Mary H. Deane.

with the best wishes

of her affectionate uncle

Robert

Thursday

Feby 24th 1853.

MARY HOWITT'S STORY-BOOK.

Published by C S. Francis & Co., New, York

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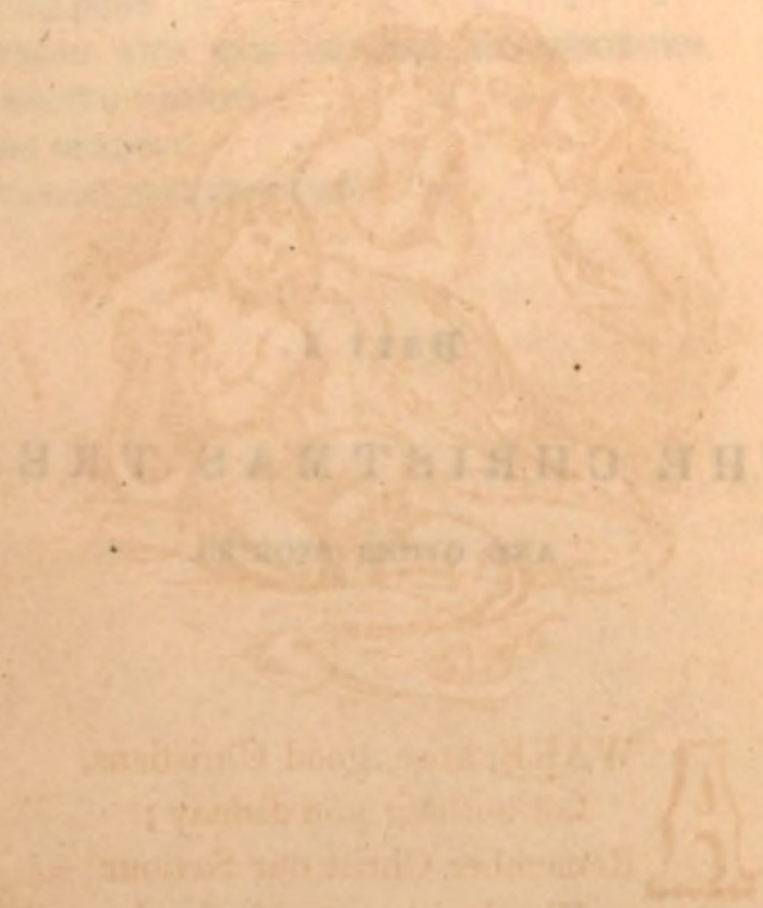
THE CHRISTMAS TREE;

AND OTHER STORIES.



A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

AWAKE, arise, good Christians,
Let nothing you dismay;
Remember Christ our Saviour
Was born upon this day!

The self-same moon was shining
That now is in the sky,
When a holy band of angels
Came down from God on high.

Came down on clouds of glory,
Arrayed in shining light,
Unto the shepherd-people,
Who watched their flocks by night.

And through the midnight silence
The heavenly host began,
"Glory to God the highest;
On earth good-will to man!

"Fear not, we bring good tidings,
For, on this happy morn,
The promised one, the Saviour,
In Bethlehem town is born!

Up rose the joyful shepherds
From the ground whereon they lay,
As ye should rise, good Christians,
To hail this blessed day!

Up rose the simple shepherds,
All with a joyful mind;
"And let us go, with speed," said they,
"This holy child to find!"

Not in a kingly palace
The Son of God they found,
But in a lowly manger
Where oxen fed around.

The glorious king of heaven;
The Lord of all the earth,
In mercy condescended
To be of humble birth.

There worshipped him the wise men,
As prophets had foretold;
And laid their gifts before him,
Frankincense, myrrh, and gold.

Long looked the simple shepherds,
With holy wonder stirred,
Then praised God for all the things
Which they had seen and heard.

And homeward went rejoicing,
Upon that Christmas morn,
Declaring unto every one
That Jesus Christ was born.

That he was born,—the Saviour,
The promised one of old;
That they had seen the Son of God,
To every one they told.

And like unto the shepherds,
We wander far and near,
And bid ye wake, good Christians,
The joyful news to hear.

THE STORY OF LITTLE CRISTAL.

ITTLE CRISTAL'S mother was Barbara; she died soon after he was born, and left him to the care of Nancy. Barbara and Nancy were both poor; they lived in a dark, gloomy court, which turned out of an alley in the very heart of London; a broken wooden staircase led up to their room, for they lived together; they had one bed, a very poor one, and but little to cover them.

Little Cristal lay in his mother's bosom, and helped to keep her warm, and when she was dead he lay in Nancy's arms, and communicated the warmth of his little body to

her. Nancy was not a young woman as Barbara had been; neither was she handsome nor good tempered, but I need not describe her; what she was you will find out. She was, as I told you, very poor, and as she had promised Barbara to be a mother to her child, she had to work for his support as well as her own. All day long she sate crouched on a stone step in one of the most public streets of London and sold dolls dressed in crotchet work, which she was doing all the time; she was the first person who invented little crotchet parasols, and while the thing was new, she had a great run for them; those were golden days to her, but before a month was over she had so many rivals and imitators that her sale sank down again to a doll a day. Not far from her stood, in another recess of the street, a man who sold dog-collars; he was a neighbor of hers, and his name was Ephraim. Little Cristal, who was now six years old, was very fond of Ephraim; he had another trade besides selling dog-collars, and that was catching birds, which he sold to a man in Seven Dials. He went out early on Sunday

mornings, while it was yet grey dawn; and walked many miles into the country with his snares and his decoys to some pleasant woodland fields or breezy downs, where he caught the birds. Now and then he would take Cristal with him, and nothing delighted the child more than this; the grey dawn, the golden sunrise, the masses of opal-colored cloud that opened a pathway as it were for the ascending sun, filled him with inconceivable joy. Ephraim never noticed these things himself, and yet when the little lad called his attention to them, he often replied with the scrap of a hymn or some odd text of scripture which had stuck, as it were, in a corner of his memory from the time when he had been a child like Cristal, and had been taught out of the Bible or the hymn-book by his mother. But those days were long and long gone by. Ephraim read neither in Bible nor hymn-book now; and yet he was not a bad man either; in some great pressure of poverty in former days he had pawned both Bible and hymn-book; he meant at that time to get them soon back again; but he never could manage it; so he had

now been six and thirty years without either one or the other, and as to going to church or chapel, that was a thing he never thought of, because he never had decent clothes to his back.

Nancy was in these respects very like Ephraim, only that when she was a child she had had no good mother to teach her either out of Bible or hymn-book. She could not read herself, and therefore she never thought of little Cristal's learning; yet neither was Nancy wilfully wicked; she was very ignorant, and that was her misfortune. As far as she knew it she did what was right, and hence it was that she had saved the unhappy Barbara from a great, a very great misfortune; had become, as it were, a mother to her, and a true friend when she had none beside, for poor Barbara had thirsted and Nancy had given her to drink; she had been hungry and Nancy had fed her; she had been a stranger and Nancy had taken her in; she had been sick and in prison and Nancy had visited her; therefore we will not blame her, though she neither

he understood nothing about it, excepting such little meanings as he gleaned up out of Ephraim's hymns and scraps of scripture.

It was in this way that he learned about God the Father; of Jesus Christ, I am sorry to say, he knew nothing, and that was a great pity, for he had a heart to have loved the Saviour—the poor child in the house of the carpenter. But nobody told him of these things, so he went on groping his way as best he could along the dark paths of ignorance, and never foregoing any little glimpse of truth or knowledge which came in upon his soul by the way. One thing, however, I must tell you; after Cristal came to have a little knowledge of God the Father, he never could bear to hear wicked people curse and swear, and though he knew nothing about the ten commandments, he felt as if he himself could not take the name of God in vain. Of angels, too, he had a dim but very pleasing idea from the same source; he often fancied that he saw angels in the sun-lighted clouds. The beautiful tropical flowers also that he saw, now and then. exhibited in gardeners' windows in London

suggested to him, he did not know how or why, the idea of angels.

"Move on, you young rascal!" said the police to him many a time when he stood at the shop windows, wondering at and admiring the beautiful things which were there exhibited. Exquisitely chased vessels of silver; alabaster figures; fine engravings and paintings appealed, as it were, to some spirit within him, which could only thus make itself heard and felt.

It was a very populous court in which Cristal lived; besides Ephraim, he had another acquaintance, and this was a poor widow who went out washing. The widow lodged with a deformed young woman, who was a seamstress, and both were very poor. The widow had two valuables, a great old bible and a lark in a wicker cage, which was always hung out of her window by three o'clock on summer mornings, when she went out a-washing.

The lark sang in his cage glorious hymns to that freedom of which he was deprived; but as nobody understood the language of the bird, none knew how heart-touching and

pathetic they really were. Cristal, who had always found it so delightful to go out with Ephraim to catch birds, had no idea of there being tyranny and cruelty in the thing. To his fancy, the litle decoy birds, that are trained by the cunning and wicked craft of man to beguile and betray their innocent and unsuspecting brethren of the fields, were the cleverest and most wonderful little creatures in the world. Ephraim made money by the birds he caught; it was an honest way of livelihood everybody thought, and that was enough.

The imprisoned lark that sang its eloquent anthems to the little bit of blue sky above that dirty and melancholy court, was the most beautiful and delightful thing which little Cristal found near his own home. If ever he got money enough, he resolved within himself, he would keep a lark. When the widow was at home, she allowed Cristal now and then to have a close view of the bird, because he never failed to bring home with him from his Sunday rambles a fresh sod for the prisoner. Little did the poor lark know the care that the child had taken to

choose, as he thought, the most beautiful sod in the fields, and in which there was always a daisy, an orchis, or a cowslip root in flower.

The lovely speckled breast, the graceful form, the bright black eye, were characteristics of the most surpassing beauty to the soul of Cristal. "If ever I can get money enough I will keep a lark," said he to himself time after time; and whenever he walked through the streets, he never failed to stop at any shop where bird-cages were sold, to look out and see if there were one in sight which would do for his lark—when he got it.

One holiday in the autumn—it was not Sunday—Ephraim and Cristal went out together to collect plaintain seed for canaries. They went into the neighborhood of Wimbledon, which was a very favorite resort of Ephraim's. As they were walking slowly along the road, all at once there came sweeping along, like a whirlwind, a small troop of Life Guards in scarlet and gold, on splendid horses covered with glittering trappings. After these came several open carriages, in which sate, as it seemed to Cristal, the most beautiful ladies and the most magnificent

gentlemen in the world. But that which struck him most was a little boy in hat and feathers and green velvet dress, who sate at the side of the principal lady. They passed on like a flash of lightning; another troop of guards came after them, and all were gone, leaving nothing behind but a cloud of dust, which almost smothered the poor wayfarers.

"It is her Majesty the Queen," said Ephraim, "I have often seen her when I have been hereabouts. She loves fast driving, and that little chap beside her is the Prince of Wales."

It was the first time that Cristal had seen the Queen and the Prince. A strange, melancholy feeling came over his soul, like a cloud obscuring the sunshine. He had often before seen grand carriages and grand people in the streets of London, but he had taken no notice of them; they were nothing to him, and neither troubled him nor gave him pleasure. It was a new feeling that he had now at the sight of the Prince; he did not envy him, nor feel angry; he only felt as he had often done at the sight of beautiful

leathers often took compassion on him, and gave him of her poor victuals; and another who sold little slates in a very windy passage, told him that he should have seven little slates from her for fivepence, which he could easily sell for a penny a piece, and he might pay her when he got his money. She taught him how to hold them between his little fingers, like a sort of fan, and sent him to what she thought a good situation, near a great thoroughfare in the city.

Poor Nancy, who was so sorely pinched by poverty, was well pleased that these good women befriended the lad, and though his supper was scant enough at all times, I must do her the justice to say, that she fared no better herself.

Cristal stuck the little slates as he had been taught, between his thin, small fingers, but his hand soon grew tired, and he could not hold them firmly. About noon, when the throng of people was the thickest, a gentleman who had suddenly found himself the heir of a large property, leaped out of a cab, and ran across the pavement, to the lofty door of a great banking house, where his money

who only wanted to excite their pity, and get money from them.

The police told him to move off; and full of misery and indignation, he walked slowly along the pavement. He did not know, however, how great his loss had been; he believed that he had only lost one shilling, when in truth he had lost twenty.

The woman who had trusted him with the slates, would not believe him. She said that she saw now that she had been deceived in him, that he had sold the slates, and that this was all a tale made up, that he might keep all the money, and that as she could not afford to lose her property in that way, she would find out where he lived, and see his mother: for have the worth of the slates she would, that was certain!

Cristal did not tell her that he had no mother, and that Nancy, when she heard of this, would beat him. He turned away from her, weeping bitterly, and dared not go home. It was the first week in January, and bitterly cold. He felt the piercing cold to his very bone, for he had only in addition to the poor clothes which he wore in the summer, an

old green and red comforter round his neck, and the cape of Nancy's cloak which she had lent to him, and which did not reach to his knees.

For the first time in his life he felt utterly miserable; fear, anger, and a sense of wrong and unjust accusation weighed upon his spirit, and almost crushed him to the ground.

Towards midnight he crept into the court where Nancy lived, and in this court there were some houses which had never been finished, and which had stood for years, black and melancholy objects of premature ruin. Within this place he found shelter for the night. Nancy, although she had insisted on his bringing home his sixpence every evening, was uneasy at his not coming home as usual. She loved him very much, and her intention was not to be cruel to him, but poverty made her hard and severe, and this must be her excuse; besides which, when she compared Cristal's life with her own as a child, his, even at the worst, was much happier than hers had been. Poverty has so many curses besides those of actual bodily

the window. The old woman and her lame lodger, thinking only of saving their lives, rushed into the court, dragging down part of their bedding and a few clothes. Without a moment's thought for himself, Cristal rushed up the broken stairs, and amid the smoke which filled the place preparatory to its bursting into flame, and snatched down the cage, below which lay the widow's large bible. He did not know the real worth of the book, but with a sort of instinctive impulse, he took it up also, and darted again down the stairs, being wetted to the skin with the water from the engines which was poured upon the burning houses.

Everybody who saw this courageous act of neighborly devotion, praised him; and while Cristal felt pleased with what he had done, the drunken man who had been the cause of all the mischief, and who was sobered by terror, took occasion to tell him how angry Nancy was; how she was gone out even then to search for him, and her dreadful threat on leaving the court.

The danger of the fire spreading further was over; the crowd began to disperse, and

the police walked about to keep order. The night was bitterly cold, and little Cristal was wet to the skin, yet he dared not go home, because of Nancy's threat. He crouched down again therefore under the blackened walls of the unfinished building, and as it seemed to himself, went to sleep.

Wonderful things now happened to Cristal, such as neither philosopher nor poet has described, nor ever can, therefore it is not for me to tell you much ab ut them. This much however I do know, he seemed to wake, and yet how unlike any former awaking it was; he seemed to be himself, and yet how different to what he had ever before been: cold and hunger, want and suffering were no more. He remembered his admiration of the young Prince, but now he himself was more glorious than any earthly monarch, and yet there was no crown on his head, nor sceptre in his hand. This was London in which he stood; this was the very court in which he had lived, and yet at the same time it seemed filled with the glory of the Infinite. With his hands clasped palm to palm, against his breast, although no one

had ever taught him to pray, he stood in silent wonder and adoration.

A policeman was the first who in the grey dusk of that winter's morning found the body of little Cristal; his wet clothes were frozen upon him, he had perished by the extreme cold of the night. Nancy who had returned to the court just after the fire was extinguished, heard from the widow how like a hero the boy had behaved, and how he had saved those very things which she valued so much, and yet in her terror had forgotten; the lark and the bible. The drunken neighbor also came up and informed her, how he too had seen Cristal, and had delivered to him her threatening message. Nancy felt relieved; and imagined that Cristal had taken shelter with some of the neighbors for the night.

The news reached her early the next morning, that the boy was found frozen under the wall. What an anguish then struck through her heart; her hard words pierced her like daggers. "Heaven help me!" groaned she. "I never yet said an

unkind word, or did an unkind thing, without bitterly repenting it!"

Many a one beside Nancy has experienced this.

In that strange, new and glorious state in which Cristal now was, the anguish which Nancy endured, though known to him, caused him no grief, he knew that which the wisest men have been teaching us for ages, that out of suffering comes purification, and that there is hope for every one, who, in sincerity repents him of the evil that he has done.

The body of little Cristal lies in a pauper burial-ground, in a rude coffin furnished by the parish work-house.

May all of us so live that when like his, our bodies return to the dust, we may awake to that new existence, which, enfolding us with an increase of light and love, brings us yet nearer to the Divine Presence!

MABEL ON MIDSUMMER DAY.

A TALE OF THE FAIRIES.

"RISE, my maiden, Mabel,"
The mother said, "arise,
For the golden sun of Midsummer
Is shining in the skies.

"Arise, my little maiden,
For thou must speed away,
To wait upon thy grandmother
This livelong summer day.

"And thou must carry with thee
This wheaten cake so fine;
This new made pat of butter;
This little flask of wine!

"And tell the dear old body,
This day I cannot come,
For the good man went out yester-morn,
And he is not come home.

"And more than this, poor Amy
Upon my knee doth lie;
I fear me, with this fever-pain
The little child will die!

"And thou can'st help thy grandmother;
The table thou can'st spread;
Can'st feed the little dog and bird,
And thou can'st make her bed.

"And thou can'st fetch the water,
From the lady-well hard by;

And thou can'st gather from the wood
The fagots brown and dry.

"Can'st go down to the lonesome glen,
To milk the mother-ewe;
This is the work, my Mabel,
That thou wilt have to do.

"But listen now, my Mabel,
This is Midsummer-day,
When all the fairy people
From elf-land come away.

"And when thou art in lonesome glen,
Keep by the running burn,
And do not pluck the strawberry flower,
Nor break the lady-fern.——

"But think not of the fairy folk,
Lest mischief should befall;
Think only of poor Amy,
And how thou lov'st us all.

"Yet keep good heart, my Mabel,
If thou the fairies see,
And give them kindly answer
If they should speak to thee.

"And when into the fir-wood
Thou go'st for fagots brown,
Do not, like idle children,
Go wandering up and down.

"But, fill thy little apron,
My child, with earnest speed;
And that thou break no living bough
Within the wood, take heed.

"For they are spiteful brownies
Who in the wood abide,
So be thou careful of this thing,
Lest evil should betide.

"But think not, little Mabel,
Whilst thou art in the wood,
Of dwarfish, wilful brownies,
But of the Father good.

"And when thou goest to the spring,
To fetch the water thence,
Do not disturb the little stream,
Lest this should give offence.

"For the queen of all the fairies
She loves that water bright;
I 've seen her drinking there myself
On many a summer night.

"But she 's a gracious lady,
And her thou need'st not fear;
Only disturb thou not the stream,
Nor spill the water clear!"

"Now all this I will heed, mother,
Will no word disobey,
And wait upon the grandmother
This livelong summer day!"

Away tripped little Mabel,
With the wheaten cake so fine;
With the new-made pat of butter,
And the little flask of wine.

And long before the sun was hot,
And morning mists had cleared,
Beside the good old grandmother
The willing child appeared.

And all her mother's message
She told with right good-will,
How that the father was away,
And the little child was ill.

And when the wild-wood brownies
Came sliding to her mind,
She drove them thence, as she was told,
With home-thoughts sweet and kind.

But all that while the brownies
Within the fir-wood still,
They watched her how she picked the wood,
And strove to do no ill.

"And oh, but she is small and neat,"
Said one, "'t were shame to spite
A creature so demure and meek,
A creature harmless quite!"

"Look only," said another,
"At her little gown of blue;
At the kerchief pinned about her head,
And at her little shoe!"

"Oh, but she is a comely child,"
Said a third, "and we will lay
A good-luck-penny in her path,
A boon for her this day,—
Seeing she broke no living wood;
No living thing did affray."

And neither plucked the strawberry-flower,
Nor broke the lady-fern.

And while she milked the mother-ewe
Within the lonesome glen,
She wished that little Amy
Were strong and well again.

And soon as she had thought this thought,
She heard a coming sound,
As if a thousand fairy-folk
Were gathering all around.

And then she heard a little voice,
Shrill as the midge's wing,
That spake aloud, "a human child
Is here—yet mark this thing!

"The lady-fern is all unbroke,
The strawberry-flower unta'en!
What shall be done for her, who still
From mischief can refrain?"

"Give her a fairy-cake!" said one,
"Grant her a wish!" said three;
The latest wish that she hath wished,"
Said all, "whate'er it be!"

—Kind Mabel heard the words they spake,
And from the lonesome glen,
Unto the good old grandmother
Went gladly back again.

Thus happened it to Mabel
On that Midsummer-day,
And these three fairy-blessings
She took with her away.

—'Tis good to make all duty sweet,
To be alert and kind;
'Tis good, like little Mabel,
To have a willing mind!

The Christmas Tree, p. 45.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

ALL of us looked at the picture, and agreed that it was a very pretty one; and from looking at it, we began to talk about Christmas and Christmas trees in general; and the children would not be satisfied, unless I told them about good Mrs. Kinderliebe and her two remarkable Christmases.

"You have all heard about fairy-godmothers," said I; "and you know that they are always very small, and very neat and prim, with little feet and hands, and little neat old-fashioned faces, with grey hair, and lace-bor-

or be of use to them. In summer, you saw her going out with a basket in her hand full of cakes, or fruit, or flowers, and they always were for some poor or sick person, to whom they would bring a pleasure. In the winter, you would see her going through the snow and the frost all the same, in a little pair of clogs, and a fur cloak, and little velvet bonnet; and sometimes, Barbele, her old servant, was trudging beside her with a lanthorn, if it was at night, and a large bundle of warm clothing, or something of that sort, which she was carrying to some poor, half-starved creature. And it was wonderful how much sewing and knitting her dear little fingers did, and her fingers were hardly any larger than yours; but then she had such a large heart, it was large enough for an Emperor!

The fairy-godmother loved everything that lived; but most of all did she love little children. She was an old woman you must remember, but that did not matter; she was as merry as a child herself; she knew all sorts of riddles and nursery songs, and such wonderful stories! and, what was better than all, she never was tired of telling them. Be-

and how they all loved her; but then you must remember she was just like a fairy-godmother.

"If it were not for the Herr Professor," Mrs. Kinderliebe used to say to Barbele, "I should like us to have some poor orphan child to live with us; I think we could make her happy and good. Yes, if it were not for the Herr Professor, one would have one; but he cannot bear a noise, Barbele, so we must give it up;" and with that the fairy-godmother sighed, and so did old Barbele, who thought of all things she should like to have a pair of little shoes to clean every morning, and to lay a little knife and fork beside the old lady's for dinner. They both thought a great deal about it; but the old Professor, who was so learned and who could not bear a noise, always stood like a bug-bear in the way.

One night, it was just at the beginning of December, the Herr Professor was heard shutting his room door overhead and then coming down stairs, very slowly and very quietly, as he always did; and then he knocked at the fairy-godmother's door, and

when she told him to come in, he walked in, with his hat in his hand, as he always did when he came to call upon her, for he was very polite. He looked very sad, and scarcely smiled when he spoke to her; and anybody could see that he had a great trouble on his mind—and so he had! Before long, he pulled a letter out of his pocket, which was sealed with black, and he began to tell her that this letter had brought him the news of the death of a friend of his, a very learned man too, who lived in Tübingen, a young man whom the Professor had taught himself; and he and his wife were both dead of a fever, and had left two little daughters. Anybody who had known the Professor before that night would never have expected to see him crying, because he looked so hard and dry; but he shed many tears that evening in the fairy-godmother's room, and he talked so much about the poor little orphans who had no friends, and who now were very poor, that the fairy-godmother cried too.

"I wish some good person would take those poor children," said he, "and bring them up creditably for their good father's

Christ-child would send her." The Herr Professor, who was very polite, sent his compliments back, and he would have that honor.

Mrs. Kinderliebe had come back the night before, and she had such a great quantity of luggage with her! The Herr Professor's old servant told him so, but he forgot all about it the next minute.

About six o'clock, he went down stairs, dressed all in his best, with his silver buckles on, and a new wig, and gloves, and black silk stockings, just as if he had been going to visit the Grand Duke. He gave a little company-knock at the fairy-godmother's door, but, before she could answer, old Barbele sprang out of the kitchen and opened it for him; and there was the old lady, all dressed in her best, in her little tiny high-heeled shoes, and grey satin and white lawn apron, and lace handkerchief and cap, looking so beautiful, that the Herr Professor could not help bending his stiff, straight back, and kissing her dear little hand.

The Christmas tree stood in the best par-

lor, and the next moment the best parlor door opened, and there was the beautiful Christmas tree all blazing, and just under it stood a beautiful little girl, about six years old, with long shining hair falling over her shoulders, and rosy cheeks, and large blue eyes, in a black crape frock, and with a black ribbon round her beautiful golden hair.

"The Christ-child has been here," said the fairy-godmother turning to the old Professor, "and has brought a present for you," and with that, she took the beautiful child by her hand and led her to him; "it is the little daughter of your late friend, the young Professor of Tübingen. She is now my child. She shall live under the same roof with us. We will both of us be kind to her!"

Again the old Professor kissed the dear old lady's hand, but he did not say anything; he only sat down on a chair, and took out his large green pocket-handkerchief, with which he wiped his face many times.

The little child's name was Seraphine, and before long she was sitting on the old Professor's knee and leaning against his

breast, for she liked the smell of tobacco, because her dear father used to smoke, as all learned men in Germany do. That was the happiest Christmas Eve that the dear fairy-godmother, or the Herr Professor, ever spent.

They talked much about little Seraphine and her dead parents; but this was after she was gone to bed, and about her little sister, who was younger than she, and who was gone to live with a great uncle, a farmer, in Bavaria. The great uncle was a coarse, stern man, who talked loud, and thought it a great vexation for people to die and leave orphan children behind them. Mrs. Kinderliebe could not help crying when she thought what a comfortless home this poor, dear child very likely would have.

Seraphine loved the fairy-godmother very much, and she loved the old Professor too. She used to go up every day and say a lesson to him; he had great pleasure in teaching her; he used to let her look in his big books that were full of pictures. Down stairs she learned music from the fairy godmother, and all sorts of beautiful needle-

work; she had a work-box, and a silver thimble, and she worked a sampler with blue silk; and all the time she sat at work the fairy-godmother told her stories and beautiful verses, and gave her riddles to guess. In the kitchen, she helped Barbele to make nice cakes and sugar bread, of which she always took some to the Herr Professor.

Poor little Seraphine! She ought to have been very happy, but she was not: everybody was happy but herself. The old Professor seemed to get quite young again; you could even hear him laughing down stairs; the fairy-godmother, whose face had always been so bright, looked now brighter and lovelier than ever, and as to old Barbele, she sang all the time she cleaned the little shoes and made the little bed, which now stood in the dressing-room within the fairy-godmother's chamber.

Seraphine knew that they all loved her and that she must try to be happy; but somehow, whenever she peeped through the palings into the milk-woman's garden, and saw the milk-woman's two little daughters

playing together, it made her sad, for she thought of her own little sister Angela, and she could not help crying. She would sometimes cry as she sat at work, and once or twice she could not help sobbing on the fairy-godmother's knee, and thus wetting with her tears the old lady's lace handkerchief.

Nobody asked her why she cried so; but neither did anybody scold her for it. She fancied that nobody noticed it; but they did though, and the old lady, who was, you must remember, like a fairy-godmother, she knew *why* she cried, and *why* she was unhappy, just as well as if she had been told.

The old Professor and the fairy-godmother used often now to have a deal of talk together, and whenever they saw Seraphine looking sad, they only nodded at one another.

It now was twelve months since Seraphine's father and mother died, and she had been nearly that time with the fairy-godmother; but for all that she could not help crying when she thought of Angela, and it

sor by Barbele to his servant, for her to give the Christ-child.

The evening came! Seraphine was dressed in a white frock, with blue shoes on, and a broad-blue sash; and her beautiful hair, which the fairy-godmother combed and brushed herself, fell over her shoulders, just like an angel's in a picture. When she was dressed, her fairy-godmother looked into her face with such a deal of love in her eyes, and kissed her. Seraphine could not help crying; she clung to the dear old lady and sobbed so; for her heart was very full, and she had been trying not to cry all day, and now she had once begun, she felt as if she never could leave off. She was thinking so much about Angela, and wondering what sort of a Christmas she would keep with the stern, great uncle in Bavaria.

The fairy-godmother told her she must not cry, and she gave her rose-water to wash her face in, and told her to be quick, for the Herr Professor himself had come down stairs to conduct them up, because he was so impatient at them being so long.

A DREAM.

HOAR with lapse of ages seemed
The silent land toward which I drew;
And yet within myself I deemed
The dwellers in that land were few.
A strong conviction seemed to rest
Upon my heart that I was then
In the sole portion of the earth,
Which since creation's perfect birth,
Had held the sons of men;
And I was on a marvelling quest
Of that small colony of the blest.

How lone, how silent! not a sound
In earth or air, from wind or flood;
But o'er the bare and barren ground
Brooded an endless solitude.
It was an awful thing to tread
O'er grey and parched and mighty plains,
Where never living thing was seen,
Where the live heart had never been:
The blood chilled in my veins,—
Yet still I felt in spirit led
Across that wilderness of dread.

But lo! that deadness of the world,
Which seemed of an eternal power,
Like a light vapor was unfurled,
And I walked over fern and flower;
Hills, robed in light celestial blue,
Bounded that amplitude of plain;
And round me there were lofty trees,
Yet moveless, soundless to the breeze;
And not a wild bird's strain,
Nor cry of beast, could still undo
The spell which silence o'er me threw.

But man was there. Not far aside
One I beheld who strongly toiled;
He seemed a youth of solemn pride,
Of noble from, but dimmed and soiled

With rural labor and with care,
And he clove wood for sacrifice.
I listened for his sounding stroke,
There was no sound; and now the smoke
Did from the pile arise;
And he gazed on it with an air
Less marked by pleasure than despair.

But then a lovelier vision sprung
Before me; and between the tall
And shadowy trees, a low cloud hung,
So low, it scarcely hung at all;
'Twas like no cloud which sails the sky;
Around it all was clearly seen;
It mixed not with the ambient air;
Rolled on itself compact and fair,
It rested on the scene,
More still and motionless than lie
The clouds of summer in the sky.

Beside it stood a hoary seer,
And through my heart a whisper ran,
"God, or his angel shrouded here,
Holds converse with this holy man."
Dark was that cloudy dwelling-place;
No glory on it seemed to dwell;
Yet still on every thing around,

On tree, on shrub, and heathy ground,
A streaming radiance fell;
And on that patriarch's awful face
Glowed with intense, unearthly grace.

Propped on his staff, in peace he stood,
Sandaled, and girdled in his vest,
And his full beard in silver flowed
Far down his pure and quiet breast;
His eye was on the cloud, as one
Who listens to momentous things,
And seems with reverence to hear,
Yet with more confidence than fear,
What some great herald brings.

But as I gazed, a little boat,
Swift, without rudder, oars, or sail,
Down through the ambient air afloat,
Bore onward one who seemed to hail
The patriarch,—and he turned his head;
He turned and saw a smiling boy,
Smiling in beauty and in youth,
With eyes in which eternal truth
Lay with eternal joy.
He touched that old man's snowy head,
And boat, youth, cloud, and patriarch fled!

A multitude of dreams have passed
  Since this, and perished as they came;
But in my mind imprinted fast
  This lives, and still remains the same.
The beauty of that gliding car;
    The mystery of the cloud and sage;
Those plains in arid drought so stern;
That solemn hush that seemed etern;—
    In memory's living page,
Still stand in light, more real far
Than thousands of our day-dreams are!

THE

PICTURE OF THE VIRGIN.

CHAPTER I.

THE LITTLE AUGUSTUS.

POOR THEODORA lived in a lonesome cottage in a wood, not far distant from the banks of the Danube. Her husband, who was a fisherman, had died, in the bloom of life, only a short time before. The one comfort which she had in her early widowhood was her only son, a kind, handsome boy, of about five years old, who was called Augustus. That which she considered of the greatest importance, was the teaching him to be good and pious; and her unceasing care was to preserve for him the paternal cottage, and the right of fishing.

It is true that she had been obliged for the present to give up the fishing; and the fishing tackle of her late husband, as it hung useless on the wall, and his fishing-boat, which lay turned upside down near the cottage, were painful sights to her. In the meantime she supported herself and her son by making fishing-nets, in which she was very skilful; and often at midnight, when little Augustus had been long asleep, she worked unweariedly for him. Nor had the little fellow, on his part, any other thought than how to give his mother pleasure. The good mother wept on every occasion which reminded her of her late husband; and Augustus, when he saw this, did all that lay in his childish power to comfort her. A few days after the death of her beloved husband, her brother, who was a fisherman in the next village, came and brought her a fish as a present. Theodora looked at the beautiful carp, and began to weep: "Ah!" said she; "I did not think that I should ever have had again such a fine fish in my cottage."

"Do not cry, mother!" said little Augus-

him to dinner. She had set out the little dinner, which consisted of a dishful of milk, into which bread had been broken, under the beautiful beech-tree that stood not far from the cottage, in an open green space of the wood.

After the bread and milk had been eaten, and the dish was empty, the mother said to the boy, "Now lie down in the shade of the tree and sleep a little: I will go on with my work, and will come again at the right time and wake you. Now, sleep well!" cried she, as she looked round her once again, and then went with the empty dish into the cottage.

In a little while she returned and looked. The little boy lay sleeping on the green turf: his curly head rested on one arm, whilst the other was thrown round his tidy little basket. He smiled in sleep, and his countenance and his rosy cheek were sweetly shaded by the wavering beech-leaves.

She hastened back again to her work, and netted on industriously till the net was finished. The hours passed, over her work, like so many minutes. She went now to

waken little Augustus, but she found him no longer under the beech-tree.

"The industrious child is again at his work with his little basket," said she joyfully. Ah! she foreboded not what a grief awaited her.

She went back again, and spread out the net upon the green turf. She found here and there a place in it which required mending; and so a considerable time passed. But as the boy still did not come back with his basket, she began to be uneasy about him. She sought for him through the whole wood, which was about three miles long, and a mile and a half broad, but she found him nowhere. She shouted a hundred times, "Augustus!—Augustus!" but she received no answer.

She was very much frightened: she felt the most extreme anxiety. "If he should," said she, "have forgotten the warning which I have often so earnestly repeated, and have ventured down to the water!" She trembled at the very thought, and ran down to the river: but neither could she perceive anything of him there. She then went weeping

morning and evening, with terrified heart, and wandered lamenting up and down the stream. The fishermen who, in the early dawn, were on the river at their daily work, or were returning from it late in the evening, saw her often wandering thus, and often, too, raising her hands to heaven. and were all of them heartily sorry for her.

So passed on a long time. The body never came to view: the mother neither saw nor heard anything more of the child. She was always unspeakably cast down. "In so short a time," said she, "to lose such a good husband and such a beloved child—ah, that is hard! If I did not think that the Almighty had permitted it thus to be, I should be in despair!" Often most bitterly did she reproach herself: "I ought to have taken better care of the boy," cried she, weeping and wringing her hands. "Oh, you mothers," said she to the wives of the village, who wished to console her, "take example by me, and be more watchful."

Poor Theodora! by degrees her grief made her as pale as a corpse, and wore her away till she was as thin as a shadow. As she

went to church on Sunday, in her black mourning dress, some weeks after the loss of the child, the people said one to another, "Poor Dora! she will soon follow, of a certainty, her husband and her child to the grave!"

The clergyman of the village, a venerable old man, who took the liveliest interest in the fate of his parishioners, had already visited her, and comforted her, several times at her cottage. But when, on this day, he saw her pale, deeply-troubled face, he was greatly distressed. When the service was ended, he sent for her. When she entered his room, the good old man, whose snow-white hair was covered with a black velvet cap, was sitting at his desk, and was writing something in the parish book. He greeted her kindly, and said: "Wait a little while, I shall be ready in a moment."

Whilst she waited, Theodora observed a small picture that hung on the wall, in a round, beautiful, gilt frame. She was very much affected by it, and the tears streamed down her cheeks.

"Now," said the pastor, as he flirted the

suffering, and her submission to the Divine will. Good Theodora," continued he, "you have lost much—your husband and your child: a two-edged sword has pierced your heart: but look up, like Mary, to heaven!—submit yourself to God's will!—trust in Him!—pray for comfort and for strength from above! You know that Mary, confiding in God, and strengthened by his mercy, stood erect below the cross. The faith in which she spoke, to the joyful communication of the angel—'Behold, I am the servant of the Lord, do to me according to thy will!'—filled her heart also in the hour of suffering, and permitted it not to sink. It is only the assurance that God does all aright, that that which He permits is the very best which can support you from being overwhelmed by your affliction: forget not, therefore, the great and beautiful object of all our sufferings. The sufferings of time bear no comparison to the glory which shall be revealed to us. Through suffering is virtue perfected: the sufferings of time lead to everlasting joy. Even Christ himself attained to his glory through suffering. On this way, Mary fol-

in Heaven, will a crown of glory also await you."

Theodora followed the advice of the good Pastor; and her grief became much milder: but still whenever she passed the tree under which she had last seen her boy, there always went a pang through her heart. On this the thought came into her mind to make a hollow in the tree, and to place within it the beautiful picture. "The tree," said she, "causes me ever new sorrow; but then I should also here ever find new consolation. Ah!" sighed she, "other mothers place, for their dead children, a little memorial in the churchyard; the tree may thus become the memorial of my dear Augustus."

She mentioned her idea to the good old Pastor, and he had nothing against it. "So that it brings you consolation, do it, well and good."

She cut, therefore, with a deal of trouble, a round hollow, about the size of a window-pane, in the bark of the tree, placed the picture within it, and, when she now passed the tree, she looked upon that beautiful picture, and said: "I also will be a servant

of the Lord, like Mary; to me also it happened according to His will!" and by degrees her heart became less sorrowful.

CHAPTER II.

MR. WAHL.

IN the meantime, whilst the afflicted mother wept her beloved Augustus as dead, the little five-years-old boy had made a journey of more than three hundred miles; had arrived in the imperial city of Vienna; lived there, gay and full of health, in a magnificent house that resembled a palace; was as beautifully and richly dressed as if he were of noble birth; and, which was more than all this, he was educated in the most careful manner, and was instructed by the very best teachers in all that was good and useful.

This extraordinary change had been brought about in a very simple manner. After Augustus had awoke, under the beech, and had rubbed his eyes, he set off immediately into the wood, to seek again for beech-

"Nay," said Augustus, who had never heard of chestnuts, "they are not such odd things as you say; they are beech-nuts, and one can eat them." He divided whole handfuls among the children, and they made a great rejoicing. It gave the good little Augustus the greatest pleasure to find such a many merry children all together; such a happiness as this was very rare, for it was not often that he saw even a child from the village. He joined himself to the children, and they gave to him of all that they had, pears and plums.

Augustus was now very curious to see the boat nearer: it was the first large boat that he had seen near. The floating house upon it, a great deal larger than his cottage, appeared to him very wonderful. The children took him with them into the boat. Antonia led him into the papered room, which was appointed for the use of the higher class of passengers.

"Eh!" cried Augustus, in astonishment, "there is in this house a prettier parlor than we have at home!"

Antonia and his other new play-fellows

now, little fellow," began the grave, fat man, "from what city or village came you?"

"I am from no city, and from no village," said Augustus.

"That is strange," said the master; "yet you must have a home somewhere."

"My home," replied he, "stands in the wood, not far from the village."

"Good, now," said the master; "what is the name of the village."

"Ha!" said Augustus; "what should it be called but the village? My mother never called it anything else. She used to say, Now they ring the bell in the village for dinner, or, to-morrow you shall go with me into the village to buy bread."

"What, then, is the name of your parents?" asked the master.

"My father," answered the boy, "is dead, and my mother is called the fisher-wife, Dora."

"Then," said the master, "she is named Theodora; but what is her surname?"

"She has no other name but Dora," said the little one; "she has often said to people, that they need not call her anything else."

The master saw very well, that from an inexperienced child, who had no notion even of a surname, but little information would be obtained. He grew very angry, and said: "I wish that the cuckoo had brought you anywhere rather than into my boat."

The good little one, whose eyes were full of tears, answered, quite simply, and without passion, "The cuckoo has not brought me here: I have never once seen him, but in spring I have often heard him."

Everybody in the boat laughed, but the master was in great perplexity. Here, unfortunately, the Danube flowed through an uninhabited woody region, and far and wide no open space could be seen. In a while, however, as the sun was about setting, they discerned a distant church tower. "I will leave the child in that village," said the master, "that the people there may take it back to its mother; and there, since we cannot go much further to-night, will we sleep."

But Mr. Wahl, the father of Antonia, would not consent to this. He was a rich merchant, who was taking several chests full of gold and treasure with him, for he,

like the rest of the boat's company, were fleeing before the enemy, it being during the time of the Thirty Years' War which laid waste Germany.

"I wish with all my heart," said Mr. Wahl, "that the distressed mother could, without delay, have her dear child back with her. But at this moment it cannot be done! The enemy is advancing, and is approaching the Danube; a delay of a few hours might endanger our falling into the hands of the enemy, and losing all that we possess. In Heaven's name proceed."

Mr. Wahl, who had great cause for anxiety, insisted also that the boat should travel through the whole night, considering that it was the time of full moon. They said that this was against their custom: but as he promised a great sum of money both to the master and the boatmen, they consented at last, and proceeded in the clear bright moonlight onward, through the whole night.

At sunrise, they came to a little village that lay close to the shore. The master now endeavored to induce the peasants to

she was greatly attached to her youthful companion. To Augustus, therefore, Mr. Wahl gave Antonia as a wife, and nothing in this world could be happier than they two.

When the war was ended the emperor, to whom Mr. Wahl and his son-in-law had done great service, raised them to the rank of nobles. Good Mr. and Mrs. Wahl, however, could only enjoy for a few years this long-desired peace. They were beloved tenderly both by Augustus and Antonia, and affectionately cherished to the end of their days. They died, the one soon after the other, in the comfortable hope of seeing again these beloved children, in that blessed abode where reigns eternal peace.

Augustus, now Baron von Wahlheim, gave up his commercial concerns, and determined to purchase, either in Bavaria, or in Swabia, one of those noble estates which had been devastated by the war, and which now were to be had at very low prices. Several were offered to him. He made a journey, therefore, saw them, and selected the beautiful estate of Newchurch, which particularly pleased him. He immediately prepared for

gratitude if I did not impart of this blessing to others. I rejoice to be able to contribute anything to your happiness: there is no higher happiness than that of making others happy."

CHAPTER III.

THE WONDERFUL DISCOVERY.

WHILST Augustus von Wahlheim had become a rich and fine gentleman, his mother, the good Theodora, had experienced much hard fate, and had led a life of great poverty; yet, at the same time, from her dependence on God, a life of great contentment.

Soon after the time in which she lost her child, the war advanced into the country of the Danube, where she lived, and the enemy's troops took at once possession of the woods. Theodora lost her solitary cottage, and fled into the village to her brother, who possessed the paternal house: but here also was there no lasting abode for her. The

village, during a skirmish, was almost reduced to ashes, and the greater part of the inhabitants dispersed themselves. The house of Theodora's brother was burnt to the ground; but he endeavored to maintain himself as a fisherman, and Theodora fled to her sister, who lived about thirty miles off. The sister received her very kindly: she had many children, and Theodora helped her to bring them up. The two sisters lived together in peace and unity, and lightened to each other the sufferings which the war had brought upon them both. After some years she received a letter from her brother, written from the old home. He wrote to her, that his wife was dead, that his two daughters, during the war, had married away from him, and that he wished that his sister should return to him, and take charge of his house. Theodora returned therefore again to her old home.

Scarcely had she arrived in the village when she betook herself to the wood, and sought for the beech-tree in which she had placed the beautiful picture, and which she had, in her sudden flight, forgotten to take

with her. But, good heavens! how everything was changed here! The path which had led to her cottage was no longer to be found: it was lost in high grass and thick underwood. Where hitherto only low bushes had grown, now tall trees had raised themselves, with widely-spreading branches: on the contrary, many large old trees, which Theodora had well known, had disappeared. There had not been for long one single trace of her poor wooden cottage; even the place upon which it had once stood she could no longer find with certainty: all around was a thick impenetrable wood. Theodora was at a deal of trouble, but in vain, to find the tree under which she had wept so much. She passed through thorns and underwood, and carefully noticed every beech-tree.—"If I can no longer find that beautiful picture," thought she, "still the empty hollow in the tree would make known to me where once the picture had been."

"Do not give yourself such labor in vain, good mother," said an old man, who was gathering fire-wood there. "I think that the tree is no longer standing. As it is with us

on our return to the village, so is it in the wood;—men that we left here as children are grown up; those who then were grown up are now old people; and the old people of those days are now lying in their graves. The young growth presses upon the old trees: all things in this world soon pass away: men still quicker than trees. We have here no abiding place; therefore will we strive after that which is above, and which endures for ever."

The old man went on his way, and Theodora gave up all hope of ever again finding the tree.

Baron von Wahlheim lived many miles from here; but both that wood, and the village in which Theodora lived, belonged to the territory which he had purchased. One day he came into this very wood, in order to distribute among the people of the village fire-wood for the winter. The wood had grown quite wild, and would be greatly benefitted by the felling of a deal of timber. He wished, however, to see with his own eyes that every needy person obtained his proper share. He sent, therefore, for all household-

bad, and that which we reject, which we should give to the poor, but of the best also; and especially in a time of need. The tree therefore belongs to the sister of the sick man, and, more than this, it shall be felled and cut into fire-wood at my cost, and shall be delivered also at the door of the poor people. Lay hand, then, to it instantly, you wood-cutters, before you cleave my wood."

He hastened onward in order to spare her thanks. Theodora looked after him, with tears in her eyes, and said, "God bless the good gentleman!" and then went her way.

And thus mother and son, who had seen each other in this wood, for the last time, upwards of twenty years ago, and who this moment had again met here without recognizing each other, might very well again, and perhaps for ever, have become separated from each other, if the holy providence of God had not ordered it better.

Two wood-cutters immediately laid the axe to the tree: it fell with a great crash to the earth; and the men cried out in amazement, "A miracle!—a real miracle!" The tree trunk had broken in the fall, a piece of

into the tree. Some pious person has made a hollow in the tree-trunk, and has placed it there. The bark, by degrees, as is usual with these trees, has again closed over it, and thus the picture has become enclosed in the tree."

Suddenly, however, Baron von Wahlheim grew pale, and his hand which held the picture trembled. "Ah!" said he, "this is most extraordinary!" He was obliged to seat himself on the trunk of the fallen tree, for he had turned to the back of the picture, and had read these words, "*In the year of our Lord* 1632, *on the* 10*th of October, I saw here, under this tree, my only son Augustus, aged five years and three months, for the last time. God be with him wherever he be, and comfort, as he comforted Mary under the Cross, me, the heart-broken mother, Theodora Sommer.*"

The thought went through him like lightning. "I was this lost child! Name, year, and day agree exactly! It was my mother who placed this picture here!"

As he was thus thinking to himself, his mother came by. She had been waiting in

in the wood for a neighbor, with whom she was to return to the village, and the tidings of the picture which had just been found, filled her with astonishment.

"Ah, gracious sir," said she, "that picture is mine. I pray you give it me. See my name stands to it; the late pastor wrote it there. At my request also did he write the other words. Ah," said she, weeping, as she examined the fallen tree, "this then is the tree under which my child slept for the last time so sweetly and calmly, before he was taken from me! How often have I gone, since I returned here, past this tree without recognizing it! Oh, my Augustus—thus, then, I see the place once more, where my eyes beheld thee for the last time! Ah! thee, thee I shall see no more in this life. It is to me as if I stood upon thy grave!" She could say no more for weeping.

Baron von Wahlheim was almost beside himself to see his own mother in that poor woman. His heart burned within him, and he was ready to spring up and clasp her in his arms, with the exclamation, "My mother!" but he restrained himself, for it oc-

vealed himself to us as the Power who does all things for the best."

"Yes," said the mother, "he has done so, the dear, good God! He has taken thee from me because I, perhaps, from a too tender love, might not have brought thee up well. He has given thee to me again, to be my helper in need—nay, for the whole country around, to be a comforting and sustaining angel. All that He does is wisdom and love. Praised be His name!"

All those who stood around joined with her, and praised God aloud.

Baron von Wahlheim now bade the forest-master say to the brother of Theodora, that she would return home next morning, and then bring her son with her; and she engaged her good neighbor to attend, in the meantime, upon her sick brother. After this, Baron von Wahlheim ordered his coach to come, helped his mother into it, placed himself near her, and drove with her back to his castle. Here new joy awaited the good woman. She was half ashamed of appearing in her mean dress before her daughter-in-law, the Baroness: but Antonia was too noble to think of

this; she met her with open arms, saluted her in the kindest manner, and esteemed herself happy in knowing the mother of her dear husband. Theodora wept for joy; but when, beyond this, her two grandchildren, Ferdinand and Marie, were brought to her, both loving and lovely, amiable and good as angels, her joy became perfect rapture.

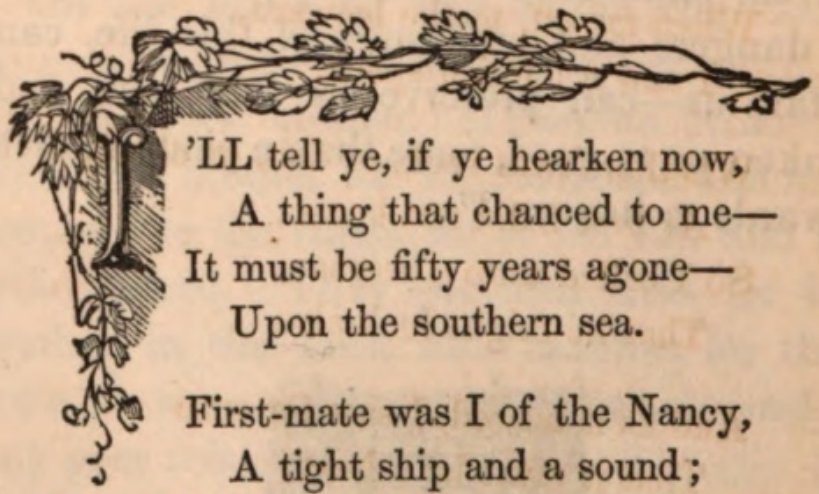
"Inexpressible," said she, "was my sorrow, but my joy is now yet still greater. I can do nothing but weep, praise and thank God!"

On the following day, Baron von Wahlheim went, with his mother in his coach, to visit her sick brother. Theodora remained with her brother till he recovered, and then removed to the castle, for so her son and his wife desired. They provided also for her brother in the most kind manner, for they were too wise and too good to be ashamed of any poor relation.

More than this, they invited, on a certain day, parents, children, and grandchildren, to a great festival, giving to Theodora the place of honor. The good people were quite enchanted, and sate with tears of joy in their eyes.

THE BOY OF THE SOUTHERN ISLE,

AN OLD SEAMAN'S STORY.



I'LL tell ye, if ye hearken now,
A thing that chanced to me—
It must be fifty years agone—
Upon the southern sea.

First-mate was I of the Nancy,
A tight ship and a sound;
We had made a prosperous voyage,
And then were homeward bound.

We were sailing on the Tropic seas,
Before the trade-wind's power;
Day after day, without delay,
Full thirteen knots an hour.

The sea was as a glassy lake,
By a steady gale impressed;
There was nought for any man to do
But just what liked him best.

And yet the calm was wearisome;
The dull days idly sped;
And sometimes on a flute I played,
Or else a book I read.

And dallying thus one afternoon,
I stood upon the deck;
When far off, to the leeward,
I saw a faintish speck.

Whether 'twas rock, or fish, or cloud,
At first I did not know;
So I called unto a seaman,
That he might look also.

And as it neared, I saw for sure
That it must be a boat;
But my fellow swore it was not so,
But a large bamboo afloat.

We called a third unto us then,
That he the sight might see;
Then came a fourth, a fifth, a sixth,
But no two could agree.

"Nay, 't is a little boat," I said,
"And it roweth with an oar!"
But none of them could see it so,
All differing as before.

"It cometh on; I see it plain;
It is a boat!" I cried,
"A little boat o'erlaid with pearl,
And a little child to guide!"

And sure enough, a boat it was,
And worked with an oar;
But such a boat as 't was, no man
Had ever seen before.

Within it sate a little child,
The fairest e'er was seen;
His robes were like the amethyst,
His mantle of sea-green.

No covering wore he on his head,
And the hair that on it grew
Showered down in thick and wavy locks,
Of the sunniest golden hue.

The rudest man on board our ship
Blest God that sight to see;
For me I could do nought but weep,
Such power had it on me.

There were three, he said, who dwelt with him
Within a tamarind-grove:
His parents and his sister young,—
A family of love.

His father, he said, had made his boat
From out a large sea-shell;
"And what a wondrous tale," said he,
"I shall this evening tell!"

His robes, he said, his mother had wove
From roots of an Indian-tree;
And he laugh'd at the clothes the seamen wore,
With the merriest mockery.

When the little child had stayed with us,
May-be an hour or so,
He smiled farewell to all on board,
And said that he would go.

"For I must be back again," said he,
"For me they all will wait;
I must be back again," quoth he,
"Or ever the day be late!"

"He shall not go!" the captain said;
"Haul up his boat and oar!
The pretty boy shall sail with us
To the famous English shore!

"Thou shalt with me, my pretty boy;
I'll find thee a new mother;—
I've children three at home, and thou
To them shalt be a brother!"

"Nay, nay, I shall go back!" he said;
"For thee I do not know;—
I must be back again," he cried,
"Before the sun be low!"
Then sprang unto the vessel's side,
And made as he would go.

The captain was a strong, stern man;
None liked him overwell;
And to a seaman standing near,
Said he, with voice and look austere,
"Haul up yon cockle-shell!
And you, my boy, content you,
In this goodly ship to dwell!"

As one who gladly would believe
Some awful threat a joke,
So heard the child, with half a smile,
The words the captain spoke.

But when he saw them seize his boat,
And put his oar away,
The smile was gone, and o'er his face
Quick passed a pale dismay.

And then a passion seized his frame,
As if he were possessed;
He stamped his little feet in rage,
And smote upon his breast.

'T was a wicked deed as e'er was done—
I longed to set him free;
And the impotence of his great grief
Was a grievous sight to me.

At length, when rage had spent itself,
His lofty heart gave way,
And, falling on his pretty knees,
At the captain's feet he lay.

"Oh take me back again!" he cried,
"Let me not tarry here,
And I 'll give thee sea-apples,
And honey rich and clear;

"And fetch thee heavy pearl-stones
From deep sea-caves below;
And red tree-gold and coral-tree,
If thou wilt let me go!

"Or if I must abide with thee,—
In thy great ship to dwell,
Let me but just go back again,
To bid them all farewell!"

And at the word "farewell" he wept,
As if his heart would break;
The very memory of his tears
Sore sad my heart doth make.

The captain's self was almost moved
To hear his woful cry;
And there was not within the ship
One man whose eyes were dry.

When the captain saw the seamen's grief,
An angry man was he,
And shut his heart against the child,
For our great sympathy.

Down from the deck he took him
To his cabin all alone;
We saw him not for many a day,
But only heard his moan.

IT was a wicked deed, and heaven
All wickedness doth hate;
And vengeance on the oppressor
It cometh soon or late,—

Oh happy hours of converse sweet;—
The Christian's hope he knew,
And with an eager heart he gained
That knowledge sweet and new.

And ever by my side he kept,
Loving, and meek, and still:
But never more to him returned
His bold and wayward will:—
He had been tried and purified
From every taint of ill.

The eve whereon the captain died,
I turned the ship about,
And said unto the seamen good,
"We'll find the island out."

So back unto the place we came,
Where we the child had found;
And two full days, with anxious watch,
We sailed it all around.

And on the third, at break of day,
A far-off peak was seen;
And then the low-lands rose to view,
All woody, rich, and green.

Down on his knees the child he fell,
When the mountains came in view,
And tears ran streaming from his eyes,—
For his own isle he knew.

And, with a wildly piercing tone,
He cried, "Oh mother dear,
Weep not,—I come, my mother!"
Long, long ere she could hear.

And soon we saw a mountain-top
Whereon a beacon burned;
Then as the good ship neared the land,
An answer was returned.

"Oh give to me my boat!" he cried,
"And give to me mine oar!"
Just then we saw another boat
Pushed from the island-shore.

A carved boat of sandal-wood,
Its sail a silken mat,
All richly wrought in rainbow-dyes,
And three within her sat.

Down from the ship into the sea
The little boy he sprung;
And the mother gave a scream of joy,
With which the island rung.

Like some sea-creature beautiful
He swam the ocean-tide,
And ere we wondered at his skill
He clomb the shallop's side.

Next moment in his mother's arms
He lay, O sweet embrace!
Looking from her dear bosom up
Into her loving face.

The happiest and the sweetest sight
That e'er mine eyes will see,
Was the coming back of this poor child
Unto his family!

—Now wot ye of his parentage?
Sometime I'll tell you it:
Of meaner matter many a time
Has many a book been writ.

'T would make a pleasant history
Of joy scarce touched by woe;
Of innocence and love; but now
This only must you know.

His mother was of English birth,
Well-born, and young, and fair;
In the wreck of an East-Indiaman
She had been saved there.

His father was the island's chief,
Goodly as man can be;
Adam, methinks in Paradise
Was such a one as he.

'T is not for my weak speech to tell
The joy so sweet and good,
Of these kind, simple islanders,
Nor all their gratitude.

Whate'er the island held they gave;
Delicious fruits and wines,
Rich-tinted shells from out the sea,
And ore from out their mines.

But I might not stay; and that same day
Again we turned about,
And, with the wind that changed then
Went from the harbor out.

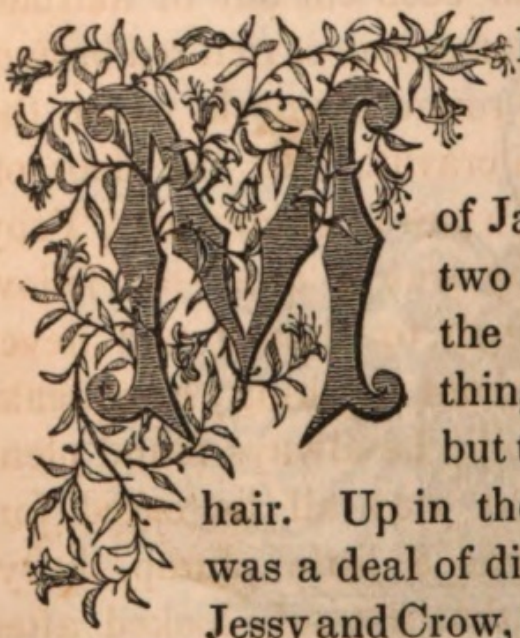
—'T is joy to do an upright deed;
'T is joy to do a kind;
And the best reward of virtuous deeds
Is the peace of one's own mind.

But a blessing great went with the ship,
And with the freight she bore;
The pearl-shells turned to great account,
So did the island's ore;—

THE BIRDS AND THE GUINEA-PIGS:

OR,

HOW THE PANTRY-DOOR KEY WAS LOST, AND THEN FOUND.



ILD and pleasant was the weather, in the beginning of January; the Poet's two children ran about the garden with nothing on their heads but their beautiful long hair. Up in the pigeon-cote there was a deal of discussion going on: Jessy and Crow, one pair of pigeons, were talking about having eggs, and a young brood; while Snowdrop and her little husband Cravates said it was quite too soon to think of such a thing. These pigeons be-

the pigeons should begin to lay or not, she sided with Jessy and his wife, and told them by all means to make a nest, and have a brood, for that it was an uncommonly fine season, there would be no more cold weather, not a bit! and even if there were, what would it matter;—fat, well-feathered birds like them never felt the cold; for her part, she never felt it: she had forgotten what cold was. The poet's children, she said, never let them want: it was all nonsense talking about want; for her part, she did not believe in the existence of such a thing! It was only a bugbear to frighten ignorant pigeons and guinea-pigs with. Jessy and Crow said the same; they said they always felt so warm about their hearts, and their feathers were so thick, that even after they had eaten their fill there was plenty of food, so they would have a brood.

Cravates and Snowdrop were convinced by what they heard, and when Crow's young ones began to peep from the egg, Snowdrop had been sitting three days. Jenny, the guinea-pig, had seven little ones. It was the merriest little region of life that ever was

seen. Guinea-pigs and pigeons were all as warm and fat as possible. The poet's children were as happy as these little creatures; they clapped their hands and screamed with delight when they saw the young pigeons come out of the shell. Snowdrop and Cravates were now full of family business, first one sat on the eggs, and then the other, and in two weeks they also would have two young pigeons.

There were many changes of weather in January: now it was fine and mild, and then it was bitterly cold, and froze and snowed, and thawed and froze again; the pond was covered with ice, and little boys slided. At the commencement of February it grew colder and colder every day; the earth was like a hard board, nothing could come out of it, and the little snowdrops and hepaticas, and winter aconites, that had ventured in the mild weather to put up their heads, now were quite sorry for it, and were so pinched with cold they did not know what to do. They said one to another how cold the bed was, and they wished so much that snow would fall, and thus give them blan-

rookery; that they were all in a pretty state there; they had begun to build some days before, while the weather was mild; but that now everything was at a stand-still; and they were all talking of a famine; they looked very discontented and down-hearted, and they said they did not know what would be the end of all this; they could get nothing out of the ground, and they could get nothing out of the air,—what then was to become of them? Jessy said it was very unpleasant to hear all this; and he told them that, for his part, he believed there was plenty of food to be had, if they would only look for it; he had often heard their outcries of famine, but he thought it was all discontent, and of people's own bringing about. The rooks were very angry to hear him talk thus, and if he had not flown off he did not know what the consequences might have been; he then went into the poet's garden, and there were all the foolish flowers that had come out too soon, shivering like naked beggars in the street, till it was quite unpleasant to see them; he told them, that they should have stopped at home by their warm

fires, and in bed among the blankets, and that if they would run themselves into trouble, they must take the consequences. The flowers made no reply, for their poor mouths were so stiff with cold that they could not open them. The next thing he saw were the little birds of the garden; there were robins, and tom-tits, and red-starts, and hundreds of sparrows; they had all puffed out their feathers like so many muffs to keep them warm, and they looked plump enough, but all they talked about was this famine. There was nothing to be had, and they thought they must all die; they looked very dismal and dispirited; they could not even twitter; they did nothing but hop about on the hard, stony ground, and pick at little bits of dirt, out of which nothing came; or if anything eatable were in it, ten to one but three or four of them fell to quarreling about it. They told dismal tales about many that had died, and said they expected that they too should die of want; they said everything was against them this winter; that last summer so little hedge-fruit came to maturity, and thus the great store of nature was

fell into the sweetest sleep, and the soft, delicate snow, like loving hands, heaped up the warm covering around them.

The little birds—robins, and redstarts, and tomtits, and the little good-for-nothing sparrows—peeped from under the broad leaves of the ivy that thickly covered the whole of the poet's house, and did nothing but sigh all day long. "It will be a deep, deep snow," said they; "it may berhaps lie four or five weeks; the pantry-door key will be lost in the snow, and how shall we ever get the door open again?" The snow fell thicker and faster, and in the afternoon the poet's gardener cut a path through the snow from the kitchen-door to the dovecote. The old garden blackbird, the bird that had cheered the hearts of the poet and his children all last summer, sate half-starved in a hole in the sycamore tree, and saw the two children, wrapped up in great coats and cloaks till only their eyes and the tips of their noses could be seen, go from the kitchen-door along the path that had been cut in the snow to the dove-house. They carried tares and peas in a basket, and soaked bread in a basin;

they were going to feed their favorites, and never once thought of all the little hungry stomachs and longing eyes that were all around them.

"The pantry-door is fast locked, and the key is now lost!" was sighed out all that night from under the roof and from the crannies of the old walls, and from under the ivy leaves, and from the hollows of the sycamore trunk. "The pantry-door key is lost, and we shall die of hunger!" The poor rooks left off building; the snow lay a foot deep in every unfinished nest; the last year's rooks asked the old ones if they had ever known the pantry-door key lost before. Very few of them ever had; they had heard their grandfathers talk of such a thing in their time, but they did not think it could have been as bad as this! The key of the pantry-door had never certainly been *quite* lost before; but they hoped it might be found. The young rooks were quite disheartened, they did not believe that the key ever would be found. They were ready to grow desperate; it was all that the most ex-

ed that he could help and save them all. Whilst he was thus thinking, he heard the twittering of the little birds in the laurustinas round the window, and he saw the old blackbird sitting just above in the arbutus. Hunger had made them very tame. He heard their mournful twitter, and he understood it—for a poet understands all languages, especially those which come from sorrowful hearts. At that moment his two children came in: "Hush," said he, and they trod as softly as falling snow; "listen to what the little birds are all saying. They say, 'the pantry-door is locked, and the key is lost! there is no one to feed us, and we shall all die of hunger!' This is what the little birds are saying.

The tears started to the children's eyes, and their father continued, "Thus say the little birds; and they speak truly; their pantry-door is locked, and the key is lost; many of them will die; they are now like so many little skeletons; they have puffed out their feathers to keep them warm, but they are starved for all that; for the famished have so little warmth within them. 'We

expected it; somebody had picked the lock or burst the pantry-door open, and behold every shelf was full of bread! They wondered how it was;—they were only birds, and so they could not tell; this, however, was certain, there was plenty now where but a minute before there had been famine. It was just as the good blackbird had said. He was a prophet and a poet, and yet he who knew all this, and had cheered them with hope, was dead! That was a sad thing! They must confess that he was a great poet; they had not thought much of him when he was alive; but they must raise a monument to him now he is dead. "But he is not dead," said the children; "he is all alive in the magpie's cage, and very happy!"

"But they do not know it," said the father; "they think him dead and mourn for him. They thought very little of him when he was amongst them, but they will honor him now they think him dead."

The frost still lasted; and the pantry remained as full as ever. Jessy went and told them in the dove-house that he knew he was

right. It was all a needless outcry about the famine; the birds only wanted to excite compassion that they might induce the pigeons and guinea-pigs to give up their food; they made themselves look miserable and half famished to get fed without working; that they were as brisk now as larks; that he heard a deal said still among the rooks about this pantry-door key being lost, but after what he had seen he put no faith in it. It was a mere pretence.

At the end of February the frost broke up; the snow melted all at once; the hard stony ground was like a wet sponge. The grass looked green, and the tree-stems brim-full of of life; the little snowdrops and hepaticas, and winter aconites, looked round them in astonishment. "Something must have happened," said they one to another; for they were not wide awake yet—"we must have been asleep a long time; come, let us get up, we feel such life and strength within us! Hark, that must be a thrush. It is spring, as sure as we are alive!"

The little dear robins and redstarts came hopping among the flowers, and they wel-

beautiful the garden is the moment he gets out of the cage."

The blackbird sprang from the open door of the cage, and flew into a hawthorn-tree that grew just by. All the little flowers saw him, and could hardly believe their eyes. The moment he alighted on the tree, he carolled forth such a hymn of thankfulness and joy as filled the whole garden. The little birds could scarcely believe their ears. He was alive and well! His song told everything, and every one interpreted it his own way. The poet heard it as he sat in his study; it told him that the spring-time —a time of plenty and of gladness—was at hand. A gushing tide of love and gratitude warmed his heart; he took up his pen, and wrote words which were immortal.

It reached the fat pigeons on the house-top, as they were strutting about with their young broods, now out in the great world for the first time; and old Jessy said to his wife, that if it really were true about the famine, he was glad that such a fine singer as the blackbird had got well through it! It reached the poor rooks, that had suffered

Bending unto their sickles' stroke,
And Boaz looking on;
And Ruth, the Moabitess fair,
Among the gleaners stooping there.

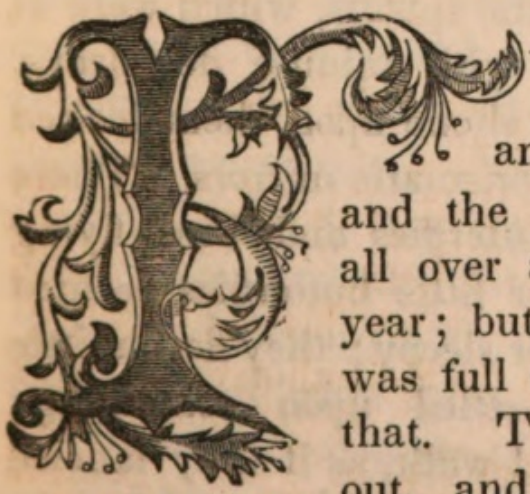
Again, I see a little child,
His mother's sole delight;
God's living gift of love unto
The kind, good Shunamite;
To mortal pangs I see him yield,
And the lad bear him from the field.

The sun-bathed quiet of the hills;
The fields of Galilee,
That eighteen hundred years agone
Were full of corn, I see,
And the dear Saviour take his way
'Mid ripe ears on the Sabbath-day.

O golden fields of bending corn,
How beautiful they seem!—
The reaper-folk, the piled-up sheaves,
To me are like a dream;
The sunshine and the very air
Seem of old time, and take me there!

THE PIGEON-HOUSE.

AN AUTUMN TALE, OF THE SWEET USES OF ADVERSITY.



AIR Summer was past; the roses, and the jasmines, and the sweet peas, were all over and gone for this year; but the poet's garden was full of flowers for all that. The dahlias were out, and the chrysanthemums and china-asters, and great big cock's-combs, like crimson madrapores, made of velvet: the leaves were changing on the trees; but apples were yet hanging golden and red upon the boughs, and looking as beautiful as flowers; and as frosts had not

brood, Pecksey and Flapsey, were equally unsuccessful in making acquaintance with the grand new pigeons; they, therefore, set them down for a couple of proud aristocrats, who thought themselves too good to associate with their fellows; they were very much vexed, but they did not dare to begin any persecution; for Dico and Dixi looked like those whom it was better not to meddle with.

About this time Cravates died; and Jessy and his wife, and Pecksey and Flapsey, and the other young pigeons, had a deal to say respecting the *post-mortem* examination, which the poet and his children had made. Something like copper was found in his stomach. "He had taken poison," said Jessy, "no doubt, therefore, but that his circumstances were bad, and that he was on the point of bankruptcy, and had committed suicide." He even told this to Dico and Dixi; but it did not interest them at all! Never in this world was there such pride as this! Jessy thought how he should like to tread on their black velvet and white satin: but there seemed no chance of such a thing!

Cravates was dead. Pecksey and Flapsey set up housekeeping together; and the most noble the Marquis and Marchioness Dico and Dixi had an heir and an heiress. Snowdrop was solitary; but neither Jessy nor Crow offered her any consolation; nay, even, I am ashamed to confess it—when they saw her come out to sit in the sunshine on the roof, they shoved her off, just as they had done poor Cravates; they strutted about, and admired one another as the sun shone on their beautiful plumage, and grew more and more self-satisfied and tyrannical every day.

But a great change was at hand. One day, a stout-built, thick-necked, positive, domineering sort of pigeon, was introduced as a resident into this little community. He was dressed in black, with a white patch under his beak. He was the famous champion, Blackbeard; not so called because his beard was black, but because he wore black and had a white beard.

Jessy, when he saw this second new arrival, of course introduced himself; but such a fellow as this Blackbeard had never been in the pigeon-house before. He did not strut

had never in his life met with his match before; and, one day, when he was strutting about in the sunshine on the roof, that his wife might admire him, what should Blackbeard do but strut up to him, and try to tread on his toes. It was more than Jessy could bear. His spirit was roused, and he strutted up to him in return, meaning to shove him right off the roof; but he might as well have tried to shove off the roof itself. They fought, and each said he had won the victory. Poor Jessy! a most uncomfortable feeling rose in his mind that Blackbeard was not so easy to be conquered. He wondered that Pecksey and Flapsey, his own offspring, did not join with him, and give the fellow a regular beating; and then it came out that Blackbeard was paying attentions to Flapsey, and there was every reason to suppose that she would become his wife. Here was an affair in the pigeon-house!

To Jessy it seemed as if the very world were coming to an end; there was a convulsion everywhere; nobody seemed quiet and cool but Dico and Dixi, and they did not condescend to mix themselves up in the

Crow sate together on their beam, and Blackbeard swaggered about over his broad territory; he was lord and master of the pigeon-house. He had humbled the pride of Jessy, but that did not satisfy him; and it seemed now as if he would have his life. Jessy's and Crow's feathers, plucked by Blackbeard, flew about the pigeon-house, and even in the autumn sunshine and among the falling leaves of the sycamore. It was a melancholy sight.

Poor Jessy sate on the roof of the garden-house, and long trails of the gossamer-spider's web floated around him. The garden was as still as death, excepting when the wind passed mournfully among the shivering leaves, and scattered them down with every breath; or now and then, when an apple fell on the grass from the old apple-tree with a dull sound, and then lay motionless. There was something mournful in the garden, and Jessy thought of his own torn and dingy plumage when he saw the seared and unsightly leaves of the trees. His pride was gone, like the pride of the year; they were both sad and dishonored together.

With slow steps the poet walked up and down his garden. An expansive spirit of love filled his heart, which was sedate rather than gay; for he, too, was thinking on many things which were calculated to sadden.

All at once, amid the silence of the place and the melancholy of the fading and falling leaves, a little robin redbreast began to sing. Its song was low but clear, and tender as the song of an angel. The poet heard it, and as he was a real poet, he understood every tone that it uttered. It sang of the sweet uses of adversity; how winter gives birth to spring, how death opens the portals of eternal life; how suffering and sorrow, unkindness and ingratitude, and the hardness of men's hearts, bring forth love, and pity, and forgiveness in noble and pure natures; it sang how that there is no suffering, no humiliation, no sorrow, which has not its compensation, and that in a hundred-fold degree, if we will only receive our affliction in meekness and patience, and the submission of love. It spoke of angels that watch over the mourner,—that breathe into his soul consolations which cannot be spoken by words; it spoke of hope,

and truth, and faith; and the chorus of his song was still "the uses of adversity are sweet."

The sorrowing bird and the poet received willingly the consolatory influence. Crow joined Jessy on the roof, but there was no more strutting about, no desire to lord it over others. They sat side by side in silence, as if they were waiting for something. And they were, but they knew it not.

Justice and Mercy had in the meantime done their work in the pigeon-house Blackbeard, the tyrant oppressor, and his weak companion, Flapsey, were gone; their fellows would see them no more, and their nestling lay beside Jessy's and Crow's in their nest. Now was an opportunity for them to return good for evil.

Jessy and Crow fed the young bird as if it had been their own. The poet's chidren told their father, and he explained to them all that the robin had sung of the sweet uses of adversity.

And thy shape is fair,
And thy locks are bright,
In the living stream
Of the quenchless light.

And thy spirit's thought
It is pure, and free
From darkness and doubt
And from mystery!

And thine ears have drunk
The awful tone
Of the First and Last,
Of the Ancient One!

And the dwellers old
Thy steps have met,
Where the lost is found,
And the past is yet.

Where shall I find thee,
For aye who art gone?
Where shall I meet thee,
Thou beautiful one?

THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT.

HOW goodly is the earth!
Look round about and see
The green and fertile field
The mighty branchèd tree;
The little flowers out-spread
In such variety!
Behold the lovely things
That dance on airy wings;
The birds whose summer pleasure
Is not of stinted measure;
The grassy vales, the hills;
The flower-embordered rills;
The clouds that lie at rest
Upon the noonday's breast;
Behold all these and know
How goodly is the earth!

How goodly is the earth!
Its mountain-tops behold;
Its rivers broad and strong;
Its solemn forests old;
Its wealth of flocks and herds;
Its precious stones and gold;

Behold the radiant isles
With which old ocean smiles;
Behold the seasons run
Obedient to the sun;
The gracious showers descend;
Life springing without end;
By day the glorious light;
The starry pomp by night;—
Behold all these, and know
How goodly is the earth

How goodly is the earth!
Yet if this earth be made
So goodly, wherein all
That is shall droop and fade;
Wherein the glorious light
Hath still its fellow shade;—
So goodly, where is strife
Ever 'twixt death and life;
Where trouble dims the eye;
Where sin hath mastery;
How much more bright and fair,
Will be that region, where
The saints of God shall rest
Rejoicing with the blessed;—
Where pain is not, nor death,—
The Paradise of God!

LITTLE CHILDREN.

SPORTING through the forest wide;
Playing by the water-side;
Wandering o'er the heathy fells;
Down within the woodland dells;
All among the mountains wild,
Dwelleth many a little child!

In the baron's hall of pride;
By the poor man's dull fireside;
'Mid the mighty, 'mid the mean,
Little children may be seen,
Like the flowers that spring up fair,
Bright and countless everywhere!

In the far isles of the main;
In the desert's lone domain;
In the savage mountain-glen,
'Mong the tribes of swarthy men;
Wheresoe'er a foot hath gone;
Wheresoe'er the sun hath shone
On a league of peopled ground,
Little children may be found!

Blessings on them! they in me
Move a kindly sympathy,
With their wishes, hopes, and fears;
With their laughter and their tears;
With their wonder so intense,
And their small experience!

Little children, not alone
On the wide earth are ye known,
'Mid its labors and its cares,
'Mid its sufferings and its snares.

read in the Bible; she often read to him about Elijah and Elisha on Mount Carmel, and he used to think then, that if ever he were rich, he would go and see all the wonderful places mentioned in the Bible. He never was rich, and yet he came here. He was very pale and thin, and had large beautiful but sorrowful eyes. He took a violin with him to Mount Carmel; it was the greatest treasure he had on earth. He played the most wonderful things on his violin that ever were heard, and everybody who heard him said that he was a great musician. In the winters he suffered much from the cold and the fogs of England; so last summer he saved a little money, and set off with his violin for Syria; and all last winter he lived in the monastery on Mount Carmel, among the grave old monks. There was one little old monk, a very, very old man, who soon grew very fond of him; he too had been a musician, but he was now almost childish, and had forgotten how to play; so the monks took from him his old violin, because they said he made such a noise with it. He cried to part with it like a child, poor old man!

The young musician had a little chamber in the monastery, which overlooked the sea; nobody can think what a beautiful view it had! The sun shone in so warm and pleasant, and a little group of cypresses grew just below the window. The young man often and often stood at the window, and looked out on the sea, and down into the cypress trees, among the thick branches of which he heard the turtle-doves cooing. He loved to hear those turtle-doves—and so did the little old monk. One day early in January he saw that the turtle-doves had built a nest just in sight; he watched the birds taking it by turns to sit on the eggs, and his heart was full of love to them; they turned up their gentle eyes to him, but they never flew away, for they saw in his mild and sorrowful countenance, that he would not hurt them.

Beautiful and melancholy music sounded for half the day down from his window to where the birds sate; it had a strange charm to the doves; they thought it was some grand, new kind of nightingale come down from heaven. The little old monk

sate in his long Carmelite frock, with his hands laid together on his knees, and his head down on his breast, and listened with his whole soul; to him too it came as a voice of heaven, which seemed to call him away to a better land; great tears often fell from his eyes, but they were not sorrowful tears; they were tears of love, tears which were called forth by a feeling of some great happiness which was coming for him, but which he could not quite understand; he was, as you know, a very old man; the oldest in all the monastery, and almost childish.

The music from the young man's room sounded finer and finer every day; as early spring came on he grew very poorly; the little old monk used to bring him his meals into his chamber, because it tired him so to go up and down the long stone staircase to the great eating-room. There never was anybody so kind as the little old monk.

A pair of young doves were hatched in the nest, and when the sun shone in at the window, the young man used to sit in his dressing-gown, with a pillow in his chair, and look out over the sea, and down into the

cypress-tree were the turtle-doves' nest was; he would sit for hours and look at them, and many beautiful thoughts passed through his mind as he did so. Never had his heart been so full of love as now; the little old monk used to sit on a low seat before him, waiting for the time when he asked for his violin; that was a great happiness to them both. The musician loved him very much, and often when he played, he meant to pour bright and comfortable thoughts into his innocent, affectionate soul

It was the end of March; the turtle-doves were all preparing for their flight to England; the pair that had built under the musician's window had a home in some old quiet woods in Surrey, where it was delightfully mild and pleasant even in winter; but they never were there in winter, although their wood had the name of Winterdown. It was a lovely wood; broad leaved arums, and primroses, and violets blue and white, covered the ground in spring; in summer there were hundreds and hundreds of glow-worms there, and the old tree-trunks were wreathed with ivy and honeysuckle. It was a very plea-

the mould with its dark crimson leaves folded up, as yet, like so many blunt-headed spears. The old blackbird had a mate, and he was singing to her with all his might; the rooks had forgotten all their winter troubles, and were now busy building and quarreling. It was a true spring morning, and the poet's children walked hand in hand up and down the garden laying out great plans for the future of this summer.

Just then, the weary turtle-doves of Carmel had reached England; the flock that had set out first had all come safely; they now, however, were very weary and hungry; the young turtle that loved the music so much was the weakest and most wearied of all the flock. "We have not far to go," said the mother, as it lagged behind and seemed ready to faint; "in an hour we shall be at Winterdown;" the little turtle grew fainter and fainter; just then they passed over the poet's garden, where the poet's children were walking. "There they are," said the mother, "the poet's children with their loving eyes and their golden hair; we shall

be at Winterdown in less than an hour; follow me!"

The weary camel in the desert when it perceives water afar off, although faint and ready to sink the moment before, bounds forward in hope and joy for the promised relief —so it was with the flock of doves; soaring above the outskirts of London, they saw in the distance the old favorite woods of Surrey, towards which they winged their way with impatient delight.

The weary young turtle sank down among the rose-trees, and heard the voices of the children as they went by. In the evening, they saw what they thought a white pigeon, on a young pear tree; they were so pleased that they even dreamed about it. Next day, the young turtle was still there; so hungry and frightened, and feeling so forlorn and friendless. The children again saw it; this made them happier still; it must be come to live with them; they stole up softly to the tree where it sat, and the little trembling bird allowed itself to be caught. They rushed into the house; they had caught, they said, the white pigeon that was so beau

Turtle Dove of Carmel. p. 22

THE JOY OF ENGELE.

HAT ENGELE'S baptismal name was, I am sorry I cannot tell you. Her parents knew, no doubt, and so did her grandmother, but I never heard of anybody else who did. Engele she was called, and I'll tell you why. Her father was a painter, and his name was Paul; he painted the most beautiful pictures that ever were seen: he painted angels, and the Virgin Mary, and little Jesus, and all kinds of beautiful saints, with white lilies in their hands. He was a sort of strong, good angel himself: he had a grave, but loving counte-

for every kind of angel, and so she gained the name of *Engel* or Angel. They called her, however, Engelein or little Angel, and this they shortened in their own old-fashioned dialect into Engele—and that was the reason of her name.

Engele was now seven; she was quite too old for the new-born Jesus, or the infant Jesus. She would soon be a model for St. Catherine, and such like saints, now she was useful for young John the Baptists. Nothing pleased Engele better than to be her father's model; she stood for hours and hours to him; he always talked so cheerfully when he was painting; and her mother used mostly to sit at her work in the room, and often at her spinning. Often her mother sang; and sometimes, when Engele was very much tired, her father would take his violin out of its case, to play to her and her mother while she rested.

Engele lived in a little German city; I have forgotten its name, but you might find it on the map, because there is a university in it; if I remember the name I'll tell you. She had no companions except her parents

and her old grandmother, and the student Berthold, who lodged at her grandmother's. Berthold was a great friend of her father's, and used often to come to his studio, and that made her feel always at home with him.

One day Engele heard her parents talking about her father's grand picture which he had been many years in painting, and in which she herself had been the model of the new-born Jesus, and then, before the picture was finished, of the eldest of the little angels, as well as of the intermediate ones. She heard them talking about how this picture was gone somewhere, a long way off, for the king to see; and perhaps it would get a gold medal; and if the king bought it, then her father would be rich, and would be able to take them all to Italy for him to study beautiful pictures there. Engele listened to all this, and because she saw that her parents were anxious about the picture, she prayed every night when she went to bed, that God would make the great people admire her father's picture; but she prayed in such a low whisper, that nobody knew anything about it.

a baby might come into the house for her father to make lovely pictures with.

The painter and his wife were very cheerful people; there was a deal of love and joy in their house; but for all that at the bottom of her heart Engele was sad. She wished so much for a baby that her father might paint it. She was surprised, after what she had heard her father say, that he should still want her as much as ever as a model; but though now he never painted her as a baby, still she came into every one of his pictures; she was glad of that, glad that she could be useful in any way; but still she was sorry that she could not be that which he wanted most.

Engele had, as we said, a grandmother. She lived just at the other end of the little city, so that Engele had to go from one city gate to the other to visit her. The only times that Engele went out a-visiting was to her grandmother. Her grandmother was lame, and often had the toothache, so she walked with a stick, and always had a handkerchief tied under her chin and on the top of her head to keep her jaws warm.

model very much; Engele, you see, gets too big for that!"

The student was smoking with a long pipe, on the bole of which was painted a beautiful copy of one of Paul's most beautiful pictures—Mary and Jesus—the models of which had been his own wife and Engele. Engele's eyes were fixed on this as the grandmother spoke. The student said nothing, for he was in a pleasant dream over the fumes of his tobacco; but Engele lost not a word. Was there really, then, a baby coming for her father to paint? It was a strange thought; she could not get it out of her head all day; but she said nothing to any one.

When she got home she could not help looking at all her father's pictures that had young children in them. Such an indescribable love sprang up in her heart for the baby that was coming, and that would be like these, that it seemed to her as if she were already possessed of a great treasure.

Her father had a very fine picture in hand; but as yet it was only an outline car-

lay on her mother's knee, and which he was painting; it was such a lovely dream, that she was quite sorry when her father woke her. He woke her very early; he told her to get up and dress herself, and go to spend the day with the old grandmother; he helped her to dress; he plaited her long thick hair, and tied it like a coronet round her head; he put on her little old-fashioned grey woollen frock, with its long waist and full skirts; pinned a little red shawl over her shoulders, and, opening the door which led into the street, told her to go straight to her grandmother's, and he would fetch her in the evening.

Engele had no bonnet on, because she never wore one; nobody but the rich did in that part of Germany, and her family were not rich, so neither she nor her mother wore bonnets. Engele walked all through the city, wondering why she must go so early to her grandmother. It was so early in the morning, that the watchman was only just coming out of the church, in the tower of which he had been keeping watch all night. He nodded kindly to Engele as she passed,

And ever, as she went along,
The desert beasts grew tame;
And man, the savage, dyed with blood,
The merciful became.

Now, if you will attend to me,
I will in order tell
The history of this little child,
And what to her befel.

No friend at all had Marien,
And at the break of day,
In a lonesome place within the world,
In quiet thought she lay.

The stars were lost in coming morn,
The moon was pale and dim,
And the golden sun was rising
Over the ocean's rim.

With upturned eye lay Marien;—
"And I am alone," said she,
"Though the blackbird and the nightingale
Sing in the forest tree:

"Though the weak woodland creatures
Come to me when I call,
And eat their food from out my hand;
And I am loved by all:

Through the wood went Marien,
The thick wood and the green;
And not far had she travelled ere
A cruel sight was seen.

Under the green and leafy boughs
Where singing birds were set;
At strife about their heritage,
Two ruffian brothers met.

"Thou shalt not of our father's land,"
The elder said, "have part!"
The younger brother spoke no word,
But stabbed him to the heart.

Then deep into the forest dark
With desperate speed he ran,
And gentle Marien stood beside
The bleeding, murdered man.

With pitying tears that would not cease,
She washed his wounded side,
And prayed him to have faith in Him
Who for the sinner died.

But no sign made the murdered man,
There stiff in death he lay;—
And Marien through the forest wild
Went mourning on her way.

Ere long, as she went wandering on,
She came to where there sat,
With folded arms upon her breast,
A woman desolate.

Pale was she as the marble stone,
And steadfast was her eye;
She sat enchained, as in a trance,
By her great misery.

"What ails thee, mother?" Marien said,
In a gentle voice and sweet;
"What aileth thee, my mother?"
And knelt down at her feet.

"What aileth thee, my mother?"
Kind Marien still did say:
And those two words, *my mother*,
To the lone heart found their way.

As one who wakeneth in amaze,
She quickly raised her head;—
And "Who is't calls me mother?"
Said she, "my child is dead!"

"He was the last of seven sons—
He is dead—I have none other;—
This is the day they bury him;—
Who is it calls me mother?"

"'Tis I," said gentle Marien,
"Dear soul be comforted!"
But the woman only wrung her hands,
And cried, "My son is dead!"

"Be comforted," said Marien,
And then she sweetly spake
Of Jesus Christ, and how he came
The sting from death to take.

She told of all his life-long love,
His soul by suffering tried:
And how at last his mother stood
To see him crucified.

Of the disciples' broken hearts
She told, of pangs and pain;
Of Mary at the sepulchre,
And Christ arisen again.

"Then sorrow not," she said, "as though
Thou wert of all bereft;
For still though thy beloved are not,
This blessed faith is left,

"That when thy dream of life is o'er
Thou shalt embrace thy seven,
More beautiful than earthly sons,
With our dear Lord in heaven!"

PART II.

NOW Marien in the woman's house
Abode a little space,
And comfort to the mother came;
And a dear daughter's place
Had Marien in the woman's heart,
Doing the while a daughter's part.

But now 't was time that she must go,
For Marien's duty was not there,
Now grief was past and woe was done;
So with the rising of the sun,
She rose up forth to fare.

"Nay, bide with me," the woman said,
"Or, if as thou dost say,
Duty forbids that this may be,
I a day's journey go with thee,
To speed thee on the way."

So forth the loving pair set out,
The woman and the child;
And first they crossed the desert heath,
And then the mountains wild.

And in the woman's arms she lay
That night within the forest hoar,
And the next morn with loving heart,
They said farewell, as those who part
To meet on earth no more.

Upon her way went Marien,
From morn till set of day,
And the peace of God that passeth word,
Upon her spirit lay;
And oftentimes she sang aloud
As she went on her way.

The joyfulest song sang Marien
That e'er left human tongue;
The very birds were mute to hear
The holy words she sung.

But now the darksome night came on,
And Marien lay her down
Within a little way-side cave,
On mosses green and brown.

And in the deepest hush of night
Rude robbers entered in;
And first they ate and drank, then rose
To do a deed of sin.

For with them was a feeble man,
Whom they had robbed, and they
Here came to foully murder him,
And hide him from the day.

Up from her bed sprang Marien,
With heavenly power endued;
And in her glorious innocence,
Stood 'mong the robbers rude.

"Ye shall not take the life of man!"
Spake Marien low and sweet;
"For this will God take strict account,
Before his judgment seat!"

Out from the cave the robbers fled,
For they believed there stood,
A spirit stern and beautiful,
Not aught of flesh and blood.

And two from out the robber-band
Thenceforward did repent,
And lived two humble Christian men,
On righteous deeds intent.

When from the cave the robber-band
Had fled, the aged man
Rose from the floor where he was laid,
And marvelling much, began:

PART III.

THROUGH the wild wood went Marien,
For many a weary day;
Her food the forest-fruits, and on
The forest-turf she lay.

The wildern wood was skirted
By moorlands dry and brown;
And after them came Marien
Into a little town.

At entrance of the little town
A cross stood by the way,
A rude stone cross, and there she knelt
A little prayer to say.

Then on the stone steps sate her down;
And soon beside her crept,
A pale child with a clasped book,
And all the while she wept.

"Why weep you, child," asked Marien,
"What troubleth you so sore?"
At these words spoken tenderly,
The child wept more and more.

"I have not heard," at length he said,
"Kind words this many a year,
My mother is dead—and my father
Is a hard man and severe.

"I sit in corners of the house
Where none can see me weep;
And in the quiet of the day
'T is here I often creep.

"The kid leaps by his mother's side,
The singing birds are glad:
But when I play me in the sun,
My heart is ever sad.

"They say this blessed book can heal
All trouble, and therefore
All day I keep it in my sight;
I lay it 'neath my head at night,
But it doth bring no cure to me:—
I know not what the cause may be
For I of learning have no store!"

Thereat, like to a broken flower
The child drooped down his head;
Then Marien took the clasped book
And of the Saviour read.

She read of him the humble child
Of poverty and scorn;
How holy angels sang for him
The night that he was born.

How blessed angels came from heaven
To hail that Christmas night
And shepherd people with their flocks
Beheld the glorious sight.

Then read she how a growing youth,
His parents he obeyed,
And served with unrepining will
St. Joseph at his trade.

Then how he grew to man's estate
And wandered up and down,
Preaching upon the lone sea-side,
And in the busy town.

Of all his tenderness, his love,
Page after page she read;
How he made whole the sick, the maimed,
And how he raised the dead.

And how he loved the children small,
Even of low degree;
And how he blessed them o'er and o'er,
And set them on his knee.

Anon his little head dropped low,
And his white lips 'gan to say,
"Oh kiss me gentle one, for now
Even I am called away—
The blessed mother's voice I hear,
It calleth me away!"

So died the child;—and Marien laid
His meek arms on his breast.
With the claspèd book between his hands;—
Thus God had given him rest!

And Marien, weeping holy tears,
Sate down beside the dead,
And slept that night within the church,
As in a kingly bed.

Scarce from the church had Marien passed,
When came the father there,
As was his wont, though fierce and bad,
To say a morning prayer.

Not seven paces had he gone,
When, heart-struck, he surveyed
Before his feet, that little child
In his dead beauty laid.

At once as by a lightning stroke
His softened soul was torn

And now she soothed a dying wretch;
Then for another ran to fetch
Water; and every day
Did deeds of mercy, good and mild:—
Thus journeyed on the pitying child.

On went she,—and as she went on,
Men grew ashamed of blood,
So beautiful did mercy seem;
And the wild soldier rude
Slunk back as slinks a noisome beast;
And to their homes once more
Came mothers with their little ones;
And old men, weak and hoar,
Sate in the sun as they had wont,
Unfearing at their door.

On went the child,—and as she went,
Within the Baron's hall,
Were hung up helm and mail and sword,
To rust upon the wall.

On went she,—and the poets sung
No longer war's acclaim,
But holy hymns of love and joy,
To hail her as she came.

Into her face the proud man looked,
Amazed at what he heard;
Then turned unto his charts again,
And answered never a word.

Another land among the hills
He measured with his eye;
"'Tis a stern land," said Marien,
"A land of liberty!

"There fled the Christians in old time,
And built their churches there;
The bells upon the Sabbath morn
Call all that land to prayer.

"Would'st thou God's people tribulate?
A cursed thing it were
To make that Christian land of love
A bloody sepulchre!"
The proud man turned him round about
And fiercely gazed at her.

"Rivers of blood have flowed for thee!"
Unblenching Marien said,
"And many a Christian land hast thou
With Christian blood made red.

"Up, sin no more! 'Tis coming now,
The day thou canst not flee,