

THE WAY TO WIN.

'I wish I could win one!' a lassie was sighing,
When sitting quite still in a meadow one day,
And thinking of prizes not won without trying--
Not won by mere wishing as time slips away.

And as she sat wishing she heard a hen clucking;
She lifted her eyes and that hen she could see,
And soon it was rapidly scratching and chucking--
As gay and as busy and glad as could be.

She watched how it struggled to upturn a treasure,
A thing it was wishing for, something to eat,
A worm to be dug for with patience and pleasure!
'Twas found, and it gave Henny-Penny a treat!

That worm the hen wished for she could not have eaten
Unless she had scratched it right up from the ground;
And Mabel had seen that the hen was not beaten--
By carefully working, the prize had been found.

So Mabel thought quietly over the matter,
And learnt the good lesson, 'No prize can be won
By thinking and wishing, by waiting and chatter!'
And soon she jumped up and to work she begun.

D. H.

THE NAUGHTY KITTENS.

'Look at old Puss,' the Kittens said,
'He's fast asleep, he nods his head;
How dull and stupid it must be
To be as slow and old as he!
He lies and sleeps there in the sun,
And does not try to play or run;
Creep up and gives him just a pat--
He ought to run, he gets so fat!'

But Puss awoke. 'Hullo,' said he,
'You think to play your tricks on me?
I know I'm old, I'm glad I'm fat--
My dear, kind mistress sees to that;
I scare the birds while lying here--
They dare not come when I am near,
To steal my mistress's nice fruit;
My time to some good use is put.

'But you! what have you done to-day,
Except to romp and run and play?'
The Kittens, looking quite subdued,

Said, 'We are sorry we were rude.'
'Well then, this time I let you go,'
Old Puss replied, 'for now you know
That older folk are wiser far
Than silly little kittens are.'

With this remark Puss walked away
And left the Kittens to their play.
I'm glad to say they ne'er forgot
The lesson that they had been taught,
And from that day tried hard to be
From naughty, idle ways quite free;
In fact they now behave so well
That I have nothing more to tell.

C. D. B.

WAITING.

In London town the streets are gay,
And crowds go quickly by,
It is a glorious summer day,
But I sit here and sigh;
The pavement's hot, my feet are sore,
Yet I must wait outside the door.

I cannot bear to sit out here,
But I am tied up fast,
I saw my master disappear,
But I could not get past;
'No dogs allowed inside this shop'
They said, so here I have to stop.

Ah! here he is, and off we go!
'Tis jolly to be free!
I bark, and do my best to show,
As he caresses me,
How much I love him, for to part
From him I know would break my heart.

C. D. B

THE FRIENDLY LIGHT.

Wildly the wind doth rage,
Loudly the waters roar,
And anxious are the hearts of those
That wait upon the shore,
Till through the darkness of the night
The lighthouse sends its friendly light.

Warning and guiding light,
It shines across the bay.
And helps the sailor steer his course
Till safely on the way:
The harbour gained, and home once more,
He greets his loved ones on the shore.

C. D. B.

MY FRIEND.

Who is my friend? Not he who seeks
By flattery to sway;
Who, whether I be good or bad,
Gives me his praise alway.

Who is my friend? Not he who frowns
On me when I am wrong,
But never gives encouragement
To make me glad and strong.

Who is my friend? 'Tis he who makes
My highest good his aim;
Whose love sincere is shown alike
In praise or wholesome blame.

E. DYKE.

TAKE CARE OF THE DAYS.

The little days come, one by one,
And smile into our face;
Each hath its dawn and set of sun,
Each hath its little place.

Then scorn them not, but use them well,
Treat each one as a friend;
Neglect them not! We cannot tell
How soon our days may end.

Heed not the years! Make every day
With love and labour fair;
The years, then, as they roll away,
Will need no further care.

E. D.

GOOD-NIGHT, GOOD-DAY!

We got up to welcome the swallows

This morning as soon as the sun;
Then over the hills and the hollows
We went for a beautiful run.
The daisies were ready to meet us--
All over the meadows they grew;
But now we must say:
'Good-night, O good-day!
We've been very happy with you.'

We sang with the busy bees humming
O'er blossoms too bright to forget,
And when the soft breezes were coming
We saw the grass bow as they met.
Oh, may all the hearts that have known you
Now beat with a pleasure like ours,
And cheerfully say:
'Good-night, O good-day!
And thank you for sunshine and flowers.'

JOHN LEA.

Sir Walter Scott was so impressed with this marvel of Nature, Fingal's Cave Staffa, that he wrote:

'Where, as to shame the temples decked
By skill of earthly architect,
Nature herself it seemed would raise
A Minster to her Maker's praise.'

MY GARDEN CONCERT.

I hear a splendid concert in my garden every day,
When the breezes find by grove and lawn some instrument to play;
They shake the shiny laurel with the clatter of the 'bones,'
And from the lofty sycamore draw deeper 'cello tones,
And giving thus the signal that the concert should begin,
The brook beside the pebbled path strikes up its mandoline.

Then all the garden wakes to sound, for not a bird is mute:
The robin pipes the piccolo; the blackbird plays the flute;
While high upon a cedar-top a thrush with bubbling throat
Lifts up to this accompaniment her clear soprano note.

Then by-and-by there softly sounds, beside some flowering tree
The oboe of the dancing gnat, the cornet of the bee.
Such tiny notes--and yet with ease their cadence I can trace,
While over-head some passing rook puts in his noisy bass,
Or from a green and shady copse, a daisied field away,
I hear the jarring discords of a magpie and a jay.

The Wind conducts the orchestra, and as he beats the time
The flood of music sinks and swells in melody sublime;
Till, when the darkness deepens and the sun sets in the West,

They all put up their instruments and settle down to rest;
And when I seek my slumber, like the daisy or the bird,
My rest is all the better for the concert I have heard.

BOUQUETS.

Buttercups and daisies,
Violets and May,
Pimpernels and cowslips,
Make a sweet bouquet.
Not a rose among them;
Nought the garden yields.
Yet a lot of beauty
Taken from the fields,
Gathered in the sunshine,
Through the happy hours--
What a sweet bouquet, dears,
Made of simple flowers!

Patience and forgiveness,
Kindness to the weak;
Willing in our labour
All the happy week;
No exalted actions
Striving after praise,
Yet a lot of beauty
From life's lowly ways,
Gathered through the day, dear,
By the heart that heeds--
What a sweet bouquet, dear!
Made of simple deeds.

J. L.

THE STARTLED HARES.

Four hares were at dinner one day--
The sweetest of herbage was theirs--
And as they all nibbled away
They seemed to be rid of their cares;
For the grass was so green and the sky was so blue,
They had plenty to eat and nothing to do.

The sun shone so brightly that day,
They did not think danger was near;
The hunters and dogs were away,
There was nothing around to cause fear.
When, alas! from the sky there dropped with a plump,
A something which made their poor hearts give a jump.

[Illustration:

"After all, I will wait--

I must hurry off home, it is getting quite late!"]

Poor Fred was knocked backward at once,
And Charlie fell flat on the ground,
While Peter stretched out his long legs
And fled without making a sound;
But Tom, who was boastful, cried, 'Stop! Don't you see,
It is only a kite from its string broken free!

'Just let me catch hold of that boy,
I'll give him a box on the ear--
I'll teach him to fly his old kite
Beside us, to cause us such fear....
Why, there is the boy! After all, I will wait--
I must hurry off home, it is getting quite late!'

Then off with a rush went brave Tom,
His heart beating loud with dismay;
While Charlie, and Peter, and Fred
Cried, 'Isn't Tom valiant to-day?'
And the boy shook with laughter to see Tom in flight,
For he knew that fine words never drive away fright!

D. B. M.

THE JEALOUS KITTENS.

When Jack and Tom were little kits,
No settled home had they;
But Mother found within the barn
A hamper full of hay,
And there she took her children two,
And told them what they ought to do.

She said, 'Now, darlings, make no noise,
And if you do no harm,
And learn your business, you will live
In comfort at the farm.
Just catch a mouse--for that's your trade--
And then your fortune will be made.'

Now, when the kits were left alone
They soon began to play,
For neither cats nor children can
Be busy all the day;
But as they tossed the hay about,
A little mouse came creeping out!

'Look! look!' cried Jack, with eager eyes.
'I see!' cried Tom, 'I see!
You go and seek another mouse,
And leave this mouse to me.'
'Indeed, I won't!' cried Jack at once;
'You surely take me for a dunce!

'That mouse is mine--I saw it first;
So, Tom, away you go,
And let me tackle it at once,
And lay the rascal low.'
But naughty Tom would not submit;
He said, 'It's mine--I'll capture it.'

But while they quarrelled loud and long,
They quite forgot their prey,
And when at last they made it up
Miss Mouse had slipped away--
For if you fight and disagree,
You ne'er will catch the enemy.

OUR PUSS.

She came with the evening shades,
At the close of a winter day,
And her manner implied,
As she trotted inside,
'I am here, and have come to stay.'

Where she came from nobody knows,
And no one has claimed her yet;
But she made so free,
It was easy to see
That she had been somebody's pet.

Now the homeless waif on our hearth
Gives a homelike look to the place;
With her warm grey fur,
And her satisfied purr,
And content in her comely face.

She has all the craft of her race,
Though she does not look like a thief,
For she climbed of late
Up to Charlie's plate,
And calmly ate some of his beef!

But we all have our little faults,
And well will it be with us
If, when ruin impends,
We can win new friends,
Like our gentle and brave stray puss.

TRAVELLERS' TALES.

They say there is a country where snowstorms never fall,
And sliding is a game they never knew:
They never saw a lake
Paved with ice that wouldn't break--

I would rather stay in England, wouldn't you?

They say there is a country where the bright sun never sets,
But still continues shining all night through;
And you needn't go to bed,
For there's always light o'er head--
That's a country I should like, wouldn't you?

They say there is a country where the people all talk French--
I can't imagine what they ever do!
For who amid their chatter
Could understand such patter?
I should answer 'Speak in English,' wouldn't you?

They say there is a country where the women cannot walk,
And everything is made out of bamboo,
And the people's eyes are wee,
And they live on rice and tea--
I should like to go and see them, wouldn't you?

They say there is a country where the elephants are wild,
And never even heard about our Zoo;
And through the woods they roam
Like gentlemen at home--
I should like to go and see them, wouldn't you?

F. W. H.

THE BAT AND THE BALL.

'I'm quite knocked up!' exclaimed the Ball,
While mounting to the skies;
'I know I shall have such a fall
After this dreadful rise.
I speak no ill of any one,
However they provoke,
But many things the Bat has done
Are something past a joke.'

'Just watch that Ball, how high he goes,'
The Bat exclaimed with glee,
'But yet he never says he owes
His rise in life to me.
No, no, that's not his way at all;
And though I do my best,
His graceless growls at every fall
Are something past a jest.'

JOHN LEA.

INVITATIONS.

The daffodils are nodding;
There's a swaying of the trees;
The playroom window rattles
To the fragrant summer breeze.
There is sunshine in the garden,
And the bees are all a-hum.
Oh, hark, the invitation:
'You must come, come, come!'

The butterfly is glancing
On his wings of golden hue;
Ah! see where now he loiters
O'er that bed of pansies blue;
A moment since he hovered
At this very window-pane,
To see if we were coming
To the garden and the lane.

Hats! hats! for those who want them;
Boots! boots!--oh, lace them, do!
Fling open doors and windows,
To let the sunshine through!
When birds and bees and blossoms
Invite us out to play,
Oh, who could well refuse them
Upon so bright a day?

JOHN LEA.

THE PIONEERS.

A crocus peeped out from its snow-covered bed,
In a wood where the red robins sing,
And sighed, 'I could fancy, where brown leaves are spread
I heard the first footfall of Spring.'

And e'en while it spoke, from a tree-top above
There fluttered the song of the Wind:
'I come from the south, with a message of love,
And the Spring follows closely behind.'

Then while the soft echo was stealing along,
The snow melted gently away,
And over the meadow a bee's early song
Told stories of April and May.

The bluebell and primrose are blossoming fast,
And see, where the snow-drifts still cling,
The Sun his rich mantle has gallantly cast
At the feet of her Majesty, Spring.

TOO CLEVER.

Jim Brown stood at the farmer's door--
'I want a job,' he said.
'Well, lad, have you done aught before?'
But Jim just shook his head;
An idler boy he'd always been
Than any in the village seen.

'Well, tell me now, what can you do?'
'Oh, anything,' said Jim.
'Oh, anything!' said Farmer Grey;
Then looking hard at him--
'Well, drive these pigs to neighbour Pratt--
'Tis time they went, they're prime and fat.'

Jim drove the pigs from out the yard,
But, ere they'd gone a mile,
One pig went squealing down the road,
And one towards a stile;
And while Jim pondered what to do,
The naughty pig just wriggled through.

Just then the farmer chanced to pass;
'Hullo!' said he, 'what's wrong?'
And when he saw Jim's downcast face,
He laughed both loud and long.
'My lad,' said he, with knowing wink,
'You're not as clever as you think.'

THE GREAT PICTURE BOOK.

The world's a pleasant picture-book,
Wherein my eyes may daily look,
And see the things set there to please:
Mountains and valleys, rocks and trees.

Soft rivers where the sunbeams play;
The blue sky spread far, far away;
Bright flowers that blossom at my feet,
The tender grass, the ripened wheat.

Though I am young, I may grow wise
When on this book I turn my eyes,
And, as I look, with reverence see
The pictures painted there for me.

'Tis God Who made this book so fair,
Who gave the colours that are there;
Who paints the daisies red and white,
And in the sky sets stars at night.

FRANK ELLIS.

THE WEATHER SPRITES.

LAST NIGHT.

The Weather Sprites in slumber lie,
'Tis plain as plain can be,
For clouds have hidden all the sky--
A mist is on the sea,
They laid the brooms of wind away
Before the day was done,
And left a curtain, dull and grey,
To hide the setting sun.

'Wake, Weather Sprites! oh, wake again!
You slumber all too soon,
And, look you, drawn by imps of rain
A ring is round the moon.
With all your might rub out the ring,
Mop all this rain away,
For such a night can only bring
An even duller day.'

THIS MORNING.

Then through the darkness, ere I slept,
I heard them passing by;
Across the roof their brushes swept,
Then cleared the misty sky.
They mopped away with all their might,
And dried the garden soon;
While busy dusters rubbed from sight
The ring around the moon.

And as I throw the shutter wide,
And look out at the dawn,
The garden paths are neatly dried,
And all the clouds are gone.
But hark, where in the morning light
Yon chestnut lifts its dome,
I hear the last, last Weather Sprite
Dragging her broomstick home.

TOO TEMPTING TO BE LOST.

A fox one day had left his cosy den,
And wandered forth amid the haunts of men.
What did he want? Of course he wanted food--
A tender duck, or something quite as good;
But though he wandered far and wandered near,
No duckling could he see his heart to cheer.

Through fields and copses did the poor fox go,
With hungry longings and a heart of woe.

Thought he, 'It's very plain that dainty food
I cannot find to-day; still, something good
May yet turn up. But stay! what's that I see
Hanging asleep upon the old ash-tree?

'I do declare the creature is a crow--
Not very tempting to the taste, I know;
But still, if nothing better can be had,
Perhaps it may not taste so very bad.
So up at once he jumped, and seized the bird,
But how it tasted--well, I've never heard!

M. K.

[Illustration: A Corner of Hyde Park.]

WHAT AM I?

No one can be pleased with me,
I am dark and dull to see;
Those whom money troubles tease
Hate me, for I spoil their ease.

Welsh am I, and English too,
Scottish, in another view;
Wide and narrow, small and great,
Dreary, too, and desolate.

Let him think of me, who eats
Marmalade, and other sweets;
Full of work am I, and wealth,
Though too closely packed for health.

(A bank vault)

ONE AND ONE MAKE TWO.

As through the busy world you go,
Remember this is true,
That though one seems a little thing,
Yet one and one make two.

The task one could not do alone,
Is done with help from you,
For though you are a little one,
Yet one and one make two.

The thread that's rolled the reel around,
That baby's hands can break,
When with it other threads are bound,
The strongest rope doth make.

The rope thrown by some helping hand,

And drawn the waters through,
May bring a drowning man to land:--
So one and one make two.

The minutes grow into the hours,
The hours into the day,
The days to weeks, to months, to years,
And thus time flies away.

And deeds of good by children done,
Though small they seem to you,
May grow into a mighty sum,
For one and one make two.

C. D. BOGLE.

THE TRUMPET AND THE DRUM.

Said the Trumpet to the Drum:
'Less noise, good fellow! come!
For nobody can hear
My voice, when you are near.'

'Boom! boom!' the Drum replied,
'The fault is on your side;
You blow with such a sound
That my poor voice is drowned.'

And after that, all day
They blew and boomed away,
In contest so absurd
That neither could be heard.

Now, when you want to speak,
O children, never seek
To drown in noisy tone
All voices but your own;
But learn to shun in life
The Drum and Trumpet's strife.

MY PICTURE-BOOK.

Oh, what a pretty scene is this,
Of meadow, hill, and brook,
I wish that I was small enough
To get inside the book.
Upon this stream I'd launch my boat;
I'd pluck this willow wand;
Then round that reedy curve I'd float,
And past the mill beyond--
If I were only small enough.

Then where the meadows are so green
I'd moor my boat again,
And overtake that little boy
Who's trotting down the lane.
I'd ask him to be friends with me,
I'd take him by the hand,
And through my pretty picture we
Would go to fairy-land--
If I were only small enough.

DON'T BEGIN.

Two little dogs, one summer's day,
Who tired of play had grown,
Discovered lying in their way
A most attractive bone.

'I saw it first--'tis mine--let go!
The one in anger cried;
'I shan't, how dare you say 'tis so,'
The other one replied.

And so no doubt they wrangled on,
Although I cannot tell
Where those two little dogs have gone,
Or how the fight befell.

But quarrels, as we know, take two,
And some one must give in,
So far the wisest thing to do
Is simply--don't begin.

C. D. B.

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