

eBook

The Pearl Story Book

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The Pearl Story Book

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How little Karen was adopted by a lady, and how she came by her red shoes

CHAPTER SECOND.

Karen grows vain of her red shoes, and is forced to dance over the fields, across the bridges, and everywhere

CHAPTER THIRD.

How Karen tried to go to church again, how she prayed and was sorry, and how an angel came to comfort her, and how happy she became

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PREFACE.

* * * * *

One evening---it was winter, and the hills and fields were covered with snow, but the moon shone bright on the frosty windows, and the fire was burning cheerfully in the grate; it was such an evening when one likes to enjoy the pleasures of a song or story. You may imagine yourselves on such an evening seated around the table, something like the knights of old, whose pleasure it was to relate their wonderful deeds of arms, when they returned from the "*Holy Land*," or from some noble deed of knightly prowess; but the stories you shall hear are very different from those, as the picture you see before you indicates. They are chiefly stories for children, and are such as relate more particularly to the affections of the heart. They may be "*Fairy Tales*," or they may be household narratives of facts, such as occur in the every-day life of a child. If the moral be good and pure, and the mind interested and made better, the end is accomplished.

THE TURTLE-DOVES OF CARMEL.

BY MARY HOWITT.

* * * * *

CHAPTER FIRST.

ABOUT A YOUNG ENGLISH MUSICIAN, AND HOW HE CAME TO SPEND THE WINTER AT MOUNT CARMEL.

A great many turtle-doves lived about Mount Carmel, and there were orange-trees and cypresses there, and among these the doves lived all the winter. They had broods early in the year, and towards the end of March, or the beginning of April, they set off like great gentlefolks, to spend "the season" near London. All last winter a young English musician, who was very pale and thin, lived with the monks in the monastery on Mount Carmel. He went to Syria because when a child he had loved so to hear his mother read in the Bible about Elijah and Elisha on Mount Carmel. And he used to think then that if ever he was rich, he would go and see all the wonderful places mentioned in the Bible.

But he never was rich, and yet he came here. He was very pale, and had large and beautiful but sorrowful eyes. He took a violin with him to Mount Carmel; it was the greatest treasure he had on earth, and he played the most wonderful things on this violin that ever were heard, and everybody who heard it said that he was a great musician. In the winters he suffered very 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 of Mount Carmel, among the grave old monks.

There was one little old monk, a 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; and the brother monks had taken 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.

[Illustration]

The young man often and often stood at the window, and looked out upon the sea, and down into the cypress-trees, among the thick branches of which he heard the doves cooing. He loved to hear them coo, 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 of the day down from his window to where the birds sat; it had a strange charm for the doves, they thought it was some new kind of nightingale come down from heaven. The little old monk sat in his 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 from heaven, and 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 rightly understand. He was, as you know, a very old man, the oldest in all the monastery.

[Illustration]

CHAPTER SECOND.

ABOUT THE KIND OLD MONK AND THE MUSICIAN, AND ABOUT THE TURTLE-DOVES WHO MADE THEIR NEST NEAR HIS WINDOW.

Heavenly music from the young man's room was heard every day;---finer and finer it sounded. 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 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 down into the cypress-tree where 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, which was a great happiness for them both. The musician loved the old monk very much, and often, when he played, he desired to pour bright and comfortable thoughts into his innocent soul.

It was the end of March; the turtle-doves were all preparing for their flight to England; the pair that had built their nest under the musician's window had a home in some quiet woods in Surrey, where it was delightfully mild and pleasant even in winter, but they never were there in winter, although the 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, and in summer there were hundreds and hundreds of glow-worms, and the old tree-trunks were wreathed with ivy and honeysuckle. It was a very pleasant place, and near to it a poet's children were born; they had wandered in its wilds, had gathered its flowers, and admired its glow-worms, and listened to the turtle-doves, when they were very young; now, however, their home was near London; they only went to Winterdown about once a year for a great holiday. The old turtle-doves talked about the poet's children in Winterdown, and the young doves fancied that they lived there always.

[Illustration: *The poet's children.*]

It was now the time for them to set off on their long journey; the old doves had exercised their young ones, and they were sure that they could perform the journey. Next morning early they were to set off.

All night there was a light burning in the young musician's chamber, and towards morning the most heavenly music sounded from the window, which the old monk had opened a little, a very little, for fresh air, because his young friend had complained of the room being close and hot. The sound awoke the doves; and they listened to what they still thought a glorious bird. The little old man sat with his feeble hands together, and his head raised; it was the first time for years that he had ever sat so; the young man played, and there was a heavenly joy in his soul; he knew not whether he was in heaven or earth; all his pain was gone. It was a blissful moment; the next, and all was still in the chamber---wonderfully still. The lamp continued burning, a soft breeze blew in from the half-opened window, and just stirred the little old man's Carmelite frock, and lifted the young man's dark locks, but they neither of them moved.

"That glorious bird has done his singing for this morning," said the old doves; "he will now sleep---let us set off; all our friends and neighbors are off already; we have a long journey before us." The parent doves spread their wings; they and their elder ones were away, but the younger stayed as if entranced in the nest; he could think of nothing but the glorious bird that had just been singing: his family wheeled round the cypress, and then returned for him; they bade him come, for it was late. The sun was rising above the sea, and all the doves of Carmel were ready for flight. The younger dove then spread its wings also for this long journey, bearing with him still the remembrance of that thrilling music which affected him so greatly.

The turtle-doves went forth on their long journey. The young musician and the little old monk had started before them on one much longer.

[Illustration]

THE DYING CHILD

BY HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

Mother, I'm tired, and I would fain be sleeping;
Let me repose upon thy bosom sick;
But promise me that thou wilt leave off weeping,
Because thy tears fall hot upon my cheek.

Here it is cold: the tempest raveth madly;
But in my dreams all is so wondrous bright;
I see the angel-children smiling gladly,
When from my weary eyes I shut out light.

Mother, one stands beside me now! and, listen!
Dost thou not hear the music's sweet accord?
See how his white wings beautifully glisten?
Surely those wings were given him by the Lord!

Green, gold, and red, are floating all around me;
They are the flowers the angel scattereth.
Should I have also wings while life has bound me?
Or, mother, are they given alone in death?

Why dost thou clasp me as if I were going?
Why dost thou press thy cheek so unto mine?

Thy cheek is hot, and yet thy tears are flowing!
I will, dear mother, will be always thine!

Do not sigh thus---it marreth my reposing;
But if thou weep, then I must weep with thee!
Ah, I am tired---my weary eyes are closing---
Look, mother, look! the angel kisseth me!

[Illustration]

FRIGHTENED BY A COW.

I.

One morning Miss Lucy,
As oft-times before,
Went out in the fields
With maid Ellenore:

II.

The sun shone so bright,
And the air was so still;
Not a breath could be raised
To turn the old mill.

III.

They walked through the fields
All sprinkled with dew,
Where the bright yellow flowers
Gave a charm to the view;

IV.

The birds sang so gayly
To bless the bright day,
And sweetly the baby
Talked and laughed by the way.

V.

Now Lucy knew well
There was naught to alarm---
Old Brindle was gentle,
And would do her no harm.

VI.

But the cow raised her head
And looked round so bold,
That she started and shrieked,
And made Ellenore scold.

VII.

Then the man at the mill
Rushed out in a fright,
And seeing Miss Lucy
All trembling and white,

[Illustration: *Frightened by A cow.*]

VIII.

Said, "Have courage, young lady!
Pray cease your alarm;
Cows never will hurt you,
If you do them no harm."

IX.

Now the baby he prattled,
And begged for a ride;
He clapped his hands loudly,
And "Come, Mooly!" he cried;

X.

"Let me ride on your back
O'er the green fields so bright,
Where the busy bees hum---
Dear Mooly, you might.

XI.

"We'll ride o'er the hills
Where the lofty pines grow,
And through the green lanes
Of hawthorn we'll go;

XII.

"We'll ride through the groves
Where the happy birds play,
And sing a glad song
Of praise by the way."

THE RED SHOES.

BY HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN, TRANSLATED BY MARY HOWITT.

* * * * *

CHAPTER FIRST.

HOW LITTLE KAREN WAS ADOPTED BY A LADY, AND HOW SHE CAME BY HER RED SHOES.

There was once a little girl who was very pretty and delicate, but in the summer she was obliged to run about with bare feet, she was so poor, and in the winter to wear large wooden shoes, which made her little instep quite red, and that looked so dangerous!

In the middle of the village lived old mother Shoemaker, and she sat and sewed together, as well as she could, a little pair of shoes out of red cloth; they were very clumsy, but it was a kind thought,---they were meant for the little girl.

The little girl was called Karen. On the very day her mother was buried Karen received the red shoes, and wore them for the first time. They were certainly not intended for mourning, but she had no others, and with stockingless feet she followed the poor straw coffin in them to the grave.

Suddenly an old carriage drove up, and a large old lady sat in it; she looked at the little girl, felt compassion for her, and then said to the clergyman---

"Here, give me that little girl, I will adopt her!"

Karen believed all this happened on account of her red shoes, but the old lady thought they were horrible, and so they were burnt; but Karen was otherwise nicely clothed, and besides, had a pretty doll charmingly dressed in green.

[Illustration: *Karen with her doll.*]

She must now learn to read and sew; and people said she was a nice little girl; but the looking-glass said, "Thou art more than nice, thou art beautiful!"

Now the queen once travelled through the land, and she had a daughter with her, and this little daughter was a princess; and people streamed to the castle, and Karen was there also, and the little princess stood in her fine white dress, in a window, and let herself be stared at: she had neither a train nor a golden crown, but splendid red morocco shoes. They were certainly far handsomer than those mother Shoemaker had made.

Nothing in the world can compare with red shoes, thought Karen, and she greatly desired them.

* * * * *

Now Karen was old enough to be *confirmed* by the bishop, and that she might be ready to go to the church, the old lady had new clothes made for her, and took her to the rich shoemaker's in the city to select some shoes. This took place in his store, where stood large glass cases, filled with elegant shoes and brilliant boots. All this looked charming, but the old lady could not see well, and so had no pleasure in looking at them. In the midst of these shoes stood a pair of red ones just like those the little princess had worn. How beautiful they were! The shoemaker said also that they had been

made for the child of a count, but had not fitted.

"That must be patent leather," said the old lady, "they shine so."

"Yes, they shine," said Karen, "and I should be delighted to have them!"

And they were tried on, and fitted her little foot so well that they were bought; but the old lady knew nothing about their being red, else she would never have allowed Karen to have gone in red shoes to be confirmed. Yet such was the case.

Everybody looked at her feet; and when she stepped through the chancel-door on the church pavement, it seemed to her as if the old figures on the tombs---those portraits of old preachers and preachers' wives, with stiff ruffs and long black dresses, fixed their eyes on her red shoes. And she thought only of them as the clergyman laid his hand upon her head, and spoke of the holy baptism, of the covenant with God, and how she should now become a true Christian; and the organ pealed so solemnly, the sweet children's voices sang, and the old music-directors; but Karen thought only of her red shoes.

In the afternoon the old lady heard that the shoes had been red, and she said that it was very wrong of Karen, that it was not at all becoming, and that in future Karen should only go in black shoes to church, even when she should be older.

The next Sunday there was to be the sacrament, and Karen looked at the black shoes, then looked at the red ones,---looked at them again, and put on the red shoes.

The sun shone gloriously; Karen and the old lady walked along the path through the corn; it was rather dusty, and their shoes were covered.

At the church-door stood an old soldier with a crutch, and with a wonderful long beard which was more red than white, and he bowed to the ground and asked the old lady if he might dust her shoes; and Karen stretched out her little foot.

"See! what beautiful dancing-shoes!" said the soldier; "sit firm---you dance," and he put his hand out towards the soles.

And the old lady gave the soldier an alms, and went into the church with Karen.

And all the people in the church looked at Karen's red shoes, and all the pictures; and as Karen knelt before the altar and raised the cup to her lips, she only thought of the red shoes, and they seemed to swim in it; and she forgot to sing her psalm, and she forgot to pray, "Our Father, who art in heaven!"

Now all the people went out of the church, and the old lady got into the carriage. Karen raised her foot to get in after her, when the old soldier said---

"Look, what beautiful dancing-shoes!"

And Karen could not help dancing a step or two, and when she began, her feet continued to dance; it was just as if the shoes had power over them. She danced round the church-corner, she could not leave off; the coachman was obliged to run after and catch hold of her, and he lifted her into the carriage, but her feet continued to dance, so that she trod on the old lady dreadfully. At length she took off the shoes, and then her legs had peace.

The shoes were placed in a closet at home, but Karen could not help looking at them.

CHAPTER SECOND.

KAREN GROWS VAIN OF HER RED SHOES, AND IS FORCED TO DANCE OVER THE FIELDS, ACROSS THE BRIDGES, AND EVERY-WHERE.

Now the old lady was sick, and it was said that she could not recover. She must be nursed and waited upon, and there was no one whose duty it was so much as Karen's. But there was to be a great ball, to which Karen was invited. She looked at the old lady, who could not recover; she looked at the red shoes, and she thought there could be no sin in it. She put on the red shoes,---she thought she might do that also; and she went to the ball and began to dance.

[Illustration]

When she went to dance to the right, the shoes would dance to the left; and when she went to dance up the room, the shoes would dance back again; and they danced down the steps, into the street, and from there she danced, and danced straight out into the gloomy wood.

Then it was light up among the trees, and she fancied it must be the moon, for there was a face; but it was the old soldier with the red beard; he sat there, nodded his head, and said, "Look! what beautiful dancing-shoes!"

Then she was terrified, and wanted to fling off the red shoes, but they clung fast; and she pulled down her stockings, but the shoes seemed to have grown to her feet; and she danced, and must dance, over fields and over meadows, in rain and sunshine, by night and day; but at night it was most fearful.

She danced over the churchyard, but the dead did not dance; they had something better to do than to dance. She wished to seat herself on a poor man's grave, where the bitter tansy grew; but for her there was neither peace nor rest; and when she danced towards the open church-door, she saw an angel standing there. He wore long white garments, he had wings which reached from his shoulders to the earth, his countenance was severe and grave, and in his hand he held a sword, broad and glittering.

"Dance shalt thou!" said he, "dance in thy red shoes till thou art pale and cold! Dance shalt thou from door to door; and where proud, vain children dwell, thou shalt stand and knock, that they may hear thee and tremble! Dance shalt thou!---"

"Mercy!" cried Karen. But she did not hear the angel's reply, for the shoes carried her through the gate into the fields, across roads and bridges, and she must keep ever dancing.

One morning she danced past a door she well knew. Within sounded a psalm; a coffin decked with flowers was borne forth. Then she knew that the old lady was dead, and that she was abandoned by all. She danced, and she was forced to dance through the gloomy night. The shoes carried her over stock and stone; she was torn till she bled. She danced over the heath till she came to a little house. Here, she knew, dwelt the executioner; and she tapped with her fingers at the window, and said, "Come out! come out! I cannot come in, for I am forced to dance."

And the executioner said, "Thou dost not know who I am, I fancy. I strike bad people's heads off; and I hear that my axe rings!"

"Don't strike my head off!" said Karen; "then I can't repent of my sins! but strike off my feet and the red shoes!"

And then she confessed her entire sin, and the executioner struck off her feet, with the red shoes; but the shoes danced away with the little feet across the field into the deep wood.

[Illustration]

CHAPTER THIRD.

HOW KAREN TRIED TO GO TO CHURCH AGAIN, HOW SHE PRAYED AND WAS SORRY, AND HOW AN ANGEL CAME TO COMFORT HER, AND HOW HAPPY SHE BECAME.

And the executioner carved out little wooden feet for her, and crutches, and taught her the psalms criminals always sing; and she kissed the hand which had wielded the axe, and went over the heath.

"Now I have suffered enough for the red shoes!" said she; "now I will go into the church, that people may see me!" And she hastened towards the church-door; but when she neared it the red shoes danced before her, and she was terrified, and turned around.

The whole week she was unhappy, and wept many bitter tears; but when Sunday returned, she said---

"Well, now I have struggled enough! I really believe I am as good as many a one who sits in the church, and hold their heads so high!"

And away she went boldly; but she had not got farther than the churchyard-gate, before she saw the red shoes dancing before her, and she was frightened, and turned back, and repented of her sin from her heart.

And she went to the parsonage, and begged that they would take her into service; she would be very industrious, she said, and would do every thing she could; she did not care about the wages, only she wished to have a home, and be with good people; and the clergyman's wife was sorry for her, and took her into service; and she *was* industrious and thoughtful. She sat still and listened when the clergyman read the Bible in the evening. All the children thought a deal of her; but when they spoke of dress, and grandeur, and beauty, she shook her head.

The following Sunday when the family was going to church, they asked her whether she would not go with them; but she glanced sorrowfully, with tears in her eyes, at her feet. The family went to hear the word of God, but she went alone into her little chamber; there was only room for a bed and a chair to stand in it; and here she sat down with her prayer-book; and whilst she read with a pious mind, the wind bore the strains of the organ towards her, and she raised her tearful eyes to heaven and said, "Oh God, help me!"

And the sun shone clearly! And straight before her stood the angel of God in white garments, the same she had seen at the church-door; but he no longer carried the sharp sword, but in its stead a splendid green spray full of roses, and he touched the ceiling with the spray, and the ceiling rose up high, and where he had touched it there gleamed a golden star. And he touched the walls and they widened out, and she saw the organ which was playing; she saw the old pictures of the preachers and the preachers' wives.

The congregation sat on cushioned seats, and sang out of their prayer-books. For the church itself had come to the poor girl in her narrow chamber, or else she had come into the church. She sat in the pew with the clergyman's family, and when they had ended the psalm and looked up, they nodded and said, "It is right that thou art come!"

"It was through mercy!" she said.

And the organ pealed, and the children's voices in the choir sounded sweet and soft. The clear sunshine streamed warmly through the window into the pew where Karen sat. Her heart was so full of sunshine and peace, and joy, that it broke. Her soul flew on the sunshine to God, and there no one asked after the *red shoes*.

* * * * *

Hans Christian Andersen is an excellent allegorist, and has very ingeniously woven together a most interesting fabric in this story of Karen, who, I am sure, every child cannot fail to see is a fabulous heroine. And yet there is something so simple and touching in the whole story, from beginning to end, that one can scarcely read it without weeping over her sufferings, and wondering in their hearts at the severity of her punishment.

In former times there was a real belief in supernatural things among the simple-minded, a belief which, it seems to me, was much more in accordance with the Christian character than the senseless unbelief in every thing which cannot be explained according to natural laws, which is certainly very much the case at the present day among the wise and learned, and much more to be regretted than the credulousness of other days.

[Illustration]

NAUGHTY MARIAN.

[Illustration: NAUGHTY MARIAN.]

I thought to find my little girl,
When I came home at night,
With brow unruffled as her curl,
And smiles of love as bright.

I thought she'd jump upon my knee,
And tell me all she'd done,
In reading, study, work, or play,
From morn till set of sun.

Is this my Marian? No, indeed!
Not such a frown had she!
When my own little girl comes back,
Just send her in to me!

[Illustration]

MORNING HOUR.

* * * * *

I.

The buds and the blossoms,
How bright to the view!
Like jewels and diamonds

They sparkle with dew.

II.

The sun's rising beams
Have kissed each bright flower:
How lovely the scene!
How peaceful the hour!

III.

All nature awakens
From a night of soft sleep,
And the insects once more
From their hiding-holes creep.

IV.

The old birds have flown
Far away to get food,
While anxiously wait,
Their young trembling brood.

V.

To our Father in heaven
Our voices we'll raise,
With feelings most fervent,
In songs to his praise.

VI.

Dear Saviour, to love thee
Our hearts are inclined,
Oh, teach us, we pray thee,
Thy precepts to mind.

VII.

Upon our heart-garden,
Oh, let thy love rain,
Like fresh summer showers
Upon the young grain.

VIII.

Like soft, gentle dew
Upon the dry earth,

Which opens the old buds,
And to new ones gives birth.

IX.

Oh, teach us to offer
Good deeds in thy praise,
And acts of true charity
Be the hymns that we raise.

X.

From all that will harm us,
Or sorrow will bring,
Oh, keep us, dear Lord,
Beneath thy bright wing.

THE CHIMNEY-SWEEP.

* * * * *

Charley was a little boy, but he knew very well how to pity the poor, because he had a kind heart; and he knew very well that the poor laborers he saw in the streets were not bad because they were meanly dressed and worked hard: he knew they were men, and had hearts like his father and mother, and when they were dressed their appearance was very respectable, and at church no people were more devout or better mannered.

One morning---it was winter---the sun shone down from the sky, and melted the snow and ice in the street and on the tops of the houses, so that it came tumbling down upon the sidewalks, and the streets were overflowing with the great flood. Charley was looking out of the window to see it fall, and the people dodge and scamper along to save themselves from the great slides that would have been very dangerous if they had hit any one on the head. He was thinking too of the poor little ragged boys, as they went by, some with matches, some with newspapers, and some with their hats in their hands begging, and he wished in his heart that he could do something to help them all; but he was but a little boy, and scarcely knew how to take care of himself. As he continued to watch the passers-by, there came along a poor chimney-sweep, with his soot-bag and brush; his feet were very red, and looked as if they were bitten with the frost, for his shoes only half-covered his poor swollen feet, and he had no stockings on. His blanket that hung over his shoulders was black as the chimney, and his face looked like soot.

[Illustration: CHIMNEY-SWEEP]

Charley was watching him as he went along crying, "Sweep, ho! sweep!" when down came one of these great slides right upon his head. He fell flat in a moment, and there he lay as one dead, covered all over with the cold snow and ice. Charley rushed into the street in a moment, and screamed for help, but before he could reach the sweep a good man had raised him up, and was kindly brushing his clothes. He was not much hurt, but severely stunned. Charley took him by the hand and led him into the house, and gave him some dry clothes, and put some stockings and shoes upon his feet, and set before him a warm breakfast besides.

The poor chimney-sweep wept---for so much kindness had touched his heart, and he sobbed out his thanks as well as he could, and took his leave after receiving some small pieces of silver, which. Charley's mother gave him to help him in

his toil; for it was a toilsome life he had to lead---that poor sweep; so young, too. It made Charley very sorry to see his tears, and he sat a long time with his head bent upon his breast, and never spoke one word. At last his mother said---

"What troubles you, dear? Are you thinking of the unfortunate chimney-sweep? Then learn a lesson of gratitude for your own happy lot, and be humble; for remember that this poor sweep is as good as you, and perhaps far better in the sight of God, who looks at the heart and not at the outward appearance. See how much he must suffer in his poverty; he may have feelings attuned in beautiful accord with all things noble and charming in nature. He is really very intelligent-looking. He makes me think of the little boy that ran through the streets of a large city all of one cold winter, and then became a great artist, but he was so poor and inexperienced in the ways of the world, that he had to suffer a long time before his genius was discovered. Some time I will tell you about him, that you may know that true genius and worth may be found among the lowest children of earth, and, like the diamond, they will shine when they are polished."

[Illustration]

PLEASANT AMUSEMENTS.

* * * * *

"Let us go over our first steps again," said Marian to her sister; "there is nothing like beginning right. When we learn to dance or to sing, or indeed any thing else, we must be sure to learn our *first lesson well*, and then we shall be *sure* to improve; and dancing is certainly a very useful and pleasing amusement. It is *useful* because it is a healthy exercise. It is called 'the poetry of motion,' and I have read that the great philosopher Locke speaks of it as of the greatest importance in the education of young people, and he says it cannot be learned too early."

"And I think," said the mother of these young misses, "he is very right; for as we grow older we have more pressing and important uses to perform. Every thing in its own time, my children; as I have told, you before, dancing, as well as music, is a most delightful accomplishment; but we must not neglect our other duties for these."

THE CAGED BIRD.

* * * * *

I.

Pretty bird! pretty bird!
Singing so sweet;
Art wishing for freedom---
Bird-friends to meet?

II.

Dost thou guess what it is---
Living in trees?
And to sleep in a nest
Rocked by the breeze?

III.

Thou wert born in a cage,
My own dear bird!
But, I fancy, new longings
Thy heart have stirred.

IV.

Or perhaps to the garden
Some bird has flown,
And taught thee of freedom,
Before unknown.

[Illustration]

V.

If I open thy cage
And bid thee to fly,
Wilt thou ever come back,
To gladden mine eye?

VI.

Shall I hear thy sweet song,
Morning and eve?
Or wilt thou forever
Thy mistress leave?

VII.

Well, dear little bird!
I'll open thy door:
Fly forth to the woods;
I'll cage thee no more.

VIII.

But when winter months come,
With storm-winds that blow,
Come back; I will shelter thee
From the storm and snow.

THE YOUNG GLEANER

A FREE TRANSLATION FROM THE GERMAN.

* * * * *

CHAPTER FIRST.

HOW WILLY MEETS THE YOUNG GLEANER IN THE FIELD---HOW HE PITIES HIS MISFORTUNES, AND ASSISTS TO FILL HIS BAG WITH CORN.

One hot day in the harvest-time, a little boy named Willy got leave of his father to go out into the corn-field to watch the reapers bind up the sheaves and load the wagons; and he gathered the field-flowers, and formed them into wreaths to give to his mother, because she loved them dearly. After running about until he was hot and tired, Willy seated himself under the shade of a tree, to rest and amuse himself with his flowers. The poppies, corn-bottles, and dandelion, he tied up into bunches. As he was thus occupied, he saw a poor little ragged boy enter the field, his feet bleeding, and an empty bag slung by a cord around his neck.

Willy instantly felt sorry for the distressed boy, and went up to him, and asked him kindly what he cried for and what caused his feet to bleed. And he made the boy sit down under the walnut-tree by him, and, by dint of kind inquiries, drew out of him this pitiful story:---

[Illustration]

"We are five children, and our father and mother are very poor. I am the eldest, and my father sends me out in the harvest to glean in the corn-fields, for we have no field of our own to reap, and the little money for which father toils so hard is barely enough to procure our daily bread; but I can fill this bag in a day if I work diligently, and I hope to make a little store against winter, when father is often unemployed, and earning nothing. I went out at daybreak this morning, and had more than half filled my bag, when I had the misfortune to enter the squire's large corn-field. The corn was all reaped and bound up into sheaves. As there were no other gleaners there, I found a good store of ears on the ground, and should soon have filled my bag, if the squire's son, who was in the field, had not seen me.

"He came close up to me with a stick in his hand, and called me a dirty beggar-boy. But I went on with my gleaning as if I did not hear him, which vexed him so that he set the dog on me. I was very much frightened, and in fear and self-defence took up a handful of earth to throw at him, which so incensed its master, that he came up to me, pulled my bag violently from my neck, emptied all that I had gathered upon the ground, threw the bag in my face, and gave me several hard kicks and blows, and ended it all by setting the great dog upon me again, whose bites you see upon my feet."

"What a bad boy!" cried Willy, "and did you treat him as he deserved?"

"No, indeed; I only begged that he would let me pick up my ears of corn; but he would not consent, and drove me out of the field, bidding me never enter there again, under pain of a sound drubbing from the workmen, who would be ready enough, for they laughed when they saw the squire's son ill-treating me." Then the poor sorrowful child began to weep afresh.

"Do your feet hurt you much, poor boy?" asked Willy, in a very sympathizing tone.

"Yes, sadly enough," was the reply; "but I would not mind that at all, if I had not to go home with my bag empty. Father will think that I have been idling all day, and will be angry, and not give me any thing to eat; and I am very hungry now, for I have had only a small piece of dry bread before I came out this morning."

"Oh, is that all?" rejoined Willy. "Here, take this," said the kind boy, handing him a bun which his mother had given him for his luncheon, "for I am not hungry, and if I was, I had rather see you eat it than eat it myself."

The poor boy hesitated to take the bun, but yielded to Willy's kind entreaty, and ate it up very quick.

Then Willy said, "Now let us fill the bag, for I am going to help you."

So they went to work where the sheaves had stood before the cart was loaded, and had nearly filled the bag, when Willy heard his father calling to him from under the walnut-tree.

CHAPTER SECOND.

HOW THE YOUNG GLEANER WAS MUCH FRIGHTENED, AND HOW HAPPY HE WAS MADE---AND HOW DELIGHTED WILLY WAS IN DOING KIND THINGS TO THE POOR.

"I wish you would allow me a few moments," answered Willy to his father, "just to help a poor boy fill his bag from the gleanings of the field."

[Illustration]

"But I want you to go with me to the garden," replied his father; "there are some pears to be gathered, and I know somebody that is very fond of pears."

"Yes, I do like them, father---for I suppose you mean me---but to-day I like much better to stay here and help this poor boy. I pity him very much, he has been so cruelly treated by a bad boy." Then Willy told his father of the little boy's adventure in the squire's field, how the squire's son had beaten and set the dog upon him, and how the poor boy had cried and suffered with the pain, and the dread of taking home the empty bag.

The father listened attentively to his son's tale, and immediately went to the little ragged fellow, who was so busy gathering the fallen ears, that he did not hear him when he approached.

"Shall I help you?" said the loud voice of the master of the field.

The child was terrified, and replied, "Indeed, indeed, I have not touched a single stalk or ear of corn except those which were left on the ground."

"I believe you, my little fellow, you need not tremble so; if you were a thief you would not be a gleaner. Come here, my boy." He then took him to a sheaf of corn, and filled his bag.

As soon as this was done, Willy sprung up and flew into his father's arms, and kissed him, exclaiming, "Thank you, thank you, dearest father, kindest father! this is so kind!"

"May God reward you," said the boy, as he went away with tears in his eyes.

Little Willy was very happy, and expressed his interest in the poor boy several times on their way to the garden.

"Why are you so happy, my son? Is it on account of the ripe apricots, or because you have tasted a different pleasure?"

Willy looked into his father's face said, "It is because that poor boy is made happier."

After leaving the garden, he ran to his mother and gave her the flowers he had gathered for her, and related the adventure with the little boy. His mother was very much pleased to find her son possessed so much kindness for the poor, and she promised to assist him in his benevolent feelings, and to allow him in future to look after the poor little stranger, and supply him with clothes, books, and also food for the family, whenever it was necessary for their comfort.

Willy was never so happy and cheerful as when he was doing good and planning something useful to his poor neighbors and friends, for this was the way he lost sight of his own self-gratification, and grew up to be a worthy and honorable man, respected and beloved by all who knew him; for through his tender care and benevolence he dried many tears of penury and sorrow.

PERSEVERANCE.

* * * * *

My master says this is done well,
How glad, how proud am I!
For I shall see a joyful smile
In mother's dear kind eye.

She'll lay her hand upon my head,
And kiss my forehead too,
And whisper softly in my ear,
"Did I not tell you true?"

For when I said, "Oh *dear*, I can't!"
And breathed a heavy sigh,
My mother said, "Nay, do not fear;
Come, let me see you try.

[Illustration: THE PERSEVERING BOY.]

"For if you will I'm very sure
It will not be in vain;
You know a hard task *really* learnt
Is more than double gain."

I've learned it all, and written it
Without the least mistake,
And mother said, "I am right glad
To see the pains you take."

I did not know how pleasant 'twas
To study hard before;
But now, I'm very sure, I'll ask
For easy tasks no more.

[Illustration: "Now Tony might have been often seen sitting in front of his father's cottage."---See page 107.]

TONY THE MILLER'S SON

* * * * *

CHAPTER FIRST.

ABOUT A MILL, AND THE OLD MILLER WHO BECAME TIRED AND SOLD IT TO TONY'S FATHER, AND OF THE ADVICE GIVEN TO THE NEW OCCUPANT.

For many long years there once stood a solitary mill. It was in a valley between two high mountains. The stream that turned the great wheel was so strong and rapid, that its current never ceased the year through. Even in the hottest summer weather, when all other mills had to stop for want of water, or in the depth of winter, when other mill-streams were frozen over, this same mill could go on, ever working, and never standing still.

For this reason people brought their grain from far and near, even from the city on the farthest side of the lake which received the waters of the stream.

Now it came to pass the old miller grew weary of the old mill, and as he had made a handsome fortune by his industry, he determined to sell it and go to the city, there to spend his days in a more social way, and of use to his fellow-men. After having agreed with a purchaser, and received payment, he delivered the key to him with these words---

"Friend, you have paid me honorably, and I must give you a bit of good advice into the bargain. You may be visited sometimes by strange persons of very small stature, who will ask favors of you. Follow my counsel, and oblige them in what they request. You will find it for your good in doing so." Then the old miller bade him good-by, and went his way.

The new miller took possession of the place, with his wife and only child, whose name was Tony.

[Illustration]

Now Tony was a good boy, but very fond of playing, and in the winter season nothing delighted him more than to go a skating with the neighbors' children.

This his father was very willing he should do, because he believed it to be useful in strengthening his limbs.

Here is a picture of Tony skating, but you see he has fallen down flat on his back; but he never minds trifles, he will be up in a moment.

Tony's father was very active, industrious, and exceedingly clever at his business, of a frugal turn, and his wife also a good manager; no wonder that they soon became prosperous.

Half a year had passed away without his hearing or seeing any thing of the little people the old miller had mentioned at parting; but at last, one morning as he was standing outside the mill, a little woman appeared before him so suddenly that he started in surprise. With a small clear voice she spoke.

"Good-morning, neighbor. I came to ask you to open your sluice-gates at noon, so that your mill may stop for half an hour. We have had our large wash, and shall empty our tubs, which will cause a flood that might injure your mill. Farewell! and pray attend to my friendly warning."

CHAPTER SECOND.

HOW THE MILLER BEHAVED TO HIS KIND NEIGHBORS, AND ABOUT THE RUSHING TORRENT WHICH CAME VERY NEAR DESTROYING THE OLD MILL.

The miller knew not what to think. He had never heard of these neighbors before. He had lately been in the upper valley to cut firewood for the winter season, and had seen no trace of inhabitants in the silent gloomy forest. "Besides," thought he, "wherever they are, and if they have ever so great a wash, what need is there to stop my mill? No, no, it will not do, careful neighbor; there is a great deal of meal to be ground to-day, and we must lose no time." He went to work, and forgot the warning.

At dinner, however, one of his men came in hastily, crying, "Master! master! has not the little water-maid given you notice, as she always did to my old master? She and her company are having their large wash and have been emptying their water-tubs. Hark! how the stream roars and rages! and the wheel turns as if driven by a hurricane! The sky is clear, there has been no rain, yet look at the rushing torrent."

The miller, alarmed, looked out of the window. His face became red with anger, and he said, "What did I know about the water-witch, and her abominable washing-day? Spiteful, mischievous hag!"

In an hour or two the stream resumed its usual course, and subsided to its former level; but the wheels and works of the mill were damaged, and the miller suffered from the expense of repairs, and from the delay it occasioned.

After some time the mill went on clacking and grinding corn as well as ever, when one day the miller stood looking at his meadow, thinking to himself, "The grass looks very green, and the weather is very fine; this meadow must be mown to-morrow."

As he thus stood and looked, two airy figures like young girls appeared, so transparent that the miller fancied that he could see the grass through them as they floated over it, and a gentle voice said, "Good day to you, miller! We beg that thou wilt allow us to dance this evening upon this meadow."

Though much astonished, the miller quickly replied in a cross tone, "How! dance upon my meadow! tread down my grass!"

The voice answered "We will not do thy grass any harm; we and our friends dance so lightly that we hardly touch the tips, of thy long grass."

The miller replied sharply, "Why then ask me? If you do not trample my grass, you may dance all the year round for all me."

"Thank you," replied the airy creature; "we only beg, for thy own good, that thou wilt not mow thy grass until a shower of rain has wet it after our dance. Remember this."

They then vanished like a thin vapor.

"Foolish people!" cried the miller; "did I ever hear such nonsense? Must I put off my hay-making till it rains? We may not have such fine dry weather again during the summer. I shall send my men to cut it down to-morrow." He went back to the mill and gave his orders, but said not a word to anybody about what he had heard and seen. When Tony, the miller's son, was going to bed that night, he looked out of the window, and cried to his father--

"There is a strange man with a lantern in the meadow, full of pale lights, dancing about, sometimes forming a wide circle, now dispersing in all directions, then mingling confusedly together."

And the latter said, "These can be nothing but jack-o-lanterns, or wandering Willies. They come out of the boggy ground, and are driven about by the winds. Wo to the unlucky traveller who takes them for a guide!" After looking at the meadow awhile, they all went to bed.

Next day the men obeyed the master's orders, and mowed the grass. The weather was so fine that the hay was made in a few days, and brought safely into the barn. No sooner, however, had the cattle begun to eat of it, than they were all seized with a mortal sickness. In a few weeks the stalls were empty; and even the sheep and pigs, which had been turned out to graze in the meadow, shared the same fate. The miller stormed and raved, and accused his servants of neglect, and was so ill-humored that his wife and son dared not say a word to him. He set out for the city to find the old miller, to complain to him of his losses. The good old man told him at once that he must have forgotten the warning he gave him at parting, and have disobliged or have been unfriendly in some way towards his little neighbors; advised him to burn his hay, and to beware in future of showing ill-nature or a disobliging spirit towards the little shadowy people.

The miller went home and followed this advice, and burned his hay. Then he borrowed money to buy more cattle, which thrived well and were very profitable; he worked diligently at the mill, and bade his wife be more economical in the kitchen; but to no poor man or child who ventured to knock at his gate did he open his hand or heart in charity.

One day a very diminutive man, dressed in brown clothes, with skin of the same color, knocked at the door of the mill and asked for a little fine meal. The miller looked black, and bade him be gone.

"I ask only for a little, a very little; you see my bag will not hold more than a handful or two."

More angry as the brown man continued his entreaty, the miller replied---

"I will not give you one atom."

"Do have a little pity," implored the little man; "I *must* have some meal, and I *must* have it as a gift, or I would pay for it a thousand-fold."

The iron-hearted miller became furious, notwithstanding the little man's earnest begging, and he loosed the great dog, and sent him to drive him away.

As the little man was passing the tall garden-hedge, Tony slipped out at the back-door, and crept softly to the hedge, saying---

"Wait a minute, and give me your bag."

The little man gave him the bag, and Tony ran to the store-room, where there were several sacks, and filled the man's bag with the finest and best meal he could find. The man received it with joy, and thanked Tony heartily for his kindness, and said to him, "If you are ever in distress, and want help, come to the oak spring."

He nodded his head, and Tony saw him take the steep path up the mountains.

"Poor little man!" said Tony to himself, "perhaps he has a hungry little child at home, for whom he wants to make some porridge. It was very wrong of me to go and take father's meal out of the store-room without his knowledge; yet the little

man's need was so great, and he begged so earnestly, that it would have been a greater injustice not to have taken pity on him. I will go to my mother and ask her to give me less for my breakfast and supper, until the meal is replaced."

Summer was nearly over when one day a water-spout burst in, the upper valley, which caused such a sudden and terrible flood, that the miller and his family had only time to save their lives by flight.

When the waters had subsided, the miller contrived a hovel in the only corner left standing of the mill; and here, with his wife and Tony, abode in the extreme of poverty.

The good boy was grieved for his parents' misery, but chiefly for his poor mother, who was now unable to leave her wretched bed of moss and leaves.

Two goats had escaped the general destruction. These Tony took care of, and drove them out to feed upon the mountains every day. Having set out with them one morning, he took the same hill-path by which the brown man had gone, until he came to a large oak-tree, under whose roots he perceived a cave, which appeared to have been hollowed out by a spring. At the entrance Tony sat down beneath the tree, and suffered his goats to browse and skip about at pleasure.

"Oh!" said he, "if father only was more cheerful and mother quite well, all would be right, and although we have no mill, and only dry bread and goats' milk, I should be quite content."

With these thoughts in his head he fell asleep. He had not slept long before he heard his name called, and on opening his eyes he saw far into the cave, and at its entrance stood the little brown man, who, nodding kindly, said---

"Art thou come at last? I will show thee my house and garden, which will, I am sure, please thee."

Tony followed the little brown man, and after going on a long way, they came to a passage lined with smooth stone. As they proceeded the light became stronger, and they next entered another, the walls of which were formed of large iron plates. Passing through this they reached another lined with bright sheets of copper, which led to a large hall with a roof and pillars of burnished silver. From this hall a pair of folding-doors gave access to a splendid room, with walls, roof, and floor of solid gold, and windows of transparent crystal. The next room was covered with red rubies, having windows formed of large diamonds.

Tony was led from one chamber to another, all glittering with precious stones, sapphires, topazes, emeralds, and amethysts. Last of all they came to a vestibule, with a dome, and pillars of the brightest polished steel.

[Illustration]

"My brothers will rejoice to see you," said the little man. "Come into the garden."

It was enclosed with a fence of silver wire, curiously wrought, and the flowers were beautiful beyond description. The trees too were loaded with fruit equally new to him.

In one part of the garden a number of children were playing. They piled up heaps of pebbles, jumped over them, and laughed heartily if one did not spring clear over, or tumbled down. When Tony came near they cried out, "Welcome, Tony!" and shook his hand, and looked kindly in his face, gathered some fruit, and led him to the other side of the garden, where there was a grove of trees which bore gold and silver fruit. These trees looked just like those the angels bring to children on Christmas-eve. The children shook the trees, and the fruit fell off till the ground was all covered; then they gathered it up and offered Tony an equal share with themselves, and gave him a diamond needle, and instructed

him to string them into a necklace, and threw it over his shoulders. Then they presented him with a sweet orange for his mother, and a pomegranate for his father, which they said must be opened very carefully. "He will know what use to make of its contents," continued they. "Tell him we send it as a recompense for the meal which thou gavest us out of his store."

Tony modestly inquired if he might keep the necklace. They replied, that it was given him to do as he pleased with; but Tony thought it would make his father and mother rich again, so he resolved in his heart that he would give it to them.

Then he took leave of his kind little friends, and his conductor led him back through the passages to the entrance, and bade him farewell.

When Tony reached home his mother asked him where he had been, for, said she, "We have been seeking thee these three days, and thy father is gone out once more, almost in despair of ever finding thee. But come here, Tony, and let me see those shining things upon thy neck."

Just then his father entered. "Ah! Tony, where hast thou been, my boy? I thought thee lost to us forever."

Tony looked at his parents and then at the shining necklace, which he had almost forgotten, and thought, "*Then it is not all a dream!* Dear father, I have been with the little brown men of the mountain, and they gave me these shining stones, and here is a present for you," taking the pomegranate from his pocket; "you will know how to use it; and this is for you, dear mother," handing her the orange. His mother received and ate it with a great relish. Not so the father; he examined it with suspicion, and asked who this little brown man was.

"Why, don't you remember, father, the little man who came to the mill and begged some meal? You would not give him any, and drove him away, but I was so sorry for him, that I filled his bag out of the finest we had in the store-house, and told mother about it, and if I did wrong I am very sorry."

"And does the brown man send me this as a present?" said the conscience-stricken father, almost dropping the fruit upon the ground; "there may be something hidden in it to destroy me."

"Oh, no, father! they are too good to take revenge; they are all love and kindness, depend upon it. They send you this present for your good, I am sure. Pray do open it."

"Yes, indeed," said the wife, "I know it will bring in good fortune; I feel better, much better, since I ate the orange."

"Well then, I will open the fruit," said the husband. As he spoke he broke the rind, when there rolled out upon the floor a large number of polished diamonds.

* * * * *

Now the miller was able to rebuild his mill and do a great deal of good to the poor, and was once more a rich and thriving man; no longer hard-hearted, but kind and benevolent. Not a poor family was to be found, for to all who wanted he gave employment, thereby giving happiness to all.

Tony had been taught to read in his early childhood, and might have been often seen, before the acquaintance with the little brown neighbors, sitting in front of his father's cottage, reading. Among his amusements *now*, he was frequently engaged in taking some of the children of the neighborhood to ride in his neat little chaise, with his beautiful striped horse.

* * * * *

[Illustration]

He had now become older, and as he was fond of learning he was put to the best schools, and grew up to be a man having the true love of man in his heart, and happy to share the bounties of Providence with all that were in need; and he was blessed with more happiness than generally falls to the lot of men at this day.