

MIXED PICKLES

Mrs. E. M. Field

The Project Gutenberg eBook of Mixed pickles

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: Mixed pickles
A story for girls and boys

Author: Mrs. E. M. Field

Illustrator: T. Pym

Release date: July 31, 2026 [eBook #79239]

Language: English

Original publication: New York: A. L. Burt Company

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/79239

Credits: Al Haines

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK MIXED PICKLES ***



Timidly walking up to the door, Bryda tapped gently.—Page 13.

Timidly walking up to the door Bryda tapped gently.—

Page 48.

MIXED PICKLES.

A STORY FOR GIRLS AND BOYS.

By MRS. E. M. FIELD.

WITH THIRTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS BY T. PYM.

A. L. BURT COMPANY,
PUBLISHERS, NEW YORK.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Idle Hands

CHAPTER II.

A Princess

CHAPTER III.

Another Terrible Scrape

CHAPTER IV.

What Can I Do?

CHAPTER V.

Old Roger

CHAPTER VI.

Uncle Jack's Story

CHAPTER VII.

Beppo

CHAPTER VIII.

The Rest of the Story

CHAPTER IX.

A Prince in Disguise

CHAPTER X.

Beppo's Friend

CHAPTER XI.

Dreadfully Frightened

CHAPTER XII.

Some Use for Moll

CHAPTER XIII.

More About Beppo

CHAPTER XIV.

Beppo in Trouble

CHAPTER XV.

Up a Tree

CHAPTER XVI.

Poor Moll

CHAPTER XVII.

Where Thieves Break Through

CHAPTER XVIII.

Friend, Go Up Higher

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

"Pussy, Pussy! Come here, Puss."

Maurice Gray, with his queer little Scotch Terrier, Toby

Maurice fills the Syringe and sets to work

Timidly walking up to the door Bryda tapped gently

And where the water fell this Spring rose up

For a whole week there were Games

The Fairy came flying over the Town

"Little Boy," said Bryda shyly, "where do you live?"

"Our Father," Bryda prayed, "let me help Beppo."

Tom, who had now become a Poet

Bryda after looking around for Beppo, seized the Cat

Bryda and Beppo amuse themselves walking about the Field

Only one word, too—"Speranza."

Bryda appeared to have thrown the Reading Book to the other end of the room

Bryda called to the old woman, who laughed and shook her fist

Bryda laughed, and then looked solemn

MIXED PICKLES.

CHAPTER I.

IDLE HANDS.

Bryda was very lonely! Not because she was alone, for she was rather fond of wandering off by herself, away from every one else, and talking to herself and to the birds and flowers, and still more to any little stream that came in her way. But then to be alone because you fancy it, and to be alone because there is no one to play with, are two very different things, and the last was Bryda's case.

"If I had even a kitten," she said aloud, standing before the sundial in her grandmother's old-fashioned garden, and looking at the shadow that did not seem to move at all. Bryda had read of King Hezekiah, for whom the shadow moved backward; she wished it would move a little forward for her, and bring tea time, after which meal she might go and sit by the couch of her invalid cousin, Salome, who had soft fingers that rested soothingly on her rumpled hair, and a soft low voice that told pleasant stories pleasantly, and good long ones, too.



"If I had only a kitten!"

Why, only yesterday, before Uncle Jack went away and took all the brightness of the house with him, he said he thought there were kittens in a loft over the stable, and he would try and catch one for Bryda. But he had gone off on a shooting expedition, and would not be home for days and days. And he did not know how lonely Bryda was.

You see her father and mother had gone abroad a fortnight before this lonely day, and had left her in charge of grandfather and grandmother. They were very kind, but they were so old, and so fond of going to sleep in their chairs with very grave books before them, always open at the same place, that Bryda thought they looked more like

two wax figures from Madame Tussaud's—put, one on either side of the fire in winter and of the big window in summer—than like real people.

They had lived so long, probably, that they could not care much about anything. If you told any striking piece of news to grandmother she only said, "Say it again, my dear. I'm a stupid old woman. Sit down beside me, speak slowly, and always remember to wipe your shoes on the mat."

If you had just rushed in full of the great news that the robin's blue eggs in that dear little nest by the garden door were gone, and four gaping, featherless darlings were there instead, you felt that it was much worth while to try and make grandmother enter into the delight of the surprise. And when you had told her, she would only say, "Very nice, my dear; very charming, I'm sure. Now run out again, and don't get freckled." After which she would smooth down her heavy watered-silk gown, and doze over the big grave book again.

And grandfather was worse. He had long white hair, and a very long white beard, and bushy white eyebrows; so that there were only two round spots on each cheek bone, and a very narrow strip of forehead—unless you included his nose—on which to kiss him, without burying your face in white hair dusted with snuff. For grandfather took a great deal of snuff, and if you—that is, if Bryda—went to talk to him, he would say, when he was awake enough to listen, "Yes, yes, my dear, quite so, exactly so. Give me a kiss, my dear; give me a kiss. I want a bite from those cherries on your cheeks."

And then came the difficulty of kissing grandfather (who did not like to be refused) without kissing the white, snuff-scented beard, which was only to be avoided by a sudden and rapid peck at the two rosy circles on his

cheeks, or the little bits of forehead between the long locks.

When Bryda's mother went away her last words were:

"Be good to the grannies, my darling, and do all they tell you; and don't forget father and mother."

Here the mother's voice trembled and broke, and she got very quickly into the carriage.

Forget! Oh, no, Bryda could not forget And she tried "to be good to the grannies" by kissing grandfather whenever he wished, much as she disliked the operation, and trying to remember all grandmother said about dry shoes, and sitting in draughts, and eating slowly, and putting on pinafores, and various other little matters we are all familiar with.

Uncle Jack was quite different. We shall hear more of him. But perhaps the house was a little too quiet for him; he was so often away.

The dullness did not matter to Cousin Salome. She lay in bed all the morning, and was carefully wheeled into a little sunny sitting-room in the afternoon; and there, when the pain was not too bad (for she had hurt her back, and would never be well again), she was always ready to welcome Bryda with that quiet smile on her white, loving face, that was like moonlight on a sea that sings low and sadly on a summer night.

Uncle Jack was away, and Cousin Salome worse, and the governess who was to come and teach Bryda had not arrived; and so, as we have seen, Bryda was very lonely, and very much in want of a kitten. She looked herself rather like a kitten that has got wet, for a kitten never looks

so forlorn as she did unless it is quite wet, and perhaps muddy too.

But in two minutes after this bright idea had struck her Bryda looked much like the same kitten when it has been dried by a nice warm fire, and fed on creamy milk, and has licked its paws and washed its face, and is ready for the next ball of wool that some one will be kind enough to throw on the floor for it to play with.

Gathering some ripe summer pears, and hastily stuffing them into the pockets of her pinafore, Bryda, hurried off to the stable. It was locked, but the key was in the door; it turned easily, and she found herself as she entered rather near the heels of the fat old carriage-horses, Gog and Magog. But they would not kick; they were, or seemed, as old and sleepy as their master and mistress. Gog in particular would really rather be stung by a horsefly than take any particular trouble about brushing it away. They were not animals suited to Bryda's taste, however much grandmother might appreciate their steady ways, They were like those horses of whom the little girl in the poem could find nothing more interesting to tell than that

> "The tails of both hung down behind,
> Their shoes were on their feet."

And John, the coachman, was as fat, and old, and lazy as they were. Altogether the family coach, when the dear old folks were in it, was quite a curiosity. They went for a short drive every day, one day along one of the roads outside the lodge gates, and the next day along the other, turn about, and always to the same distance, which Uncle Jack called "going to there-and-back-again." Only on Sunday they went to church, which was a very short way

indeed, only just outside the gates in fact, and on that day they did not sleep in the carriage as they did on the other six days.

But if Bryda was, as a treat, taken for a drive, it really was a little dull. Both the grannies went to sleep, and nodded so that poor Bryda was really afraid their heads might come off; and John the coachman looked as if he were asleep, and Gog and Magog went along at such a slow, solemn trot that they might well be walking in their sleep, too.

So Bryda was not much afraid that either of these grave old horses would take the trouble to kick her. But she had not the same confidence in Uncle Jack's high-spirited hunter, Paddy, who lived in a big stall with a bar at the end, called a loose box, in which he could walk about; and now he put his handsome head with the white star on the forehead over this bar, and looked at Bryda as much as to say, "What business have you here?"

Next to Paddy's loose box there was a ladder, which went up through a hole in the ceiling into the loft where hay was kept, and where Uncle Jack said kittens lived.

Carefully closing the stable door, Bryda, with her heart certainly beating unusually fast, climbed the ladder without stopping to think what grandmother would say, and was soon up in the loft—a delightful place, with a raftered roof, and little windows with sprays of Ivy pushing their way in, as if to remind the scented hay that it once grew outside and was called green grass.

It was a nice place! and, oh, joy! from a dark corner came the sound Bryda longed for, a kitten's "mew!" It was not the voice of an elderly cat, but the plaintive little "mew" of a kitten, and Bryda, as she went toward the

sound, could see a pair of very round, bright eyes. Carefully, not to frighten the little creature, she went toward it; but, alas! kittens born in lofts are apt to be wild and shy, and in spite of all her coaxing, "Pussy, pussy! Come here, puss!" the round, bright eyes went further off, and finally the kitten took refuge in the darkest corner of all. But Bryda was not going to be beaten by a kitten. Treading carefully and slowly, she came nearer; one step more and she would reach the soft, furry thing. Another moment, and it was in her arms; and Bryda, delighted, sat down on a heap of hay, and hugged it, saying, "Now, kitty, let's pretend!"



"Pussy, pussy! Come here, puss!"

What fun the games are that begin "Let's pretend!" Why, one can be a king, a queen, a judge, or a lord chancellor. We can grow up in two minutes into happy people, who do no lessons, and can order exactly what they like for dinner every day, and need not go to bed at the dreadfully early hour we young folks must.

Then, merely to eat a pear is so dull! Grown people

have parties to amuse them at dinner, the very dogs growl and play with their bones, and the cats act a little play over every mouse they catch.

So Bryda would be Queen Elizabeth seated on a throne, dining off goose on that Michaelmas day when news came of the defeat of the great Spanish Armada. The kitten should be the messenger, a pear should be the goose. Bryda had just read this story in her English history. Hay makes a capital throne; Bryda piled one up, and had just sat down with much dignity, when——

Have you ever heard people say, when something awkward happened, they would like to go through the floor? Poor Bryda did! She suddenly tumbled right through the scattered hay—right through the ceiling!

She was not really hurt, only a little bruised, after all; for she had fallen into a sort of deep cage with strong wooden bars, into which hay was pushed down from the loft, and the bottom of this cage was inside Paddy's loose box, close to the manger. So that the first thing Bryda knew, when she recovered herself enough to look round, was that Paddy was standing looking at her, and seemed very much surprised, as well he might be, for little girls were not generally kept in the loft along with the hay, or poked into his stall for him to make his dinner off.

In fact, it is very likely that, if she had only known it, the big, beautiful creature was much more afraid of her than she of him.

Indeed, she was very much afraid, and grew more and more frightened as the horse, finding she did not move, came a few steps nearer, and then began snuffing at her. If she were to try to climb into the loft again, which did not seem very easy, he might—he probably would—bite her

long black legs, she thought.

It would not be very easy to climb into the loft either; the cage was so very deep. What was the unfortunate child to do? Paddy kept on sniffing at her, the real reason being that he could smell the pears in her pinafore pocket. Bryda could smell them too, and a bright idea struck her. She remembered a fairy tale about a princess who softened the hard heart of a lion by feeding him with cake. Perhaps this nice juicy fruit would have the same good effect on Paddy. Perhaps, too, while he was eating it she might escape. Cautiously she drew one out, and it went into the horse's big mouth as a gooseberry would have gone into her own, and was as quickly swallowed. That was a bad plan; he wanted more at once. The next she threw on the ground; and while Paddy stooped his sleek curved neck to pick it up, she made a desperate effort to escape.

In vain! Hardly had she risen from her cramped position and made a struggle to get her hands up to the floor of the loft, when the bright eyes and big mouth were back again, and dreadfully near her legs!

"Oh, don't! *don't*! Paddy!" cried Bryda. "Here, you may eat all my pears, but really I know I should not taste nice; so please don't bite me."

The remaining pears were soon gone; but when they came to an end the difficulty still remained, and Paddy could not be brought to see that he could have no more simply because there were no more. So he sniffed and sniffed, poking his nose more and more between the bars, and showing those dreadful teeth. He only wanted pears; but Bryda grew perfectly wild with fright, and finally, when Paddy actually touched her hand with a hot nose, she could bear it no longer, but gave first one wild shriek and then another, and another, till the spirited horse, terrified

by the noise, plunged about in the loose box, adding still more to her dismay; and even Gog and Magog pricked up their ears, and looked round, as if they would say, "Please don't spoil our digestion by this dreadful screaming."

To Bryda's joy, however, the stable door opened, and old John came tottering slowly in.

"Oh, John! John! save me! Don't let me be eaten up!" implored Bryda, as soon as she saw him; while Paddy became more composed, and stopped prancing.

Old John scratched his head; that was natural. Then he very deliberately walked toward the ladder, muttering:

"Well, I'm blessed if this 'ere ain't the rummiest go as ever I see!"

Which, you will observe, was not the sort of English one finds in the dictionaries; but then John was born before the days of school boards.

"Oh, John! make haste!" cried Bryda again.

But really it was a terribly long time before John climbed the ladder, and gave his hands to the frightened child, who was soon safe on the floor of the loft.

"Be you hurt, miss?" asked old John, looking at her as if she were a china figure that might have lost an arm or a leg in the fall.

But Bryda was not hurt; only she trembled from head to foot, and, after thanking John, turned away and walked with a grave face into the garden again, and to the foot of the old sundial.

The shadow had only moved on half an hour. Bryda

tried to hold her hand in such a way as to make another shadow, that should come further over the dial. But that was a bad imitation of the real thing, and made her think of one evening when Uncle Jack had told her, with such a serious face, to take a candle, and go to see the time by the old sundial; how she had actually gone, and had only remembered when she got there that the sun was in bed, and therefore could not tell her what she wanted to know.

Up the pillar on which stood the dial two very large snails were crawling—oh, so slowly! They seemed to go even more slowly than the long hot hours.

How amusing it would be to make them run, or rather crawl races! Bryda gathered a nice fresh leaf, and put it at one edge of the dial. Then she startled the two snails at the ether end, and for the next hour or so was perfectly happy watching them, and starting them again and again.

But at the end of that time the biggest and fattest snail gave up the game in disgust, finding he never could enjoy his leaf quietly when he *had* got it, because a giant hand always came, and would put him back at the starting-place.

So he drew in his horns first, and then went bodily into his house, which those gentlemen conveniently carry on their backs. There he sulked, and would come out no more; so Bryda threw him into a cabbage-bed, and went indoors.

Bryda had so many funny ways of amusing herself that Uncle Jack, who was very fond of making jokes, declared she "lived in a jar of mixed pickles." Indeed, these same amusements often ended by becoming small scrapes, which he called Bryda's pickles; and we shall see that they were of all sorts, and really "mixed."

None are very wise at eight years old, and many of us

are, like my little Bryda, very anxious to do right and be of some use in the world. So we will follow her as she goes into the house.

CHAPTER II.

A PRINCESS.

Cousin Salome would see her now, and so Bryda went to the invalid's room.

"You look very miserable, darling," said the soft voice compassionately, as Bryda, after kissing her cousin, stood looking dolefully out of the window.

"I am very miserable, Cousin Salome," she answered, feeling that she had good cause for misery.

"Very miserable, when you can run about and be out of doors with the sunshine and the birds and the flowers! There must be something very bad the matter. Come and tell me all about it."

Bryda knelt by the couch, a little ashamed of herself. Cousin Salome might well be miserable, so ill that she could never again hope to walk in the sunny, scented garden.

"It's easy for you to be good, I suppose, cousin," she said. "You lie here all day, and don't find any mischief to get into."

The last words were said as if mischief was a sort of thing that came to you, and asked you to get into it—in the same way as roast pigs run about in the fairy country, holding out a knife and fork and crying, "Eat me, do! please!"

"So mischief is the cause of the great misery!" said Cousin Salome, smiling, and drawing the little girl nearer to her. "Tell me what was the last piece of mischief."

Bryda told all about her adventure with Paddy, and ended:

"Oh, Cousin Salome, I've nothing to do!"

"That's the beginning of all mischief, I am afraid, darling. Do bees and birds get into mischief? Not they, they are too busy."

"Well, I would make honey or a nest if I knew how," said Bryda, laughing. "If I could paint a picture like this, I should be happy."

Cousin Salome had been painting. She could only do a little at a time and that with difficulty; but she had drawn a very beautiful figure of a young girl in a rich, old-fashioned dress, sitting by an open window, through which could be seen a great plain and a large town some way off. The girl's face was full of wonder, and rather sad, and she looked away at the sunset sky, as if she were thinking of something very puzzling. Bryda took up the picture and looked at it.

"That is Princess Isabel of Montenaro; she is doing what you are doing now, Bryda."

"What I am doing, cousin?"

"Yes; wondering what she ought to do. Do you see the town beyond the green park? That was her father's capital, and a dreadful sickness broke out there, so that people died by hundreds. But the king was a hard-hearted man, and spent the days in feasting and hunting, and paid no heed to the people's sufferings."

"Oh, do tell me the story!" cried Bryda eagerly.

Cousin Salome smiled.

"The story, as I have it, is in verse. You would not like that, Bryda?"

"Oh, yes, yes! Please read it."

"Can't you read it yourself?" asked Salome slyly.

"Oh, *no!*" with great energy. "Reading is quite different from being read to. Why, the story *tastes* quite ten times nicer when you listen to it!"

So Cousin Salome opened a book that lay near, and began to read in her gentle, tired voice, the story of the little picture she had painted of the Princess Isabel.

The story was all in verse, and it was a little hard for Bryda to understand; but it told how the princess could not bear to know that others were suffering without trying to help them. So, while the sounds of her father's noisy feast came up into her quiet room, Princess Isabel rose up, took off her fine dress and her jewels, and dressed herself very simply. Then, followed only by two of her ladies, who were unselfish like herself, Isabel went down on foot to the plague-stricken city, and there remained, nursing the sick and caring for the poor, till the dreadful plague was at last gone. Meantime the king thought he could forget all about it. and spent his time in hunting and feasting; but the

pestilence came even into his palace, and he and many of his gay court died.

Isabel was not touched by it; and when the sad time was over she remained in the city working for the poor people, and helping them till she died, never thinking of her own comfort. So the people, after she was dead, loved to call her Saint Isabel.

"Thank you," said Bryda, and drew a long breath when the story was finished. She had perhaps not understood it all, but one thing was clear.

"The princess was never idle, Cousin Salome. So I expect she never got into mischief. But I don't think it was nice for her to have no playtime."

"She could wait for her playtime, dear," answered Cousin Salome gently. "She would enjoy it all the more, perhaps, because she had worked so hard."

The sick lady turned a little and looked out at the quiet evening. Noisy rooks were flying home to roost, meek cows slowly walking off to be milked; on a large tree a peacock and his two wives were settling themselves for sleep.

Bryda looked out of the window, too.

"I think the stars are afraid of the great big sun, Cousin Salome. Do you see the way they first poke out their heads, and look to see if he is really gone, and then come right out to do their little shining?"

Cousin Salome laughed, and the deep lines that sickness had written seemed to grow fainter, and make her younger and rounder.

"Their little worktime is just beginning. They look as if they came out smiling, with clean bright faces, ready to do as they are bidden."

"Poor Cousin Salome!" said Bryda, stroking the thin white hand that lay weak and idle on the soft coverings. "You can't work or play either. You must be very unhappy. I should be."

"When I was your age, darling, I built myself grand castles in the air. Oh, how many nice things I meant to do when I grew up! But I was given a different sort of work, a much harder one to me, dear child—the work of patiently doing nothing."

Bryda looked sorely puzzled.

"Never mind," went on Cousin Salome. "You are not set to that work, Bryda, nor to a great work like Princess Isabel's. Just now you will find there are plenty of little works ready for you to do—little crumbs of which to make a great loaf."

"Picking up grannie's stitches when she drops them? asked Bryda. Grandmother's knitting was often in that sort of state.

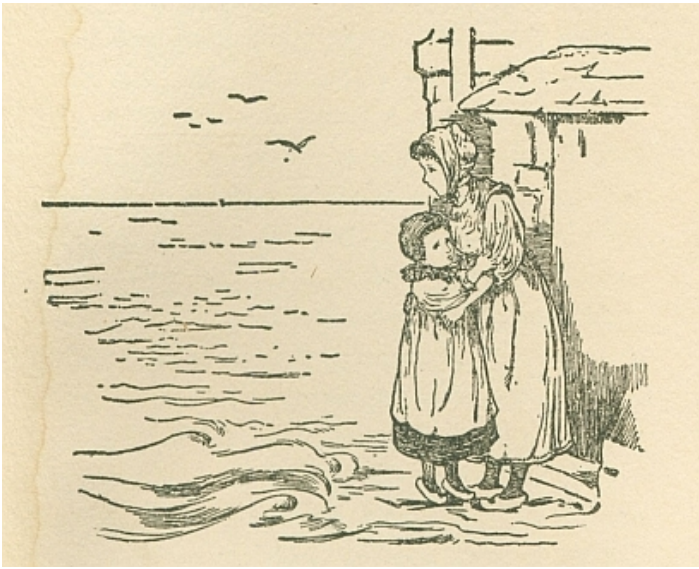
"That may be one thing. They are plenty more. Shall I tell you an old German story, about the use of little things?

"Once upon a time some people lived in a plain, at the edge of which there was the sea. They lived here long and happily; but one sad day the sea began to rise and overflow the plain, creeping every day a little nearer the prosperous village.

"So the people were sorely frightened, and tried to build earthworks; but the sea washed away at night what

they had done in the day.

"These were days very long ago, when, according to the old stories, God would answer men from heaven when they called to Him.



"So the people prayed and asked God to send them His great angels, that they might make hills for them to protect their homes and fields from the terrible waters.

"But God answered, 'My angels have already their work; they cannot help you in this. But to-morrow, at sunrise, I will send to you an army of My laborers; they shall make you sand-hills.'

"So the villagers were very glad, and next morning they rose early, before the sun, wondering what sort of laborers these would be.

"'Perhaps the happy spirits of our fathers will come back to help us; perhaps men from the south country—a kind and friendly people—will be sent to work for us. Perhaps——'

"But all their wonder was in vain, and it was changed to surprise and dismay when, as the sun rose, they saw coming swiftly from the east an army of—what do you think, Bryda?"

"Lions and tigers?" asked Bryda, with wide-open eyes. "Elephants? People? Giants?"

"No, indeed; neither great, strong animals, nor clever men, but hundreds and hundreds and thousands of ants!"

"Ants, cousin? What use would they be?"

"You shall hear. Each ant carried one grain, or what seemed to be one grain, of sand. On and on they came, and the ground was quite black with their hosts. The people looked, and gradually their murmurs grew to one great roar of discontent. But God's little laborers paid no attention. They had their Master's will to do, and so long as that was done they cared for neither the praise nor the blame of His other creatures. So all day long they worked, each little ant carrying his little load; and when the sun set there was a great line of sandhills, so high that no waves could wash over them, so thick that no storm could break them down, between the happy villagers and the sea."

"Then the people stopped grumbling, I suppose."

"We will hope so. And perhaps they learned that God can use the smallest things to do His work with. The little ants were as useful in their way as the noble, unselfish Princess Isabel. Now, dear, I am getting very tired; will

you sit quietly and look at pictures, or run away and see the grannies?"

Bryda chose the pictures, and sat as still as a mouse in the window, looking first at a picture, and then out of the window, and saying to herself that she, too, would try to be of some use.

CHAPTER III.

ANOTHER DREADFUL SCRAPE.

The next morning Bryda was awakened from her pleasant morning sleep by a strange sound. Her window was partly open, but something struck against the upper sash; it was not a bird that had lost its way, nor a wasp come to look for jam, for as Bryda raised her head something that could only be a handful of light gravel or shot struck the window again, and at the same time a clear, shrill whistle sounded outside.

Bryda hastily sprang up. One does not care much about dress at nine years old, so in white nightdress and dark twisted hair she fearlessly put her head out of the window, and saw, to her delight, her cousin, Maurice Gray, a boy some two years younger than herself, with his queer, ugly little Scotch terrier, Toby, standing on the lawn. She need not be sad for want of a playmate to-day.



Maurice Gray with his queer little Scotch terrier Toby.

"Get up and dress!" cried Maurice. "Aren't you ashamed, my Lady Lie-in-bed? Come out directly!"

Bryda did not need a second invitation. A very short time indeed passed before she was by Maurice's side.

His father had brought him over, he said; his father wanted to see grandfather about some business, so he had started off very early. Maurice was dreadfully hungry, and, as the grannies never breakfasted till ten, he and Bryda each got a thick slice of bread and jam from the good-natured cook, and then went off to the garden, Bryda running races with Toby, who mostly had the best of it. You see he had four legs to Bryda's two.

They went to the vinery, and acted a little play, which, however, wanted a few more actors sadly. It was so puzzling for Bryda to be both the imprisoned princess and the ogre at once; and when Maurice, the valiant knight, slew Toby for a dragon, and stepped over his corpse (or would have done, if Toby had been a little more dead, and not run away every other minute), it got really puzzling, and it was well that the breakfast-bell rang at that moment.

Breakfast was rather a long, dull affair. Uncle James, Maurice's father, explained to grandfather a great deal about a drainage scheme; and grandmother, every five minutes, asked her maid Martha, who stood behind her chair, to tell her what it was all about, which Martha had to do in very loud whispers over and over again.

Maurice and Bryda were very glad to run out again, with special directions from grandmother to keep off wet grass, and not get into mischief. This, they thought, could not possibly happen. This time they rambled into the farmyard. Bryda would not look for more kittens, but tried to make friends with some small balls of fluff, which meant some day to be turkeys. At one corner of the yard was a deep tank, or little pond, full of a dark brown, rather thick fluid, which was used in the garden and fields, and

had a great effect in the way of making things grow. Bryda and her cousin stood looking at it.

"I declare," said Bryda, "it's like the Styx!"

"I don't see any sticks," said ignorant Maurice, who had never learned that the old heathens believed the souls of dead people went in a ferryboat across a dark river called the Styx, and that the old man who rowed the boat was called Charon.

Bryda thought it would be capital fun to act this little scene. Certainly the treacle-colored stuff in the pool looked nasty enough to do very well for this dark river.

As to Maurice, he was younger than his cousin, and when they were together she always invented the games, although he had been to school already, and thought girls generally were very little use.

So when Bryda explained what she wanted to do, he only said that he did not know how to act a story that he had never heard; to which Bryda only answered quietly, and as if it were a fact no one could think of doubting for a moment, "You don't know anything about anything, Maurice. Sit down there—no! not on a cabbage, but on the wheelbarrow—and I will tell you all about it."

So she told him the story, in the middle of which the wheelbarrow upset, because Maurice laughed. So he sat on a log of wood, and Bryda picked up the wheelbarrow, got into it, and began in the words of one of her lesson-books, with a little alteration to suit the occasion.

"Friend! Roman! Countryman! lend me your ears! I am Charon——"

"What?" asked Maurice.

"Don't spoil my speech! You may only say 'Hear, hear!' as they do in Parliament."

"But suppose I don't want to hear?"

Bryda had no notion of what they would do under such unlikely circumstances; so, after thinking a little, she merely said, "Don't be silly, Maurice!" And that sort of answer puts an end to any argument quite easily.

"This is my dog Cerberus, with three heads," went on Bryda, pointing to Toby.

"My! what a lot of bones he would eat!" said his master.

Bryda suddenly jumped down from her rather unsteady pulpit.

"Oh, we *will* have fun! Here, Maurice, put on my white pinafore. You shall be a ghost, and I will get into the tub with my dog Cerberus, and ferry you over the river," she said.

"It won't hold two," said Maurice, looking rather doubtfully at the rotten tub which Bryda pushed into the filthy waters, making a splash and a most horrible smell as it went in.

"Oh, ghosts don't want much room! Now, Cerberus, in you go!" and in the poor dog went, hastily and ungracefully; being, in fact, thrown in head foremost.

After one howl he resigned himself, and lay down at the bottom of the tub, into which unsteady boat Bryda, armed with her own small spade, followed with Maurice's help.

Having balanced herself by crouching down, so as to bring the center of gravity to the right place, she proceeded to paddle, or, as she called it, to row with the little wooden spade, splashing a good deal, and, of course, making the tub turn round and round, and wriggle very uncomfortably in the pool.



"Well, it doesn't matter," said Charon, giving up in despair, and looking very red in the face. "We can pretend I crossed the Styx to fetch you. Now I must speak to the soul in Latin, because, of course, Charon and Cerberus talked Latin always."

"I suppose Cerberus barked in Latin—all three mouths at once," said Maurice; "what a horrid row it must have been!"

"Now talk away," said Bryda.

"But we don't know Latin; I've only just begun at *hic, hoec, hoc*."

"That doesn't matter; we must make it up, of course. If we put 'us' or 'o' at the end of every word it will sound

exactly like the stuff Cousin Ronald learns. Now: Poor-us soul-us, do-us you-us want-o to cross over-o?"

"Yes-o," replied Maurice promptly.

"Then-us come-o—oh! oh!" screamed Bryda, making the last word very long indeed; for she trod on the one tail of the dog Cerberus, causing that remarkable animal to jump up howling. Charon's ferryboat was not built to allow of athletic sports on board, so it went over, and Bryda went in.

Oh, dear! what word can describe the filthy mess into which Bryda was plunged up to her waist! the smell of it, and the chill, horrible feeling! Fortunately, she had just taken Maurice's hand, to help in "the soul," who indeed felt very lucky to escape such a voyage! Maurice was able to help her, but, soaked to the waist and ready to cry, she scrambled up to dry land.

By way of mending matters, the dog Cerberus, who may be supposed to have become Toby again, had gone in altogether, and was rather pleased with himself. So he came and had a good shake close to Bryda, so as to splash all the rest of her small person, and then ran round and round, expressing his delight by all sorts of queer noises.

But, oh! here was a mess! And this after the trouble of yesterday, and all Bryda's good resolutions! It was too dreadful, and tears came fast to her eyes.

But kind Maurice, instead of laughing, pitied her. "Don't cry," he said; "can't you wash?"

"I might *run*," said Bryda dolefully, remembering what dreadful things happened to frocks that "ran."

"That stuff might run off," said Maurice; "come on."

And she followed meekly to the nearest greenhouse, where was a large tub of fresh water, and beside it a big squirt or syringe used for watering plants high up in the greenhouse.

"Oh, Maurice dear, I never will call you stupid again!" cried Bryda, delighted, as Maurice filled the syringe and set to work upon her. What fun that was! It was almost worth the fright of that horrid splash, and almost—not quite, perhaps—worth the disgrace Bryda would certainly be in with nurse. Such peals of laughter followed each shower that the quiet cows in the fields beyond lifted up their great heavy heads, and stared with brown eyes of mild astonishment.



Maurice filled the syringe and set to work.

Can you imagine the sort of figure Bryda was when grandmother came out in her wheel-chair to take a turn in the sunshine? Soaked from head to foot; streams of clean water, and others of the horribly smelling stuff into which she had plunged, pouring off her in all directions! She did

indeed look a miserable little guilty thing, hanging her head while grandmother looked at her through her gold eyeglass, evidently so surprised and shocked that she could find no words for a few minutes, and at last could only tell her she must never! never! never! do such dreadful things again. If she did, the consequences would be

* * * * * *

This row of stars must stand for those dreadful consequences, for Bryda never heard them! Uncle James and grandfather had come up by this time, and she fled, as fast as wet, clinging clothes would let her, to the house. It was "out of the frying-pan into the fire," though, for nurse's wrath was really something too dreadful; and the way in which she ended, by saying that she supposed Miss Bryda would like better to make mud pies in the streets than to play with other Christians, hurt the child's feelings dreadfully. I am sorry to say she walked out of the nursery with damp, smooth hair and a clean frock, but with her head so very much in the air that her namesake, Saint Bride, or Bridget, or Bryda, would have been quite shocked.

"You see, Cousin Salome," she said afterward, "it was such a dose of disgraces, and I meant to be so wise, and clever, and useful."

"Did you *ask* to be made wise, and clever, and useful?" asked Salome gently.

Bryda hung her head. She had forgotten that. I am afraid she dressed so quickly in the morning to join Maurice that she never remembered to ask the Helper of the helpless to make her what she would like to be.

"I have been so miserable, Cousin Salome," she added;

"I don't believe Mary, Queen of Scots, could have been more wretched if she had had her head cut off three times running."

How this was to be managed did not seem to strike Bryda as puzzling. She and Maurice had so often acted the execution of Mary of Scotland, with an armchair for the block, and an umbrella for an ax, that they were quite used to the queen having her head cut off very often without minding it in the least, or being any the worse for it afterward.

But, certainly, it is very tiresome when our most amusing games end in some mischief that we never dreamed of doing! It was not so very long before this dreadful accident in the tub that Bryda, who had been reading English history, told Maurice they would act King Canute and his courtiers on the seashore.

So she put two chairs, and collected all the water she could from every jug and water-bottle she could find, so as nearly to fill a bath placed in front of the two chairs on which she and Maurice sat.

"So they put chairs close by the seashore as the tide came in," related Bryda, "and the little waves came nearer and nearer. And the courtiers said, 'O king, let us move a little higher up.' But Canute said, 'Why should we? Did you not say I was such a great king that no doubt even the sea would obey me?' And the courtiers held their stupid tongues, for they knew very well that they had said so. But the tide kept on coming, and presently the courtiers got up and ran away, for the water was halfway up the legs of their chairs, and they had already been sitting with their knees up to their noses."

But here Bryda, trying to get herself into this graceful

position, lost her balance, and rolled off her chair, falling on the edge of the bath; which, of course, upset, and made a higher tide in the nursery than had ever been seen there before, for the water flowed in every direction, and the children, ashamed and frightened though they were, could not help laughing at the way in which a pair of Bryda's shoes floated about like little canoes, till one that had a hole at the side turned over and went down.

This happened at Bryda's own home, before her father and mother went away. Mother was not pleased, of course; but still she was not quite so dreadfully shocked as the grannies were at the adventure in the old tub.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT CAN I DO?

It was in a penitent frame of mind that Bryda awoke on Sunday morning. She would be really good and keep out of mischief all day long.

Cousin Salome was better this morning, and Bryda went in to see her after breakfast.

"No, dear, I cannot go to church," she said, when Bryda asked if she would go that morning; "but I dare say church will come to me. I shall read to myself, and think of all the people all over the world who are saying the same words of prayer, till my little room seems to grow into a piece of a great church." And Salome's white, thin face grew so bright and sweet that Bryda thought it looked like

an angel's face in a picture she had seen.

The idea helped her to sit much more still than usual in the old family coach, opposite the two dear old grannies.

Grandfather was a very polite old gentleman, and thought people nowadays too free and easy. Especially he held that no gentleman ever ought to drive with ladies with his hat on; so, as soon as he got into the carriage, he always took off his very well brushed tall hat, and fixed it by the brim in two ribbons fastened for the purpose along the carriage ceiling.

Grandmother always wore a bonnet of the shape that was in fashion when she was young, a curious coal-scuttle affair, which generally set Bryda wondering how the wrinkled old face looked when its pink cheeks were round, and whether, if she were to go to work with a piece of india-rubber, she could rub out the deep lines and get the young look back again.

Grandmother's eyes were dim, and she liked to have the lessons and the hymns found for her. Bryda sometimes did not care to do this; because, if the hymn were a short one, it was sometimes half over before she had found her own place, and was able to join, as she dearly liked to do, in the singing.

But to-day she really did want to be of use, so she did this small duty cheerfully, and was rewarded by the happy way in which the old lady smiled and nodded over the big printed book.

The sermon seemed to have to do, in a most curious way, with the very things of which Bryda had been thinking, and she quite started when the rector's voice said suddenly, "Nothing to do!" and there stopped. "Nothing to

do," he said, "when the whole world is full of things that want doing! The harvest ripe, but the laborers idle! The people hungry, and those who have the loaves and fishes keeping them—wasted, unused!"

The clergyman went on to speak of works that men and women might do, and Bryda nestled close against grandfather's shoulder and thought sadly, "When I am grown up I may be of some use, but what a long time off that is!" But presently she looked up again very brightly as the kind old rector went on:

"And now, what shall I say to the little ones? Just this, that the Father needs them quite as much as their elders. They may not be able to do great works, to reap the harvest field, but they may help with cords of love to bind the sheaves; they may glean the scattered ears, and make a little sheaf of good corn. The Lord took a "few small fishes" to serve His great purpose; He will take little hands and feet and hearts, and make them do His will. Only the little ones must be *willing*."

Yes! But he had not told Bryda what she might do, and how to set about doing the Lord's will seemed to her very puzzling.

She wondered about it the whole way home, and made a little plan, which she determined to carry out at once after luncheon. When grown-up people were very good, Bryda knew that they were fond of caring for the poor, and that then they generally carried soup to those who were sick, and read the Bible aloud in cottages. In her own town home she had never been into the houses of the poor at all; indeed, these houses were so hidden away behind the handsome streets in which the rich lived, that she hardly knew there were such places. But here, in the little village outside grandfather's lodge gates, she knew poor people

lived, mostly in neat cottages with honeysuckle climbing over their trellised porches. There were most likely nice old women there, who sat knitting in their tidy room, with spectacled eyes, and caps as white as snow. It would be nice to go there, and surely to visit them would be useful, and would please Him who made use of a "few small fishes" to do His work when He was on earth.

Full of this happy thought, Bryda descended to the kitchen. The servants'-hall dinner was just over, the kitchen-maid was washing plates in the scullery, and cook was sitting by the kitchen window with a very clean apron and very smart cap; while by her stood a tall young shepherd, in his Sunday best, and a flower in his coat.

Bryda made her request to cook, namely, that she might have a little soup in a jug.

"Whatever do you want it for, miss?" asked the cook, evidently ill-pleased by the interruption.

"I want to do good to the poor," answered she, looking up seriously at the cross face.

"Dear! miss: what an old-fashioned child you are!" cried cook. But she fetched the soup, and Bryda was much surprised to see that it was a cold bright jelly, very nice to carry, as there could be no fear of spilling it on her fresh Sunday frock. So off she started, and walked quickly down the avenue and out into the pretty village, with her soup and her testament. But now came a new puzzle—Bryda knew none of the people in the village. To which house should she go?

Looking round, she saw that one of the houses looked much poorer than the others. The little garden was full of weeds, the porch shabby and broken, with creepers that

sadly wanted nailing, hanging loosely from the wall, one poor rose quite bent to the earth with heavy blossoms. Everything looked neglected, and Bryda thought the people must be very poor indeed, since their home looked so wretched. Timidly walking up to the door, for her courage began to fail her a little, she tapped gently.

"Open the door, Betsy," said a gruff voice inside; to which another voice answered, grumbling:

"Can't you do it yourself, you stupid old woman?"

Then the door opened suddenly, and Bryda saw a rough-looking girl of about fifteen, with a very dirty face, shock head, and untidy, torn dress, whose voice was as rough as her look, holding the door.

"Now, then, what do you want?" she said, frowning fiercely at her trembling visitor. "D'yer want to know the way, or to ax a glass of water? That's all folks like you ever troubles folks like us for, 'cept when we're ill, and then yer brings us tracks:" by which she probably meant tracts.

"If you please," said poor Bryda, "I thought some one might be ill here, and so I brought some soup."

"Come in, my dear, come in," said the old woman from her corner, and began coughing and wheezing very loudly, groaning so dreadfully between her attacks that Bryda was more frightened than ever, and thought she was going to die. Perhaps some soup would do her good; so she timidly entered the cottage, the girl immediately shutting the door behind her, set down her little basket, and began to open it.

"That's a nice bit o' chain round yer neck," said the rude girl, coming behind her. "I wonder if it wouldn't look

better on me." So saying, she quickly unclasped the pretty silver chain that hung round her visitor's neck, and put it on her own, before Bryda had time to object.

The old woman had, meantime, stopped coughing; she got up quickly and seized the jug of clear soup-jelly, and began poking her shriveled old fingers in, and so eating it. But the girl, seeing this, caught the hand that held the jug, while the old woman was eating and muttering all the time.

"Soup for the sick! Oh, yes, I am very ill! Bring me some soup, my dear; bring me plenty of soup." The rough girl caught the jug and tried to put her own fingers in, on which a struggle followed; the pitcher fell to the floor and broke, while the jelly was scattered everywhere; and poor Bryda, frightened almost out of her wits, left the two dreadful women to fight, opened the door, and ran as if they were after her, leaving locket and chain, and her basket, and feeling as if she were fortunate in escaping at all.

Rushing blindly on, she hardly knew where, only feeling that she must run, her foot caught in the root of a tree, and she fell violently to the ground, striking her head against the trunk. Stupid as she felt, in a moment she was trying to struggle up, when a hand was laid on her shoulder; and, thinking it must be the dreadful girl who had so frightened her, the poor girl screamed aloud.

"Hush, hush! don't scream that way!" said a kind, soothing voice; an arm gently raised her, and Bryda, looking up, saw an old man, with cheeks like a winter-apple, white hair, and a pair of the kindest, friendliest old eyes that ever looked through spectacles, standing beside her.

"Come into my cottage here, and rest a little."

Bryda looked round her, feeling that for this time she had had enough of the inside of cottages.

"Do now," went on the old man. "Don't be afeard, missy! Thy grandfather and old Roger were young together; ah! and good friends they were, too, for all I could beat him at wrestling; he never took it amiss, did Master George—that's your grandad, little missy. Come in now, and welcome." Bryda gained a little courage at this speech, and followed the old man into his cottage, close to which she had fallen.

As she went she could see the rude girl looking out of her house and making ugly faces.

"Which she need not have done," said Bryda afterward; "she was *hideous* already!"

CHAPTER V.

OLD ROGER.

Directly Bryda was inside the old man's cottage she was able to collect her scattered wits, and look round at her kind friend and at his dwelling.

The little room into which she had come served as the old man's sitting-room and kitchen both; the door into what would naturally have been his little parlor was open, and she could see tools hanging up on neat wooden racks, half-finished chairs and boxes lying about, and in the center of the room a carpenter's bench and turning-lathe. The

carpenter himself wore a very old-fashioned dress, long blue knitted stockings, strong low shoes with buckles, a scarf wound round and round his throat, so that two little points of very white collar came just under his chin, and a funny old brown coat with peculiar-looking buttons.

He drew a chair for Bryda near the hearth on which burned a small wood fire, and above which were a great many memorial cards in frames—wonderful works of art, with very black backgrounds and very white tombs, over which leaned in exhausted attitudes drooping female figures, supposed to be lamenting the departed in the tombs, while usually a large weeping willow languished in one corner of the picture.

The carpenter himself sat down, where he had evidently been sitting before, at a small table, on which was a very large Bible with pictures in it.

As he did so his eyes rested on the opposite wall, on which was a quaint old woodcut, representing the Christ in Joseph's workshop at Nazareth, with a glory round His heady busily making a table. Bryda saw, it too, and could not help noticing the look of pleasure that came into the old man's face, as if he had suddenly seen a very dear friend.

"You're a carpenter, Mr. Roger?" said Bryda, trying not to feel shy.

"Ay, ay," answered the old man, turning his spectacled eyes slowly from the picture to her face. "I make chairs and tables, and all else that I've strength for, just as He did," pointing to the picture. "He made them for over twenty years, but I've made them now for twice that, and more. Nigh on to seventy years I've done the same work as He did; and whenever I do a real neat job, missy, I say to

myself, "That's right, Roger; do 'em better and better still, and some day you'll do one that He needn't a-been ashamed of."

"Do you think the Lord made the best chairs and tables?" asked Bryda, wondering. She had been so much more used to think of our Redeemer as He taught, and worked miracles, and went about doing good, than as the carpenter who worked quietly in a little out-of-the-way village.

"I dunno about the best, missy; maybe He never had the best teaching leastways, not to make grand folks' furniture. But I know every nail He drove was put in true and straight, and never a bit of bad wood used, or a place people wouldn't see left unfinished. All the work He did was the best He knew to do—that I know right well, missy."

Bryda sighed. She had come out to try and do some of the Lord's own work—to help the poor. And she had failed so horribly, with the best intentions! The old carpenter heard her sigh.

"Tell old Roger how you got into trouble, missy," he said; "and maybe a cup of tea would freshen you after all's done."

It was only half-past three, but the old man got up and bustled about, laying tea on the clean deal table, with a cloth still cleaner, for Bryda and himself, a big loaf, and a little bit of country butter. Then he put the kettle on to boil, and sat down opposite Bryda to watch it, while she told all the story of her adventure to her new friend, beginning with the scrape of yesterday, and Cousin Salome's story, and ending by saying sadly that it seemed as if there was no use for her in the world.

"Don't fret, my dear; don't fret," said the kind old man; "the Lord has a use for everything and everybody, if they'll ask Him to show the way. Why, the dear Lord had need of a donkey once, and He sent to ask for it. Didst ask Him what to do, little miss, before thou went?"

Bryda hung her head. That she had not done.

"That's where the fault was," said Roger thoughtfully. "What dost think 'ud happen if I tried to do squire's work, or parson's? They wouldn't thrive with me, for sure."

At this moment the cottage door opened, and the object of Bryda's terror, the shock-headed girl, entered. In one hand she held Bryda's locket and chain, in the other her basket, both of which she thumped down upon the table, so that all the tea-things rattled, merely saying, "There, take yer things, and don't come near us no more!" She bounced out again, and banged the door behind her.

"So it was Moll Dawson as freckened ye!" said Roger, when she was gone; "she's a real bad 'un, that girl. I'm thinking she's one of those lambs that run further off because they hear the Shepherd calling."

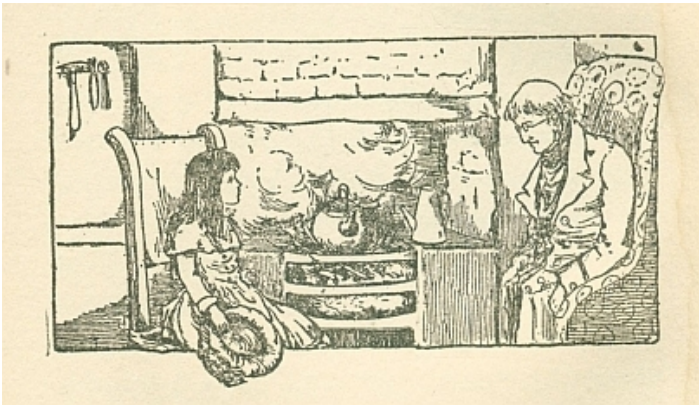
"I shall never dare to go near her house again," said Bryda; "but I am glad she did not steal my locket and chain. And I wish I could help somebody who is sick or very poor," she added, returning to her first idea.

The old carpenter leaned his elbows on his knees, and looked at Bryda very earnestly.

"When I were a young 'un," he said, "and lived in a part of the country far away from here, there was a cold, clear spring as bubbled up by the roadside, with the best water in all the country round, that never dried up. And

they called it 'The Child's Well,' and told a pretty story about it."

"Oh, do tell me!" said Bryda eagerly, roused at once by the idea of a story, like a dog at the scent of game.



"Well," continued the old man, "they say that once, long years ago, there was a little lassie troubled in mind like you, missy, and wanting to do a bit o' work for the dear Lord. So every day, when she left her little white bed, she knelt down and prayed summat like this: 'Dear Lord,' says she, 'give me a little bit of Thy great work to do.' And all day long she was kind and gentle, and always doin' a hand's turn for some one, if it was only mindin' a babby while the mother went out.

"But she didn't understand, ye see, missy, that such bits o' things could belong to the Lord's work. Till one day, as the story goes, when it was a holiday, all the chicks went out, and were going some way off to play. Just as they got a little way out of the village, on the dusty, hot road, they met an old man, very foot-sore, and old and tired-lookin'. So he says, 'For dear pity's sake, little 'uns, give me a little

water.' But the well was some way back, and the childer in a hurry to go and play, so they one and all told him to go on furder, and he'd find what he wanted. All but this little maid: she stayed looking wistfully at the old man, though the others called to her to come on. 'Sit down,' she says, 'till I fetch you some water,' and off she runs back to the village, fills a cup, and brings it back steady, not spillin' a drop. But when she came where she left the old man sitting, there was a beautiful figure, all in a white dress with, gold about it, and such a face as she had never seen before. And He took the cup and put it to His lips, and then with a voice like the sound of many waters—so she told the people after—He told her, 'Even a cup of cold water, given to the very least, shall have its reward.' And He poured out the rest of the water, and where it fell this spring rose up. And while the little maid looked at it, all on a sudden He was gone."



And where the water fell this spring rose up.—Page 59.

And where the water fell this spring rose up.

"Was it an angel that she saw?" asked Bryda, in an awe-struck tone.

"Some say it was an angel, some say it was the dear Lord Himself," said the old carpenter, bowing his head reverently. "But I don't rightly know, missy; I don't rightly know."

Here the kettle made a distraction by boiling over, and old Roger took it off and made tea.

Then his little visitor, who had now quite recovered her spirits, suggested that it would be "awfully nice" if they had some buttered toast, and in two minutes he and Bryda were on two stools by the fire, each with slice of bread at the end of a fork, the old man and little girl as happy as it was possible to be.

They were just going to turn their pieces and toast the other sides, when suddenly the door opened, and Bryda's nurse entered like a whirl wind, and stood horror-struck on the threshold.

"Oh, Miss Bryda, you naughty, naughty girl! Whatever do you think your poor dear mother would say, seeing you sitting there, for all the world like a vulgar child, and every one up at the house running about distracted, because you're lost? Come away this minute!"



Bryda had nothing to say for herself. She meant to do good; but it was very naughty to slip away "unbeknown," as nurse would say, and frighten every one.

The old carpenter had tea alone after all, and Bryda went sorrowfully home with her scolding nurse.

CHAPTER VI.

UNCLE JACK'S STORY.

Uncle Jack came home next day, and Bryda's spirit rose from freezing to a very high point indeed when she saw him come into the garden, where she was sitting rather sadly, with knitted brows, very busily thinking, and staring hard at nothing. She was trying to think how it was that she could not manage to be of more use; and that is a very deep subject to think about when you are only nine years old.

"Though, after all," said Bryda to herself, "lessons may do me some good. When things are disagreeable, like doses and lessons, people say they are for your good; but I don't see how they can do any one else good."

Just as she was thinking this, a merry whistled tune came through the trees. Nobody could whistle like Uncle Jack.

"What's the matter, maiden all forlorn?" asked his cheery voice. "Here comes the man all tattered and torn to rouse you up!"

"Oh, Uncle Jack!" said Bryda sorrowfully, "I am of no use."

"No use! who cares about that? Perhaps you were made for ornament, like the roses, and butterflies, and nice little singing-birds."

"Ornament's no use," went on Bryda, sadly still.

"Isn't it? If the world had no birds, and no flowers, and no butterflies, and no children, only hard-working men and women and cart-horses, what sort of place would it be?"

"Very dull," said Bryda quickly.

"So I should think. And supposing the birds were all harnessed to carts, and the flowers mown down for hay, and the children set to work in offices all day long, would that be nice?"

Bryda laughed. "No, indeed, Uncle Jack."

"Well, then, Bryda's work is to look merry, and good-tempered, and happy, as if she was a tame sunbeam that the grannies kept to amuse them." Bryda laughed still

more.

"Uncle Jack do you know you are horribly nice?" she said, dragging him down to a seat.

"Horribly nice? What sort of niceness is that? Like raspberry jam, or pet kittens, or troublesome children?" All these are nice, and horrible too. Jam is horrible when it makes you ill, kittens when they scratch, children when they behave badly."

"I wish I could grow up all at once," said Bryda, with a sigh; "and then I should never get into scrapes again, and have grandmother calling me Bridget."

This was Bryda's idea of the worst thing that could be said to her; when she was naughty her own mother, and the grannies too, called her Bridget, instead of using her pet name.

"Would you like all other children to grow up too, and have only men and women in the world? Oh, poor Bryda! how dull you would be! Supposing I were to tell you a story about a country where something of the sort happened?"

"Please, please do!" cried Bryda; "only please, Uncle Jack, don't let it have a moral. Miss Quillnib used to tell me stories when it was too wet to go out after lessons, and there was always a moral—something about me, you know. And that spoiled the story, just the way powders spoil raspberry jam."

Uncle Jack laughed at his little niece's fancies, then settled himself comfortably on the garden seat, lit his pipe, and went on talking between the puffs, telling his promised story.

UNCLE JACK'S STORY.

"Once upon a time," began Uncle Jack, "since we know no fairy stories are worth hearing unless they begin with 'once upon a time.'

"Once upon a time there was a country ruled over by a king and queen who had no children. Having no children of their own, these sovereigns thought other people's children a nuisance. I am afraid they were like the fox, who said the grapes were sour because he could not reach them, for it was well known that they wanted some of these 'torments' very badly themselves."

"Don't call us torments, Uncle Jack," interrupted his little niece.

"Well, you see, madam, historians must be truthful. I am bound to say that the king and queen passed a law in which the children were described as 'pickles, torments, plagues, bothers, nuisances, worries,' and by twenty-four other titles of respect which I have forgotten. This law enacted:

"First—That the children were to be seen and not heard. Wherefore all children under the age of sixteen were to speak in a whisper and laugh in a whisper."

"They couldn't, Uncle Jack," broke in Bryda, "they could only smile!"

"Or grin," said Uncle Jack. "So you think that a cruel law, Bryda?

"Secondly—As the sight of a child set the royal teeth on edge, no child was to be allowed to set foot out of

doors, unless between the hours of twelve and one on any night when there was neither moon nor stars."

"At that rate they would never go out," said Bryda.

"Well, you see this was a law for the abolition of children; so they were to be suppressed as much as possible, of course.

"Then, thirdly, the law declared—That, as little pitchers have long ears, no child should ever hear the conversation of grown-up people. Therefore children were never to be admitted into any sitting-room used by the elders of the family, nor into any kitchen or room occupied by servants."

"O-o-oh!" said Bryda; "did they keep them in the coal-cellar?"

"In some houses, perhaps."

"Fourthly—Forasmuch as play was not a profitable occupation, and led to noise and laughter, all play-time and holidays should at once be abolished."

"That was a very bad law," said Bryda warmly.

"Well, the law was passed, and was soon carried out; and any one coming to the city would have thought there were no children, so carefully were they kept out of sight. All the toy shops were closed, and confectioners were ordered, under pain of death, neither to make nor sell goodies. But one thing the king had forgotten, and that was that, after all, there were more children than grown people in the country. One family had nine children, another six, and so on; so that, counting the boarding-schools, there were just three times as many children as grown people in the capital. Well, after about a week of this treatment (for

the parents were compelled under threat of instant execution to carry it out), it happened that there came a night when at twelve o'clock, though it was not raining, there was neither moon nor star to be seen. So all the children in the city rushed forth into the park with Chinese lanterns in their hands, making quite a fairy gathering under the trees. Oh, how delicious it was! They ran and shouted, and played games and laughed, till suddenly one o'clock struck; and all the king's horses, and all the king's men, came to drive them to their homes again. But there were hundreds and hundreds of children, and only a few soldiers with wooden swords; for this was a very peaceable nation, and armed even its police with only birch rods. So one of the biggest boys blew a tin trumpet, and called all the children to him.

"'I vote we rebel,' he said. 'We will not stand this any more; let us drive away all the grown-ups, and have the town altogether to ourselves.'

"Now it so happened that a fairy had been watching all that went on in the town, and was not at all pleased. So when she heard this bold boy speak she thought it would be a good thing to let this rebellion be carried out. 'Serve 'em right,' she said; 'young and old shall all learn a lesson.'

"So she collected a few thousand fairies, and they flew to all the king's men, and whispered in their left ears dreadful things, which frightened them terribly and made them believe an immense army, instead of the troops of children, was coming to crush them all. Then the fairies whispered in their right ears that it would be wise to fly to a neighboring mountain where there was a large old fort, and there take refuge. So they galloped off as fast as the king's horses would carry them. Then the fairies flew all over the town and whispered the same things to all the grown-up people—fathers and mothers, old maids and old

bachelors—till they, too, tumbled out of bed, dressed in a terrible hurry, and fled to the mountain. Even the king jumped out of bed, tied up his crown in his pocket-handkerchief, and ran for his life in his dressing-gown, while two lords in waiting, or gentlemen of the bedchamber, rushed after him with the royal mantle of ermine, and the scepter and golden ball. The lord chancellor filled his pockets with new sovereigns from the mint (for he slept there to look after the money) and then he too ran, but rather slowly, for he had the woolsack on his back, and it was pretty heavy. When they asked him why he took the trouble he answered that he thought the ground might be damp, and he already had a cold in his head.

"Well, all the elders being gone, the children were left in possession of the city, at which you may well suppose they were greatly astonished. They went on with their games for awhile; but then the lanterns began to go out, and one after another they grew very sleepy. So the boy with the tin trumpet blew it again, and commanded that every one should now go to bed, and that a meeting should be held at twelve o'clock next day in the park, at which every child should appear.

"Appear they did, in their Sunday clothes, those of them at least who cared for finery; there were no mothers or nurses to object. All were in great delight at having no one to rule them.

"'I shall never go to bed at eight!' said one.

"'I shall never eat rice pudding—horrid stuff!'

"'I shall never take any more doses!'

"'I shall never do any more lessons!'

"'Nor I! nor I! nor I!' shouted one after another; 'we shall all do only what we like! How happy we shall be!'

"Only one little maid whispered, with a tear trembling on the long lashes of her blue eyes, 'Dottie wants mother!' But Dottie was soon comforted, and ran about as merrily as ever.

"Meantime the elder boys and girls held a very noisy Parliament, in which there were never less than five speaking at once. After a great deal of chatter they determined to set up a queen; and a very pretty little girl called May was chosen, and crowned with a crown of flowers.



"Next, Queen May and her council of six, three boys and three girls, ordered that a big bonfire should be made of all lesson-books and pinafores, for they thought pinafores were signs of an inferior state, of being under command, as servants sometimes think their caps are.

"The next law was that all the raspberry jam in the city should be set aside for the use of the queen and her court, and for those who were invited to the royal tea parties. There was a little grumbling about this, but finally the

grumblers gave in. All this time troops of children came pouring in from the neighboring villages with pinafores on the end of broom sticks as flags of rebellion. Being pretty hungry, they dispersed for dinner, which in most of the houses was a very curious meal, as, of course, no one could cook, so they had to forage in the kitchens and storerooms, while bands of hungry young folks stormed the confectioners' shops, and dined off ices and wedding-cake.

"Then they opened the toy-shops and put them in charge of parties of children and gradually the other shops were treated in the same way, for buying and selling is always a game children like, and it was such a treat to have real things to sell. Only money was such a trouble: they were always forgetting to bring any, and the young shopkeepers never were sure if a shilling or a sovereign was the right price for a thing. Therefore they concluded to do without it; and costly things were bought for kisses, while cheap ones were to be had for saying, 'If you please,' or, if they were very small, as a penny bun, for instance, then 'please' was enough."

"How nice!" said Bryda.

"Well, for a whole week there never was such happiness as the children enjoyed. Games from morning to night, bread and jam three times a day, no lessons, no forbidden things, and a queen of their own age in place of the tyrant king.



For a whole week there were games.

"But when a week was over some little murmurs began to arise. Every morning, I ought to say, the queen sat on her throne in the royal palace, to receive any of her subjects who liked playing at being courtiers, and she and her council then settled any difficulty that arose about rules of games, about the way to make the best toffee and any other important question.

"On this particular morning, then, rather more than a week after the establishment of the Children's Kingdom, a very large throng entered the queen's presence. Foremost came a troop of boys and girls, who led in a pale, serious-looking boy as a prisoner, and brought him to Queen May's feet.

"'What is the charge against this prisoner?' asked the queen, with dignity. 'Don't all speak at once,' she added, so hastily that several courtiers giggled.

"'Please your majesty,' said a boy, stepping forward, 'we caught him in the act—the very act—of learning lessons!'

"'Lessons!' cried the whole court, in every tone of disgust, anger, grief and dismay.

"'Lessons!' screamed the queen, and at once fainted away."

"She didn't!" said Bryda indignantly.

"Don't you think the shock was great enough?" asked Uncle Jack. "Besides, she felt it part of her royal duty, perhaps.

"Anyhow, they tickled her with feathers, and put burned cork to her nose till she had a black mustache; and one boy brought a red-hot poker, which he said he had heard was a good thing, though he did not quite know how it was applied.

"It was the best remedy, certainly, for on its appearance the queen jumped up shrieking, and declared she was perfectly well.

"Then the queen proceeded to try the prisoner, and requested the whole court to act as jury. It was a very sad case of youthful depravity—the criminal had carefully kept this one book, 'Somebody's Arithmetic,' or 'Hangnail's Questions,' to gloat over in secret; and even now was not at all penitent, but declared, when asked what he had to say for himself, that it was 'stupid, and a bore,' to play games all day long, and he was sick of them.

"The jury could not agree as to what was to be done with such an offender, and so he was allowed to go, and bidden 'not to do it again,' and the queen went on to the next difficulty. Here the throne-room became quite full of children, all in great perplexity; for the matter was this, that the food supply was running short. The confectioners'

shops were nearly empty; there was plenty of jam, but very little bread; and one or two boys, who had breakfasted on jam out of a pot, eaten with a spoon, said, 'They didn't know how it could be, but somehow they thought it did not quite agree with them.'

"This was really very serious. Could no one cook?

"Well, several had tried to make puddings; but somehow, though they ought to have been quite right, *something* was wrong, and no one would eat them. One girl had bravely made some apple-dumplings, and baked them quite brown; but then she could not find out how to get the apple in, so they were no more than hard balls, and not real apple-dumplings at all.

"'What are we going to do?' said Queen May sorrowfully.

"A dead silence reigned.

"'I know!' said a boy called Eric, starting forward suddenly, and all eyes turned to this owner of a bright idea. 'I know!' he said, brandishing a many-bladed knife; 'I'll kill a pig!'

"A murmur of horror arose from the girls.

"'Oh, no!' said Queen May politely; 'my faithful subject, we will not let you make yourself so miserable."

"Oh, *I* don't mind!' cried Eric; 'really, you know, I should *like* it!'

"'I'll hold him for you!' cried several boys at once.

"'Quite as if they liked it,' whispered the girls.

"But Queen May interposed, and said the court should break up and go to blind-man's-buff. At the same hour next day any one who had a bright idea should come and tell it. For the rest of the day she, at least, did not mean to bother her head. If a pig were killed, it would have to be cooked. And shaking her curls, which were like a crown of gold, Queen May jumped off her throne and ran out into the park.

"Presently the Fairy Set-'em-right came flying over the town, and saw all the children running about and shrieking with laughter.



The fairy came flying over the town.

"'Bless my broomstick!' she said, for she had borrowed one from a witch to fly upon, saying she had rheumatism in her left wing. 'Bless my broomstick! this won't do at all!'

"She did not notice that a great many children were standing about in groups, whispering—what they dared not say aloud—that they were getting tired of games all day, and of nothing to eat but sweet cakes and jam at meals.

"'I should really, really and truly, like some boiled mutton,' said Master Archie, who was known to have had a special dislike to that dish.

"'I know what I shall do,' said the fairy; 'I shall make these children feel like grownups, and then I shall fly off to the mountain, and make the grown-ups feel like children: and if *that* doesn't bring them to their senses, I am sure I don't know what will.'"

At this exciting point a servant came to tell Uncle Jack that grandfather wanted him, and he went off whistling, promising Bryda the rest of the story "next time."

But as she did not know when "next time" would be, it was rather provoking.

CHAPTER VII.

BEPPO.

Bryda sat still where Uncle Jack had left her, thinking over his story.

"You see, my dear," she said to herself (Bryda had a funny way of calling herself "my dear" when she talked to herself, and told herself stories, or read herself little moral

lectures as Miss Quillnib her governess used to do); "You see, my dear, the thing is this: when any one tells a story they can make things happen so that there shall always be a good moral. Now, I am sure that town in the story would be a very nice place, but Uncle Jack is sure to make everything go wrong!"

Here nurse came and carried Miss Bryda off for a walk. They went through the village, and old Roger was at his work. The house-door was open, and he nodded a pleasant "Good-day."

Bryda lingered a moment.

"Isn't this a nice day, Roger?" she said.

"Ay, ay, little miss," answered the carpenter, "it's one of the Lord's own days. He doesn't give us too many of them, for fear we'd get too fond o' this place, and not be in a hurry to go to our Father's house."

Nurse had stopped to talk to the blacksmith. It was funny, but she always had something special to tell the blacksmith; and he would keep a horse waiting ever so long to be shod while they talked, though really they never seemed to say anything very interesting.

However, Bryda knew she would have some time to herself, so she walked into old Roger's cottage, and sat down on a bench among the sawdust and shavings.

"I suppose you are very poor, aren't you, Roger?" she asked, after watching him silently for some time.

"Poor, missy? Well, maybe some folks 'ud think so, but there's no man in the village richer, for all that!"

"Then why don't you have a grander house?"

"I'll go to my grand house by and by, missy," he answered, driving a screw carefully. "Ah! a grand house that is indeed! It's making ready for me all this time; but when once I go, I'll not come back here again!"

"I should think not!" answered Bryda, looking round the poor cottage. "Is it a palace, Roger?" Bryda's idea of a palace was something very splendid—golden tables, and silver chairs, and all the rest of the furniture to match.

"Ay, you may well call it a palace! There's no house hereabouts would match that one," answered Roger, in his cheery voice.

"Does any one else live there?"

"Oh, yes! All my brothers and sisters—the children of the King."

"Miss Bryda! Miss Bryda! You troublesome child!" called the nurse's voice. "Come along, this minute! wherever have you got to—poking in them low places?"

"Nurse did not think the forge a low place," thought Bryda, but she was obliged to go.

"Nurse," she said, when that worthy person had done scolding, "do you know, I am sure I may go and see that old carpenter, for he is not a common man at all, but a prince in disguise Only fancy! Just like a fairy tale!"

"Fairy grandmother!" said nurse, who was not in the best of tempers; and they went on for some way in silence through the village.

A little outside the village stood a neat white house, in which the doctor lived, and in front of this a woman in an Italian dress was turning the handle of a barrel-organ,

while a handsome boy of five or six, or perhaps older—for though small, he had an old look in his face—stood holding a little tin mug to collect pennies. There were no pennies in it; the woman looked dreadfully pale and ill, and coughed without stopping, and the child's big, black eyes looked very sorrowful.

The doctor's servant came out of the white house, and roughly ordered them away, with abuse which shocked Bryda to hear.

Evidently the kind doctor was not at home, for he would have been sorry for the poor sick woman, who was trying to earn a few pence when any one who was better off would have been in bed, carefully nursed.

Bryda had a penny; she meant to buy sugar-candy, but she dropped it into the little tin, and was rewarded by a bright smile on the little face, and "Tank you, signorina;" by which the little boy meant, "Thank you, miss." That was nicer than sugar-candy.

"I can't abide furriners," said nurse. "Aren't there any little white children for you to give your money to, Miss Bryda, without encouraging those outlandish folks to beg?"

Bryda did not answer; she was wondering if the Lord would think her penny of any use for His poor. It was a very little coin, but it was all she had then. It would buy a bit of bread; and, perhaps, one of the "few small fishes" was not worth much more.

As they came home again Bryda saw the same woman and child toiling along the road in front of them, entering the village again.

The woman staggered under the weight of her barrel-organ; she seemed very faint and weak; either she must be very ill, or she had had no proper food. Perhaps both misfortunes were hers.

A baker's man went riding by with some loaves in a basket. As he passed the Italian woman the horse seemed frightened, either at her white sleeves or at the instrument she carried, and Bryda saw him sway violent and throw one of the loaves out upon the road. The baker did not miss it, and rode on faster, beating his horse.

But the little Italian boy sprang at it; and Bryda felt sure he was cruelly hungry from the way in which he seized the bread and put it to his mouth. He did not bite it though, but changing his mind, ran to his mother, and held it out.

"*Madre mia, pane!*" he cried. "My mother, bread!" he meant.

The lad's mother looked at the loaf of bread for a moment—only a moment; then she shook her head, and spoke to the child in Italian. The baker had stopped at a house by the roadside; the boy was off like the wind, and soon came up breathless, and handed him the loaf.

The baker was a kind-hearted man, and gave the child a roll, with which he ran back to his mother. Then he broke it in two and offered her the large half, beginning at once to munch the other himself. The mother took a little of the piece he had given her, but she seemed too faint and weak to eat more than a mouthful.

By this time Bryda and her nurse had overtaken them.

"Little boy," said Bryda shyly, all her pity roused by

the scene, "where do you live?"



"Little boy," said Bryda shyly, "where do you live?"—Page 96.

"Little boy," said Bryda shyly, "where do you live?"

The child was not shy; he looked her full in the face with his big black eyes, and pointed to the village.

"In house-yesterday-next-day," he said in his broken English.

"You are living there for a few days, are you?" asked Bryda, puzzled.

The boy nodded.

"Do tell me your name?" she asked again.

"Beppo, signorina."

Here nurse again interposed. She was a cross-grained woman, very faithful to her duty, but with little sympathy to spare, and she did not at all approve of "Miss Bryda's notions," about caring for the poor.

"When you get your governess and plenty of lessons to do, you won't be so anxious about them low creatures, miss," she told Bryda. "Learn to play tunes on the piano, and paint pictures like other young ladies—that's what you've got to think about."

But poor little Bryda, though she often, as we have seen, got into trouble and mischief (for she was not at all a model little girl), did really want to serve the Lord Jesus, of whose great love she had learned, and her great wish was to know what a little girl could do for Him.

The Lord Jesus was always helping the poor, and she knew His faithful servants did the same, so it was a sad puzzle to her to find such treatment as Moll Dawson's, when she tried to do some good. Perhaps Uncle Jack was right, and she ought not to have tried to do what was only grown people's work.

But here was this little Italian boy. He looked sad, and seemed hungry and very poor, and his mother was so ill. How sad it was!

Bryda knelt by the window when she came home, and looked up at the beautiful blue sky, where a happy lark was singing—so high up he ought to be nearly at the doors of heaven.

"Our Father," she prayed, "let me help Beppo a little, for Jesus Christ's sake."



"Our Father," Bryda prayed, "let me help Beppo."—Page 88.

"Our Father," Bryda prayed, "let me help Beppo."

And this little prayer of "one of His little ones" went straight to the ear of the loving Father, who is always more ready to hear than we to pray; and very soon it was

answered.

God has so much work for hands, and brains, and tongues, and feet. In this world a child who loves "helping mother," can do many a little thing for her, and the work is sooner done, because of such small helps. And so the great Father, who uses the little dewdrops to water His thirsty world, will give to every happy, willing worker *something* to do, little works for the little ones, more to His great angels, and at last heaven shall be full of "servants" who "serve Him" and see His face, and are never sorrowful, or stupid, or tired, or disappointed in anything any more.

When Bryda had asked God to let her help Beppo she felt much happier. She would talk by and by to Cousin Salome about him.

Meantime she had the greatest of all treats, for in the afternoon Uncle Jack was going to drive in his dogcart, with Paddy in the shafts; and the pace at which Paddy went was what Uncle Jack called "greased lightning." Anyhow, it was something very different from the solemn jog, jog, jog, one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four, of Gog and Magog, when the grannies took her out, and old John dozed on the box.

"It's so dull to have to drive alone," said Uncle Jack at lunch, with a heavy sigh.

"Call for Captain Tomkins, and take him out," said grandmother.

"I'm so shy," answered Uncle Jack sadly. "But if I could find a young lady, a very young lady of about eight or so, to come with me——"

"Oh! Uncle Jack, take *me*!" burst out Bryda. And so he

did; and best of all, when they were fairly started, Uncle Jack lit a big cigar, and between the puffs went on with his fairy tale.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REST OF THE STORY.

"So the Fairy Set-'em-right waved her hand over the troop of children. 'You shall all feel like grown-up people,' she said.

"In a few minutes a strange change began to come over them all. A great game of 'blind-man's-buff' was going on, when suddenly several of the girls put themselves into very stiff, solemn attitudes, just like old maids, and said, 'Really, they thought they were almost afraid they could not play any more. Such games, especially at their time of life, were hardly quite proper.' So they would not go on. Others, again, declared that there was nothing they so thoroughly enjoyed as watching people playing at these kind of amusements; but for themselves—well, if the others did not mind, they would like just to sit quietly and watch. So they did, and presently some of the boys began stroking that part of their faces where a mustache might some day grow, and remarking that 'Haw! don't know, you know—a—this sort of thing was all very well for schoolboys, but really—a—we could not, you know.'"

This sentence Uncle Jack brought out with a very funny drawl, the boys being turned in to dreadfully

fashionable fellows.

"The crowning point," continued Uncle Jack, "was reached when the blind man, pushing down his bandage, stood still, and addressed this altered crowd very seriously indeed. 'What miserable folly is this?' he asked. 'Shall we mortals waste our precious flying moments in—in what, my brethren?'

"You see he had turned into a preacher," explained Uncle Jack.

"'In what a miserable, frivolous occupation! catching each other!—nay, only *trying* to catch each other! Poor fools and blind! let us cease, I say—' But he had no one to say it to, for the whole audience had gone off in different directions, and the preacher had only his little brother of five left to listen to his wise words. 'Come along, Tommy,' said he, 'I will try and find some one for you to play with, little man.'

"'Play with!' answered the little brother in a tone of utter surprise. 'My dear sir, I have no time to play. Letters, telegrams, appointments by scores fill my time. Let me tell you, sir, there is no busier man than your humble servant in the whole country.'

"With which he turned about and strode off with the longest strides his little legs in their blue sailor trousers could take; for he had become a man of business.

"'This is too absurd,' muttered the elder, and went off to look for the church of which he was vicar.

"The same remarkable change came over all the children. One little brat who was busy teasing an unfortunate kitten stopped suddenly, and rushed off in

search of pen and paper, with which he returned, and began at once to compose an ode 'To Tabitha.'

"'Fairest pussy ever seen!
With mine eyes of clearest green,
Fly me not.'

That was how it began, for he had become a poet."



Tommy had now become a poet.—Page 93.

Tommy had now become a poet.

"I thought poets wrote about knights and ladies, and green fields and the moon," remonstrated Bryda.

"So they do. But sometimes they want a new subject, and this young genius thought he had found one.

"Well, all the children, without losing their child faces and figures, turned into the sort of people they would be when they were grown up. So of course their games seemed very dull, and they wanted grown-up occupations. But not knowing quite how to set to work, they were all lounging vaguely about, when the clear notes of a bugle sounded through the city.

"This was the well-known signal for the assembling of the whole population in the park, and off went all these queer grown-up children to the place of meeting. Here they were met by Queen May, who sat on a garden-chair with her court around her, all looking very solemn.

"'My faithful subjects,' said the queen, 'I have sent for you to consider a very grave question. I regret to state that the affairs of this kingdom are in a condition which will, perhaps, be best described as unsatisfactory.'

"'Hear, hear!' said a gentleman of four, bowing gravely.

"'Hear, hear!' echoed many voices.

"'Perhaps the most unsatisfactory point is,' went on Queen May, who, you see, talked in very grown-up language, 'is, I say, the banishment of a large portion of the population; that portion, in fact, which we were formerly accustomed to call our elders and betters.'

"Cries of 'No, no!'

"Queen May went on to explain that after all they got on badly without these elders. With all their efforts the young folks had not strength or skill to do a variety of things, without which the round of life seemed likely soon

to come to a standstill. So she proposed that she and all who would go should start at once for the mountain and fetch home the exiles.

"There was some murmuring at this. The old law might be carried out, and the children made wretched again.

"'And—why, bless me,' said an elderly person of nine, as he fixed on a double eyeglass with gold rims, 'they might actually want to send me, me! to bed at eight o'clock!'

"'Proper conditions would be made,' the queen said.

"One after another all the objections were overcome, and a long procession started, with Queen May, mounted on a white pony, at its head.

"On arriving at the mountain they were greatly surprised to meet the king, that stern tyrant who wanted to stop all fun, running as hard as his legs could carry his fat body, with his crown on the back of his head, and a green net-bag tied on to the end of his scepter, chasing a white butterfly.

"'Please, your majesty,' began Queen May shyly; but the king only looked round for a moment, and ran on, then tumbled over a furze bush, so that his crown rolled far away, and the butterfly escaped, while he lay there kicking.

"The children were very much surprised at this, and thought the king must have gone mad, and, in fact, they felt very penitent, for they supposed his hurried flight must have been too much for the brain, so they were to blame for this terrible alteration.

"A little further on, however, they were still more surprised to see a circle of the most serious old maids in

the whole capital, ladies whose time was mostly spent in making flannel garments for the poor, or sitting at neat tea-tables with neat curls on each side of their faces, and a neat cat, curled on a neat cushion, in a neat chair, close at hand, and these old ladies were all screaming and laughing like children.

"These very respectable old ladies now looked anything but neat! Their curls were flying in all directions, and they were screaming with laughter, pinching each other, and making all sorts of silly jokes over a furious game of 'hunt the slipper.' For you see they had gone back to what they used to like when they were children.

"Queen May looked at them gravely.

"'Dear friends,' she said, 'at your age, is this decorous? Is it proper? Is it even ladylike?'

"'There it is! Catch it! Catch it!' cried one of the old ladies.

"'Come and play with us!' cried another.

"None of the rest paid any attention to the serious looks of the grown-up children, who went sadly on toward the fort, hoping to find some one more reasonable.

"The next person they saw was the lord chancellor, a bald, stout old gentleman, who was sitting on the woolsack, which, you remember, he had carried away on his back. He was very busy with a pipe, and the children thought he was smoking, and grew more hopeful. He might have some trace of good sense left, they thought, if he could care for such a grown-up pursuit."

Here Uncle Jack offered his cigar to Bryda politely; but she made a face and turned her head away.

"I don't want to be so grown-up as *that*," she said.

"Oh!" said Uncle Jack, with his funny face, that he always put on to tease Bryda. "Oh, I thought you wanted to grow up all of a sudden."

"Well—only for some things," answered she, feeling that Uncle Jack was taking a mean advantage in remembering her sayings, and bringing them up again. "Please go on," she added hastily.

Uncle Jack winked at her very slowly and solemnly; then took a good puff at his cigar, and went on.

"When they came up he was found to be blowing soap-bubbles!

"'A-ah!' he spluttered, trying to talk with the pipe in his mouth. 'D-don't break it, please! There!' as the bubble burst and vanished; 'it's too bad, I declare! Directly I get a really good one, big and bright, that always happens. Have a try,' he added, offering Queen May the pipe.

"'I say, my lord,' said the major-general commanding the royal army, coming up at the moment, 'can you tell me how to mend lead soldiers? I've tried gum and glue, and one of the maids of honor tried to sew one, but somehow they don't join properly. It's a horrid bore, and that fellow, the speaker, won't let me have a ride on his rocking-horse. I'd punch him, only he's six feet three, and as broad as he's long. So I don't know what to play at.'

"'It *is* slow,' answered the lord chancellor, pityingly. 'Never mind, old chap, come up to the fort and we'll make some toffee.'

"So the elderly gentlemen went off arm-in-arm, and Queen May shook her head sadly.

"'They are all mad, poor things! What are we to do?'

"'Hi! hi!' cried a voice, and looking round they saw that tall, handsome nobleman, the master of the horse, running toward them as fast as he could. At last, perhaps, they had found some one to speak sensibly to.

"'Hi! you fellows,' he cried breathlessly; 'stop a minute, will you? Is that a circus pony? and can he do tricks? Sit up with a hat on, and drink out of teacups, I mean.'

"'Certainly not,' replied Queen May, with her utmost dignity. 'I hardly understand, Lord Moyers, how you can ask such a strange question. Did you ever see a lady, especially if she were a crowned queen, riding a circus pony?'

"Lord Moyers giggled, and turned head-over heels on the spot, after which he rushed off again to join the rest of the House of Lords, who were playing 'hi! cockalorum,' close by.

"The procession went on very sorrowfully toward the fort. It grieved them to see this frivolity in those to whom they had been taught to look up.

"'Alas, my country!' sighed Eric, the boy who, you remember, had proposed to kill the pig before he was touched with the fairy wand.

"Perhaps it was on arriving at the gates of the fort that the very strangest sight was seen. The queen was a very stout and middle-aged person, of rather stern countenance, and here she was busy with a skipping rope—her hair loose, her royal robes tucked up, and her crown on one side.

"'It's the best fun and the finest exercise in the world,'

she gasped, 'If I could only skip twice to one turn of the rope!'

"And on she went, while the children watched. But there was something so utterly ridiculous about the sight that Queen May and her followers, after various vain efforts to suppress their mirth, burst into one peal of laughter, which rang merrily through the old fort, and over the hillside.

"It broke the charm, and in a moment the children became children again, and the grown people became as they were before.

"There was a large flat field on the mountain top, in front of the gates of the old fort, and here all the exiles were in a few minutes assembled.

"The king was about to address them, when in a moment, no one knowing how she came there, the Fairy Set-'em-right stood among them, close beside his majesty.

"'You have all learned a lesson, and I will put it into words for you,' she said."

"Oh, dear!" interrupted Bryda, "here comes the moral! Don't make a very hard one, Uncle Jack, please!"

He laughed. "I must finish this truthful story truthfully, miss.

"She said, turning to the king and queen:

"'Your fault was that you forgot you once were young yourselves.'"

Bryda nodded her head very wisely.

"'And you, children, forgot that you could not do without old people. That wicked law is at once repealed.'

"'Certainly, ma'am,' said the king, bowing.

"'Children are to be children, and behave as such, and be treated as such. Parents are parents, the children are not to forget that. Now go home all of you, and don't forget this one one caution, *I've got my eye on you*.'

"With these awful words the fairy vanished. And that's the end of the story."

"And a very nice ending, too!" said Bryda.

CHAPTER IX.

A PRINCE IN DISGUISE.

More good-tempered than usual next morning, nurse was easily persuaded by Bryda that the village would be quite the nicest direction for a walk. She wanted to see that nice old Roger again, and perhaps they might even meet Beppo. She begged a roll left from breakfast, and put it, wrapped in a sheet of old copy-book, with some pennies, in her pocket.

The blacksmith was in his forge, and had some very important news for nurse, and Roger was outside his door busily weaving the cane seat of a chair he had made, for he was a jack-of-two-trades, if not of all trades, and made chairs from beginning to end.

"Good morning, Roger," said Bryda, as she came up.

"Good morning, missy. A good morning it is, though not like yesterday. That was a sort o' wedding day, with the world in a green dress, covered with jewels made of dewdrops, while the birds sang a hymn, and the great gold sun came in his best blue dress to marry her," answered the poetical Roger.

"And to-day, Roger? What's that like?"

"All! to-day's a good honest workin' day, missy, made for the busy bees and all the Lord's workin' folk."

"Cats aren't working folk," said Bryda, stroking Roger's sleek tabby.

"Maybe cats' work is to keep lone folk company, missy," said the disguised prince, for as such his little friend always thought of him.

"Shall you have cats in your palace?" she asked.

"That'll be as the king pleases, missy. I do hope so, for I be main fond o' cats."

"Is tabby very old? she's very lazy."

"I don't rightly know how old she is. You see, missy, nigh on two years ago my housecat died. Well, I suppose the village cats told each other when they met on the house-tops at night. Anyhow I never could open my door of a morning that there wasn't one cat, or maybe two and three cats, applying for the situation, each one with a first-rate character from his last place."

Bryda laughed heartily. "How did they tell you?"

"How? Why, bless you, little miss, it's often easier to know what God Almighty's brutes mean than what men mean, for all we call the brutes dumb. Tell me all about it they did, rubbin' against me and purrin', how the master of one had gone away, and the mistress of another was dead; and how one was a real good mouser, and another was that honest he'd rather starve than steal.

"Well, the long and short of it is, missy, I took Mrs. Tabby for a month on trial, to see if she'd make a good housekeeper. An' we suited, she and I, and she's never given me warning yet, nor I her, so I don't think we'll part company till I go home."

"When are you going, Roger?" asked Bryda. She could not help puzzling a good deal over this story of the old man's, about his palace home; but he spoke so simply and naturally that she could not doubt that he spoke the truth.

"I don't rightly know," he answered slowly; "I'm thinking when it's ready they'll let me know. But I'd be main glad to stay a little longer now, Miss Bryda, for all I've often wearied to be there. Shall I show you why?"

"Please do."

The old carpenter got up and opened a door opposite to that which led to his own little room, and there Bryda saw a touching sight.



The poor Italian woman was sitting propped up with pillows in a straight-backed old armchair, with Beppo in her arms. The child seemed to have grown sleepy after play, or perhaps, like his countrymen, he was accustomed to take a nap at midday. At all events he was sleeping, and the poor sick mother was gently rocking the heavy boy, and singing a soft little Italian cradle song:

"Ninni, ninni, ninni, nanna,
Ninni, nanna, ninni, nolu,
Allegrezza di la mamma,
Addormentati, oh figliolu."

That is:

"Joy of thy mother,
Fall asleep, oh, my little son!"

How white she looked and how weary! She laid her finger on her lip, and looked at the curly black head on her knee. Roger closed the door softly, and went back to his seat on tiptoe.

"I think, missy," he said, "it won't be long before the Everlasting Arms are put round her, to soothe her gently to sleep, as she do the little 'un."

"Is she *dying*, Roger?" asked Bryda, in an awe-struck voice.

"Ay," answered the carpenter, wiping his spectacles, which had suddenly grown dim. "That little black head'll not long have a mother to lean against; though she'll want for nothing as I can get her; and doctor, he sent her full two pints o' stuff, all for nothing. But he shook his head, he did, and I know what he means by that only too well; he did it to my Liz twenty-five years ago, come March next."

Bryda felt very sorrowful. Her own mother had gone to India, but then she wrote letters, nice long ones, every week. And she would come back. But poor Beppo would have no letter from his mother if once she went away, as she knew Roger's loved wife Liz had done, for there was an old gravestone by the old church door with that one little word roughly cut upon it—"Liz." And on it last Sunday she had seen the old man lay a bunch of fresh flowers, as he passed in to pray.

"Will you share your riches with her, Roger—that money you told me you had stored away?" she asked.

"My hid treasure, missy? Ah, that I will! There's so much o' that—ah, so much!—that I might share it wi' every soul as passed the door and be none the worse off mysel'."

"You won't want it in your palace, will you? Or is there more of it there? Chests and chests of precious things all the palaces in fairy tales have in them. But they are only made up," added Bryda, with a little sigh. "That's the worst of fairy tales. But your treasures are really true, aren't they, Roger?"

"True when all else is false, missy; safe when all else is lost; real when all else is a sham."

Bryda longed to ask more about this wonderful wealth of the old man who looked so poor. He must be a miser, she thought.

"Roger, are all the king's sons as rich as you are? and his daughters? or are you the eldest?"

"There's enough for all alike, missy. No one's too rich or too poor in our Father's house. But our Elder Brother, missy, there's none like him—none. The only wonder is as he isn't ashamed of his sisters and brothers, so far as he is above them, and so much greater than ever since his work was finished."

"Oh, do tell me about him! Oh, nurse! don't go on yet, please!" implored Bryda, as nurse came up the little garden-path with hasty step.

But nurse would not stay. She always said she "couldn't abide that old Methody carpenter;" and the real reason of her dislike was that once before, when she had brought Bryda to stay with the grannies, old Roger had said something she did not care to hear, because she had helped to spread a cruel mischief-making story about the village.

So Bryda left her roll and her pence with Roger, and

went on with nurse.

Bryda had not seen the last of Beppo for that day. There was a private walk through the grounds, which led to the church. The grannies could not walk so far, and the old carriage always came to take them to church. But this afternoon, as Bryda was wandering in the garden, it struck her that she would like to take some flowers and put them on the grave of Roger's dear Liz. It would please the old man to see them there.

Bryda, of course, had never seen Liz.

"But I know exactly what she was like," she told herself. "She was not very tall, but just nice; and she had violet eyes and long black lashes, and pretty rosy cheeks—not too red, but pink like a peach. Oh, I know she was nice! And she always wore a brown gown, and a red handkerchief crossed on her chest. And I don't wonder Roger loved her. I should, too, for she always spoke gently, not like nurse."

So Bryda grew quite fond of the Liz she had thus invented while she gathered her flowers.

"I wonder what flower Liz was like? Cousin Salome says we ought all to be like flowers in God's garden. If we are, I'd rather be like some flowers than others. Here is a tall orange lily. Oh, you great, showy thing! How stiff and proud you are! And I tell you you're not so very pretty, after all," said Bryda severely.

The orange lily did not seem to mind in the least, but stood up just as proudly as ever.

"You poppies, red and white," went on Bryda, "you have much nicer manners: you're like ladies who are polite

as well, and say nicely, 'How do you do, Mr. Jones? Will you sell me some chickens, please?' You yellow flowers—I don't know your name—you're very nice till one comes close, and then you smell horrid. I think you are like people who are very polite to strangers, but are nasty and cross at home, and slap when they play games.

"You, dear roses," she went on, talking to all the flowers in turn, "you are really too lovely! But I mustn't put you on Liz's grave, because the grannies don't like you gathered; you are like beautiful ladies in pictures, who get prettier and prettier if you go on looking at them.

"Here are pansies—hearts'ease, nurse calls them. That is the right flower for Liz! She was so gentle, and good, and kind that she made every one happy. If you fell down and were hurt, or if you had that horrid ache all over, that comes of being naughty or unhappy, and you told Liz, she would make you all right in no time. She shall have hearts'ease on her grave and nothing else, except a little mignonette, for that is quiet and sweet like she was."



So Bryda twisted up a pretty wreath of hearts'ease and mignonette, to take to the grave of this Liz, whose looks and character you see she had invented for herself, for you know if the carpenter was really a prince in disguise, of course his wife and daughter were princesses. Bryda would take the first possible chance of asking old Roger more about his brother and about the palace, and if he would not be sorry that Liz could never go there with him. Meanwhile she set off down the pretty shrubbery walk with her simple little wreath to lay on the princess' grave.

"No one would call her Princess Liz. I suppose she was Princess Elizabeth," she said to herself.

CHAPTER X.

BEPPO'S FRIEND.

Away went Miss Bryda, with her head full of Liz and her charms, the flowers in her hand, to the churchyard.

It was peaceful there in the quiet September sunshine, and Bryda felt sorry to think that the dead people could not see how pretty their resting-place looked. It was a large churchyard, with some old vaults, and white crosses over newer graves; indeed, many generations of old and young were asleep there. It was a city of rest, with the gray old church for its temple in the middle; and its streets were mossy paths, as unlike as possible to the great, noisy, restless streets of the big towns of the living.

Bryda put her green wreath with its purple and yellow stars on the humble grave where there was no grand inscription like that to Sir Jocelyn de Wraymont close by, with all his virtues in capital letters after his name; but only that one word "Liz."

Then she went and tried the door of the old church. It was open; the vicar never allowed the building to be closed, unless there was some urgent reason, so that any one who wanted to think or to pray quietly might come in there. At first the village people thought this an odd idea, but after a little time first one and then another found out this quiet refuge and slipped in. There was always service morning and evening for those who could spare time to attend; and though the worshipers were always few, yet, as the vicar said, "they could pray for everybody, and the Father was so gracious that if only two or three were met together it would please Him."

When Bryda went in there was nobody in the building but an old man, who had just risen and was going out on tiptoe, with the sunshine from a painted window on his bent, white head. Bryda felt sorry for him, he seemed so old and feeble; she would have been still more sorry had she known that it was the evil doing of his two sons, and even of his daughter (for he was Moll Dawson's old father), that made him look old and bent before his time; sounds of quarreling were so often heard from the uncomfortable cottage he called home that he often escaped to the quiet church. There he would sit by the hour, sometimes with tears rolling slowly down his furrowed cheeks, and then go home very weary, for when we are young we are not much the worse for "a good cry," but old people's tears are few and bitter.

Bryda watched this old man go out, and then stood still, wondering whether she should go in herself, when her attention was attracted by a low sound, like that of some one sobbing quietly. She listened; the sound stopped a moment, then began again. It was certainly someone crying, and for a moment she felt half-frightened, for she could not see any one.

Then a better thought came. Perhaps she could try and comfort some one who was unhappy, and that might be a little bit of the "Lord's work." She had once heard her mother say that a child was sometimes the best of all earthly comforters.

So very quietly she stole up the side aisle, and there, behind a pillar, she found—Beppo!

Yes, poor little Beppo! Crouched on the ground, half-kneeling, leaning against the cold pillar, the poor child with passionate sobs seemed to be pouring out all his heart. His great black eyes were fixed on a beautiful painted

window opposite. This window had been put in to the memory of a very good and charitable young lady, whose early death had been deeply mourned by every one who knew her, and it showed a lovely figure, with angel's wings, and a face of pity, gently raising a sick child, and looking at him tenderly.

Poor little Beppo, alone and lonely, had crept into the church, and gazing long on the beautiful window, had presently thought the kind face was watching him with pity.

He was in bitter grief, for his dearly-loved mother had been trying to tell him she would soon go away never to return. She had succeeded only too well, for the poor child, when at last he understood, brushing past kind old Roger, rushed from the house to the church where he could be alone. In his own country the church is a refuge for the sorrowful, always open for any one who will enter; so in this strange land he naturally sought the old gray building.

Poor little boy! he was very young and very ignorant, and he had been taught to ask for, and to hope for, the help of saints and angels. The doctor could do little for his mother; Roger, kind as he was, could not save her; and poor little Beppo, wild with grief, and in the midst of strangers who could scarcely understand what he said, threw himself before this lovely figure in the window, and thought that at last he had found a friend to help him.

All this Bryda learned, but really it was rather difficult. She could not "make up" Italian that Beppo would understand, in the easy way in which she and Maurice Grey made up Latin to talk to each other when they played at Charon's boat.

Then Beppo's English was very odd, and his story was

so often interrupted by sobs, that quite a long time had passed before the little comforter was able to make out the younger child's trouble, and to understand that he had been talking to the angel in the beautiful window when she found him.



Little Bryda was sadly puzzled. How was she to comfort Beppo? What could she say?

She could not tell him to hope his mother would get better. That the doctor said could never be. Could she comfort Beppo with a lie? No, never!

She could not say the angel would do the poor dying woman good. The angel was very beautiful, but after all she was only made of glass and paint.

So, after looking sadly at Beppo's tear-stained face and little drooping figure, all she could, say was:

"Oh, Beppo! I am so sorry!"

And with that she threw her arms round him, and together the two children cried, till Beppo's sobs came more gently. This little English girl was sorry because he was unhappy. After all he was not so lonely!

"Children!" said a voice near them, so near that both started and looked up. Bryda sprang to her feet, and held Beppo by the hand, feeling as if they were both likely to be scolded for making the church a place to cry in.

But there was no anger on the loving, kind face of the old vicar, who stood before them, only great pity for whatever trouble had caused these tears. The Good Shepherd, his Master, cares as much for the pains of His lambs as for those of His most prized sheep, and His messenger would give as much care to these two children as to the greatest people in the land.

Beckoning them to follow, he went quietly down the aisle and out into the churchyard; there, taking a hand of each, he led them to a seat that was placed under a spreading tree among the graves.

"Now tell me all about it," he said kindly; and Bryda forgot to be shy as she looked into his face, and soon told all Beppo's story while the little boy looked with wide black eyes, that had no tears in them now, at his new friends, the old clergyman and the little girl.

"I see, I see!" said Mr. Joyce, for that was the vicar's name.

"And now, Beppo, can you understand if I speak English? because then, if I talk to you, this young lady will understand too."

Beppo nodded his head.

Mr. Joyce went on: "There was once a little boy, no matter how long ago, whose little sister was very ill—so ill that the doctor said there was no hope that she could live many days. Now in the country where these children lived it was always believed that if any mortal could get one leaf from the Tree of Life, that grew in the garden of God, every illness would be cured at once. But no one had ever tried to get this leaf, because the journey was steep and rough to the gates of the garden, and because an Angel stood there to keep the gate and would let no one pass. But this little boy loved his sister so well—as well, I think, as Beppo loves his mother."

Beppo's dark eyes filled with tears again, and the vicar laid a hand gently on his shoulder.

"So well that he could not have loved her more if he had tried with all his might. And, when all other hope seemed gone, he said, 'I will go, I will beg of the Angel at the gate to let me in for one moment, or to give me a leaf, only one leaf, from the Tree.'

"So he went by the long, rough way, till in the golden sunset he stood before that great Angel, and trembling made his request.

"'None can enter this garden but those children of the King for whom He has sent, that they may be with Him. I can let no other enter,' answered the Angel.

"'But one leaf,' prayed the child, 'one little leaf to cure my sister. The King will not be angry!'"

"And as he spoke he could hear, though he could not see into the garden, the Tree rustling gently, and the birds among the branches warbling the praises of the King of Glory.

"Only one leaf, and there were so many on the tree! 'The King, the loving Father, cannot wish that my poor little sister should have to suffer so, and then die and leave me all alone! Have pity upon me, great Angel, it is such a little thing I ask!' entreated the child.

"But the Angel looked down upon him with deep love and pity in his eyes.

"'The King has sent my brother, the Angel of Death, to bring your sister to Him. She shall dwell forever in the light of His smile. If you are allowed to keep her, will you promise me to take care that she shall never again lie tossing on a sick bed?'

"'How can I?' said the child, wondering. 'Not even the wisest physicians can always heal diseases at once.'

"'Then will you promise that she shall never be unhappy? never do wrong, and suffer shame and sorrow? never be cold, hungry, tired? that no one shall speak to her harshly?' asked the Angel.

"'Not if I can help it,' answered the child. 'But perhaps I could not always make her happy, even when I am grown up.'

"'Then the world where you want to keep her is rather a sad place,' the Angel said gently. 'Now I will open the gate a little, and you shall look in for a moment, and if you still wish it, my child, I will ask myself that you may have a leaf from the Tree of Life, that your sister may stay upon earth with you.'

"So the Angel who kept the golden gate opened it a very little way, and as the mighty door rolled back for a moment, the child could see into the Land where by the

river stands the Tree of Life, and where those who are counted worthy walk forever in white—where they need no candle, neither light of the sun, because the smile of God is the light of that wonderful place, and His servants shall serve Him, and no tongue can tell the happiness that is theirs forever and ever."

"Did the little boy see right into heaven?" asked Bryda, in a low tone. "Oh, do tell us what he saw!"

"I cannot tell you what he saw," answered the vicar; "you and I, little Bryda, have to wait awhile, it may be for me a very little while, trusting that the Father will in His mercy, for His Son's sake, give us a place there. But this I will tell you, that the child turned toward the beautiful Angel with eyes full of wonder and surprise.

"'I will not ask it now,' he said; 'I think there is no friend so kind as the Angel of Death, who seems to us so dreadful. Oh, I wish he would take me, too!' And the Angel answered:

"'When all the lessons which the Father desires you to learn in His school, which is called the Earth, are learned; when the little piece of His great work that is meant for your hands is finished, then the Angel will come for you too, my child, if only you are true and faithful.'

"And the child turned away and went back under the stars, that were like eyes of angels watching him, back from the golden gates to his home in the world. And as he went a golden ray shot once across his path, and brought a sound of wonderful music, such as he had never heard. And he knew that the golden gates had opened, and his sister had passed in. On a little bed at home lay her body, white and still, but he knew that it was only the dress she had worn in the world. And the child was comforted."

And Beppo was comforted too. As the vicar spoke, he imagined a country more beautiful than his own Italy, where golden oranges hang in the dark-green leaves, and the wonderful blue sea sleeps under the blue sky, but where people are sick and sorrowful as they are everywhere in the world. His dear mother would go to that wonderful place, so beautiful that even this wise gentleman could not tell him exactly what it was like. She would never cough, nor be tired nor hungry again!

But the bells began to ring for service.

"Come, Beppo, I will take you home," said Mr. Joyce; and Bryda said good-by to both, and went slowly home along the shrubbery path.

This has been a sad chapter; but you see there are sad parts even in the lives of children; and if Bryda was not in quite such wild spirits as usual, she certainly did not feel unhappy that evening, when, sitting by Cousin Salome's couch, she told her all that had happened.

"Don't you think," said kind Salome, "that if you were to bring Beppo here in the afternoon, Bryda, you and I could teach him a little about a better Friend than his angel in the window, a Friend Who can and will help him, and Who will never die and leave him, never change and forget him?"

And Bryda very gladly promised to bring Beppo next day.

CHAPTER XI.

DREADFULLY FRIGHTENED.

"Miss Bryda," said Uncle Jack at breakfast next morning, "if you knew what I know you would be a good deal wiser than you are now."

"I dare say I should, Uncle Jack," answered Bryda, pouting. "I suppose you mean if I knew all the dates of all the Norman kings, and could speak French without any mistakes, and—and—several other things."

"Such as how many beans make five? and that useful kind of thing to know, I suppose? But if I were a little girl, and any one told me the very nice piece of news which I think I had better not tell you, why, I should really and truly, I do believe, be obliged to get up and give the person a kiss. Especially if he was young and very handsome!" added Uncle Jack, twirling his mustache, and looking very seriously at his niece. Evidently the only chance of getting this news was to get up and give him a kiss, which Bryda did, and both she and Uncle Jack were promptly scolded by grandmother, who said that in *her* young days she used to sit still at breakfast till every one had finished.

Uncle Jack begged her pardon at once, very politely indeed, and then told Bryda his piece of news.

"I know a field, a very little way off, where there is a hedge simply crawling with blackberries."

Grandmother was a little deaf, so she did not hear what he said quite lightly, and with a little scream she said:

"Crawling with black beetles! Oh, John! for pity's sake have them all killed at once!"

"I will, mother, dear, and they shall be made into jelly for your dinner," said Uncle Jack, laughing.

But the dear old lady grew quite excited about the black beetles, and he had with some trouble to explain that a hedge crawling with blackberries was a way of speaking that he had invented to make Bryda laugh. "She so seldom does laugh, poor child!" he said.

Well, Uncle Jack was going to shoot this morning, and he would take Bryda to the blackberry hedge, and leave her there till he came back again.

So he did; and Bryda, as she marched off with a big basket on her arm, beside Uncle Jack with a gun, made a little request.

"Might Beppo come and help her? It would be a very little round to pass old Roger's cottage, Bryda would like it so."

"Why, what a little coax it is!" said Uncle Jack; "and, pray, who is Beppo?"

Bryda soon explained, telling Uncle Jack all about the little boy who so much interested her and his poor mother.

"And he's such a nice boy," she ended. "He has curly hair, and big black eyes, and speaks such very funny English."

"He must be a nice little boy with all those charms!" laughed Uncle Jack. And to Roger's cottage they went.

Roger was at home, and so was his cat. Uncle Jack began to talk to the old man. Bryda, after looking round for Beppo, seized the cat, and sat down on a stool to pretend it was a baby, and put it to sleep, with her eyes continually

fixed on the door of the Italian woman's room.



Bryda after looking round for Beppo, seized the cat.

Into this room Uncle Jack went presently, and Bryda was left alone with Roger. Now was the time to ask him about Liz and his palace home, and if he was not sorry Liz had died before he could go there.

"Roger," she asked, not quite knowing how to begin, "when did you say you were going home?"

"As soon as I've finished the bit o' work I've had set me here, missy. Maybe if I'd made fewer mistakes over it I'd be there by now. It's, oh! my clumsy hands, never fit to touch it at all!"

"Do you mean your carpentering?" asked Bryda, wondering.

"Not quite that, Miss Bryda," answered the old man, looking away through the little window. "It's weaving work more than carpentering work, making a bit of the Bride's beautiful marriage dress. There's a-many weavers set to that work, missy—ay, many they are! And some waste the materials and do naught; an' some put gold and silver thread into the pattern anyhow, an' it's all mixed and spoiled. But there's some good workers weave the bright threads and the dull threads as they were meant to be, and work real pearls on it, and seldom make a fault. That's how my Liz worked; but I've been a clumsy one—ah, sad and clumsy old Roger's been all his life!"

"When will the wedding be, Roger, and where? Is it to be in the old church here?"

Roger shook his head.

"When will the dress be finished, missy, the Bride's beautiful dress that's so long a-makin'? An' where will ____"

Here Roger was interrupted, much to Bryda's grief, for Uncle Jack came out of the sick-room, looking much less cheerful than when he went in, and leading Beppo by the hand. He spoke in a low tone to Roger, to whom Bryda saw him give money, and wondered why he should, when the old man was, she believed, so rich already. Then beckoning to Bryda, he left the cottage.

"Now, Beppo, you shall go and play with this young lady. Will you be very good?" he asked, outside.

"Oh, si, si! I mean say, yes, sir!" answered the little Italian, looking brightly at Bryda, who seemed to him now quite an old friend, and speaking his queer English.

So Uncle Jack led them both into his blackberry field, which was quite as good as he had said.

"It's simply beautiful!" Bryda said to Uncle Jack as he went away, promising to return by and by and fetch them.

Left alone, the two children were happy enough, and their tongues wagged very fast indeed. Beppo told his little companion about his own country, where oranges, hanging on dark-green trees, might be had for the trouble of gathering; and about beautiful vineyards, with clusters of white and purple grapes, and the merry, merry vintage-time. Ah! if they could go back to Italy again, he was sure his dear, dear mother would be quite well again! His father was dead, and the mother grew poorer and poorer in her own country, and at last she dreamed night after night that if she would go north to England she would be able to get money for herself and her boy, and come home quite rich. But it was not so; people did not seem to like barrel-organs much, and the little money his mother had had all gone to buy this instrument.

Often they had been sent from houses with angry words; often they had nowhere to sleep; often they had nothing to eat.

Bryda had never known real hunger. She had known how pleasant it was to come in tired and hungry after a long expedition, and how delicious bread and butter tasted then, and jam! but to ache with hunger, and, when ready to faint, not to have any food, how terrible that must be!

But very soon both Bryda and Beppo forgot that there ever had been any troubles in the world, they were so busy and so happy with the blackberries.

What a delightful amusement blackberry hunting is! To see the basket filling fast with the fat, sweet, well-flavored berries; to eat one after another, because this one is crushed or that one is too nice to part with, or a third may have a different flavor since it grows on another bush—how nice it is! We eat, and chatter, and eat again, till fingers and mouths are stained a dark-red color; and how we laugh and make fun! Only one thing vexes us—that is, that the very nicest, finest fellows always *will* grow right up at the top of the hedge, just out of reach even of our longest stick! They would be so nice; but very often, after struggling a good deal, scratching faces and hands, and getting wet feet by slipping into the ditch, we have to give it up and own ourselves beaten.

Never mind! we have generally quite enough for the jam or the puddings we want to make, and in great triumph we go home, each boasting of having gathered most!

So Bryda and Beppo amused themselves, and wandered on at last to the other end of the field. Here there was a gate leading into another field, where was a very high hedge with what seemed to the children the best

blackberries they had seen.



Bryda and Beppo amused themselves wandering about the field.

In a moment they were through the bars of the high gate and in the field. Just as they entered it a loud shout came from before them; and Bryda, looking across the field, saw the terrible Moll Dawson waving her hands and shouting to them.

Terrified, she caught Beppo's hand, and dragged him further into the field. On the side where the blackberries were there were also some trees, and beyond was a little wood. They might hide in this, and be safe. If Moll Dawson found them what would she not do? She might take all their blackberries. She might ill-treat them in some dreadful way. She was so big and strong, and there was no help near. What might she not do?

So Bryda and her companion, poor Beppo! who was frightened because she was frightened—though he did not in the least know why—these two fled further into the field, while Moll Dawson still beckoned and called.

Bryda, seeing that the girl did not come into the field, took courage a little, and looked about her. Oh, terror! if she was frightened before, she was now as if rooted to the ground with fear.

Sullenly coming toward the poor children, sniffing violently as he came, and glaring at them with wicked eyes, was an immense bull!

"Run, Beppo!" screamed Bryda. Beppo looked at her a moment. "Run! I am coming!" she cried; and Beppo was off like the wind toward the gate where Moll Dawson beckoned.

Bryda, looking round a moment, saw a great board, with "Beware of the Bull!" nailed against a tree in the middle of the field.

Only for a moment she looked. Was there any hope of her being able to climb a tree? Which gate was nearest? The dreadful animal was some little way off. If Bryda ran with Beppo she might escape. In a second she was off; but, alas! alas! the bull was after her.

He came on bellowing and roaring.

Beppo was safe. He reached the gate before Bryda; but she, rushing half-blind with terror, tripped as the fierce animal was close behind her, and with a wild shriek fell flat on her face a yard or two from the gate.

CHAPTER XII.

SOME USE FOR MOLL.

Flat on your face, and a raging bull coming after you! That is a terrible position! It is never wise to run races with a bull, or a horse, or a greyhound, or anything else that has four legs—except, perhaps, a very fat prize pig, or the kitchen table. What can you, with two legs, do against four legs?

Besides, poor Bryda felt that there was no one to help her; there was only Moll Dawson near, of whom she was nearly as much afraid as she was of the bull; and poor little helpless Beppo, whose eyes grew, like those of the dog in the fairy tale, as big as saucers with terror, as he stood, panting but safe, on the right side of the gate.

Stay! there was one Friend, to whom Bryda had long

ago learned at her mother's knee to look for help. She had, indeed, never been in any such danger before, but mother had, and many a time she had told Bryda of the time of peril when the ship was said to be about to go down on the broad Atlantic, and no help was near—no human help, at least. And the chaplain gathered together all who could or would come, and cried to Him Who holds the seas in the hollow of His hand.

"In the midst of life we are in death: of whom may we seek for succor, but of Thee, O Lord? ... Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts; shut not Thy merciful ears unto our prayer; but spare us, Lord most holy, O God most mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour!"

So the chaplain prayed, and the sea went down, as once did the waves of Galilee when the Lord of winds and waves willed it, and mother and all the shipload were saved. And so Bryda cried to the loving Saviour as she fell, and to her, too, came help in the way she least expected. For as the bull with angry red eyes and dreadful sharp horns had nearly reached her, when all hope seemed gone, and she had not strength to try and rise, a shawl deftly thrown fell right over the furious animal's head, making him stop and then turn round, bellowing frantically, as if he meant to ask who dared to interfere in this way with his great will and pleasure, which was to toss an insignificant child. There were plenty of children in the world, pray why should he not toss one if he so pleased? he seemed to ask.

While his majesty was expressing something of this sort very noisily, a strong hand rather roughly seized the fallen Bryda, picked her up, and dragged her over or through—she never knew which—the great, strong, five-barred gate, where Beppo stood already, and watched, white with terror, having had time to take breath.

Bryda was not white, she was red-hot and breathless, and it was several seconds before she could collect her scattered wits enough to see the bull tearing the shawl to pieces, with a strong wall and gate between himself and her, and also to see that her preserver was no other than that great object of her terror, Moll Dawson.

"Now then," said Moll roughly, as she tried to pinch Bryda's hat into shape again. "You're a foolish one, you are. Why didn't you stop when you heard me screechin'?"

"Because—I—because—" stammered Bryda, who felt she could not tell Moll that the "screechin'" had made her run as fast as possible in the other direction from that Moll intended.

The girl burst into a loud laugh. "You're a softy, upon my word! So you thought I'd eat yer blackberries and yer blessed selves arter them! But it was out of the fryin'-pan into the fire this time, and no mistake. Oh, I see ye blushing! Tell Moll Dawson no stories; she's too 'cute for the likes o' you."

"I don't want to tell stories," said poor Bryda, with tears in her eyes. "Indeed, indeed I am grateful. That bull would have torn me to pieces, as he is tearing your shawl."

And Bryda turned quite sick at the sight of the great brute stamping on fragments of the shawl, then, tearing them afresh with his horns, bellowing all the time as if it was quite an amusement to destroy something.

"I shall ask grannie to give me a new shawl for you, Moll," said Bryda.

"Don't trouble your head, child; it's only a old rag, bless you. So soon as I can earn a bit o' money I'll have a

jacket wi' beads all over, like a young lady. Not as that they'll take me for a lady—not even the boys at the factory. Give me that pretty blue silk handkerchief on your neck," went on Moll, with a sudden change of tone. This was a command rather than a request, to judge by the tone in which it was spoken; but Bryda hesitated—mother had given it to her just before she went away.

The girl, seeing she hesitated, laughed again loud and bitterly—a laugh without merriment.

"Oh! keep your things to yourself! I want none of them! Silk handkerchiefs are not for the likes of me, nor nothin' else that's good—only sharp words and crooked looks." Here Moll threw herself down on the nearest bank, and tore some white queen-daisies to bits.

"Here, take it, Moll!" said Bryda, as she snatched off her handkerchief. "I am sure you are welcome to it, and anything else I have;" and with a gentle coaxing way she tied the scarf round Moll Dawson's neck. The rough girl looked more gracious; she bent her neck to try and catch a glimpse of this bit of finery, then looked up at Bryda again.



"You've got a gran, too! I've seen her. Does she beat you very often?" was her next remark.

Bryda and Beppo both stared open-mouthed at this question. Grandmother would as soon think of——

"Never!" said Bryda at last, very decidedly.

"I suppose she's kind, then?"

Bryda nodded expressively,

"Well, my gran ain't," pursued poor Moll. "Beats us with the poker, for all she pretended to be so ill and weak when you brought soup o' Sunday, missy. We're a bad lot, we are, all but father; he'd be good if he could, I know."

"Oh, Moll!" said Bryda, answering the girl's miserable

tone as much as her words, "why don't you try and be good?"

"I suppose you're good?" said the girl; "it is not hard for such as you to keep straight."

"Indeed, I am not good," cried truthful Bryda, remembering a great many faults at once. "I'm so often in mischief or some trouble that Uncle Jack says I live in a jar of mixed pickles. But I do want to be good for all that."

"So you will some day, when you're a fine lady. And, I warrant, you're not real bad now. And you'd not be frightened of me any more?" added Moll sadly, looking up at her.

"No, indeed; we'd be fond of you—wouldn't we, Beppo?" said Bryda eagerly.

Beppo nodded and said, "Yes, yes." He was proud of his knowledge of English, such as it was.

"No one's fond of me," said Moll, still more sadly. "Jim used to be in a fashion, but he wouldn't give his little finger to save me from drowning. An' I'm too wicked for father to love me—or any one else either."

Bryda's eyes filled with tears. "God loves you, Moll," she whispered gently.

But Moll shook her head. "No, He don't. God Almighty may care for the gentlefolks—seems like it. But He don't care for such as us."

"Indeed, He does," said Bryda earnestly, quite sure this time that there was no doubt of what she said being true. "See how he has cared for Beppo and his mother!"

"Did He tell the old carpenter to be good to them?" asked Moll thoughtfully. "Well, it's not much a poor man like him can do."

"Oh! he's not a poor man," burst out Bryda. "He's a prince really; he told me so. And his Father's a very great King, and will take him to live in a palace some day soon."

"And he have gold, much gold, hid safe from de tieves," added Beppo in his broken English. He and Bryda were sitting on the bank now beside Moll Dawson.

"Eh!" said Moll; "whoever would have thought it."

"It's quite true," said Bryda, and went on to tell all about Roger's inheritance. She was just going on to tell all about his cat, and the funny story of all the cats with excellent "characters," when Uncle Jack's voice was heard in the blackberry field calling her.

At this sound Moll Dawson sprang up, nodded a hasty farewell, and scrambled through a small breach in the hedge behind, vanishing in a moment, in spite of Bryda's entreaties to her to stay, and let Uncle Jack hear how she had saved them.

Uncle Jack's cheerful brown face grew very white when he heard the story.

"Say nothing to the grannies, Bryda," he said. "Not because it is right to have secrets, little maid; but because grandmother is too old and weak to hear about anything that would frighten her. But you and I will see what we can do for Moll Dawson, and we will ask Cousin Salome's advice, eh?"

Poor Moll Dawson! She had done one good deed that day. It was a pity that in the afternoon she should do,

though not intentionally, some sad harm.

Her brother Jim worked as garden-boy with Mr. Seymour (that was the name of Bryda's grandfather). Moll, roaming idly about, met him as he came from work in the evening, and in her careless, gossiping way began to tell him all that Bryda had said about old Roger's store of treasure, which Moll said was money he had hidden away somewhere in his poor little cottage, like a miser.

For Bryda did not yet understand, what is perhaps plain to any one reading this, that the old man, accustomed as he was to live alone, thought so much of the heavenly country where he hoped to go, and of the many mansions in the Father's house, that he talked of them in a way that seemed to the child to mean things on earth. So the precious treasure of the love of Christ, and of the hope that is in Him, seemed to little Bryda to be perishing treasures of earth—money and jewels. And what Bryda had told Moll, Moll repeated, with improvements of her own, to her bad brother.

"Ah! ah!" said Jim; "he's a chicken worth plucking—eh, Moll? A knock on the old boy's head, if he objects, and then share and share alike for you and me."

"You leave him alone, Jim," she answered; for the longing to be better was working in the poor girl's darkened mind, even as the spirit of God rested on the earth when it was "without form and void." Christ, who died for poor Moll, was calling gently, and the hard heart softened a little.

"Boo," said Jim, with a hideous grimace "You're afraid o' being found out. Split on me and tell the police, will you? Yah, that's like a woman."

"I'll not have it, Jim," went on Moll steadily. "I'm not afraid, that you know right well: I'm a better thief than you by a long way, and never was caught yet; but I'll have naught to do with this—nor you either."

"We'll see," said Jim, and held his tongue.

CHAPTER XIII.

MORE ABOUT BEPPO.

Bryda was not allowed to go alone to the village again, since her nurse had told granny she was missing on that unfortunate Sunday afternoon, when the whole household had turned out in pursuit of her. She had therefore promised Beppo to meet him in the church or churchyard at half-past five, and take him to Cousin Salome.

For the second time she found the poor little Italian in bitter grief. It happened that a great dark bank of clouds had covered the sky for a great part of the day, and the church inside was so dark that the sexton thought it well to light up the building before the short service, which was every evening during summer at six, and in winter much earlier.

Tonight the choir were practicing before service, so when Beppo came to the church at half-past five, to meet his little friend, the building was lighted up. He came to see his beautiful angel again to tell her, whom he still thought a great and powerful friend, all that had happened to him. But with the darkness outside and the bright lights

within, all the colors had faded out of the window, so that, as any one who goes into a lighted church by night can see, there was only a dark blank space where the beautiful angel had stood. And the passionate little southern boy said to him self that his friend had forsaken him, that she was gone and would never come back again.

Bryda felt that somehow he was quite wrong, but how was she to explain, or to comfort him?

First she told him his angel was not gone, but had only faded from his sight, and that with daylight he would find her again. But as at this he only sobbed afresh, and said she *was* gone, he could not see her, so she must be gone, Bryda tried to explain that his friend was no real person but only a beautiful picture. This only made him very indignant; he knew angels took care of people, his mother had often told him so; did Bryda mean to tell him there were no angels?

Then Bryda, not knowing how to meet these questions, proposed that he should come with her at once to Cousin Salome; and, hand in hand, the two children went up the long shrubbery walk to find her.

Salome greeted them with her own bright smile, and made Beppo sit on a low stool by her side. Soon the black eyes grew very bright and round, when the child found that this English lady had seen his own beautiful Italy, and seemed to love it nearly as well as he did.

Then, when Cousin Salome began to speak to him in Italian, Beppo fairly jumped off his stool and clapped his hands with delight.

Here was a friend for him! Until one has gone to a strange country and there been very lonely and sorrowful, like poor little Beppo, it is not easy to understand the

delight that he felt at hearing his own language spoken again.

After a little time Bryda began to tell Cousin Salome all about Beppo's troubles, and especially the last, which seemed to the poor little boy a very great one.

"No, Beppo, your beautiful angel is not gone," she answered, "she is only hidden from you for a time by the darkness. But I will tell you both, dear children, what this little grief of Beppo's is like; and we can make it a sort of parable. Bryda, you know what a parable is?"

"A story that means something, isn't it?" said Bryda.

"Yes, dear. Well, when we are young, our life is like a bright painted window, very lovely to look at. But supposing our sky gets dark, and some great trouble comes up like the night——"

"Something like your illness, cousin?" said Bryda gently.

Cousin Salome smiled.

"Yes, perhaps, dear. Or like Beppo's great trouble, when his mother told him she must go and be with God, and leave him alone. That makes life seem very dark, doesn't it, Beppo?"

Beppo nodded his head; he could not speak, because a great lump came up in his throat and made him feel as if he must choke.

"Well, when the night is over," went on Salome, "and the kind, bright sun comes back again, our life looks beautiful again. But what do people do when the church gets dark, Beppo?"

"Light de lamps," said Beppo quickly.

"Ah, yes! that is it! Light the lamps, and then we forget all about the darkness outside. Inside there is warmth and light and brightness, and sweet hymns go up to the Great White Throne of God. And life is beautiful after all, though it is a little more sad and solemn, as Beppo feels it now."

Then Cousin Salome went on to talk to Beppo in Italian about a Friend who never would forsake him, and Who was always near, though the dim eyes of men cannot see Him; of One far more lovely and loving than the angels, who were only servants in that great House of the Father's, in which heaven and and earth are contained. Only servants; but He—this Friend Who was willing to be always Beppo's friend, if the child would look to Him and trust Him—He was the Son of the House, and all things were His.

Bryda listened, though she could not understand the language; and as she listened she thought she knew the use of lessons.

"Lessons and doses," she had said, "were supposed to do people good;" and now she saw, at all events, one use of lessons. "If I could talk Italian to Beppo, how nice it would be!"

And to herself she resolved that when the new governess came—it was to be very soon now—she would work harder than ever before, even over lists of dates. After all she might find out some day that there was a use for those, too!

Beppo listened as to one who told him some strange new thing. He had been taught by his mother much about angels watching over him with beautiful shining wings; but

very little, almost nothing, about the loving Saviour Who was once a little boy like himself, and Who grew up to be the Friend and Helper of any one who was in distress, and to Whom the little troubles of His little children were as important as the great and bitter griefs that crush the hearts of men.

Poor little boy! he drank in every word, with great eyes fixed on Cousin Salome's face, and it seemed to him, as it had seemed to Bryda while she listened to the vicar's sermon, that there never could be anything half so sweet as trying to please this loving Lord Jesus, Who was such a kind Friend.

But the invalid began to grow tired, and Bryda saw that she could not talk much longer. So she got up suddenly, and carried off Beppo, and Cousin Salome was left to her needful rest.

It was settled first of all, though, that Bryda should give Beppo lessons in reading every day.

"Reading and weeding!" said Uncle Jack. "I have made love to Hayes the gardener, and he has promised to let Beppo come and weed in the garden; and so the little chap can earn something, and not feel quite such a burden on old Roger."

Beppo's mother was not to be long a burden on any one. One night, while Beppo slept, and while it seemed that she slept, too, old Roger, stealing in on tiptoe, found that she was indeed asleep, wrapped in that last long sleep which no evil dreams disturb. She would never be hungry, or thirsty, or tired again, for God had taken His child, who, though ignorant enough, had been faithful to Him, to that rest of which we say, "He giveth His beloved sleep."

Close by that grave, with the one word "Liz," they made another, and on that there was only one word, too —"Speranza."



Only one word, too—"Speranza."—Page 159.

Only one word, too—"Speranza."

Very few of the village people knew what Cousin Salome told Bryda, that the beautiful name of the poor Italian meant "Hope."

Old Roger would not part with Beppo. He was a lonesome old man, he said, and it would be a charity to let the boy stay with him. Beppo could weed and learn to read for the present, and as soon as he knew the language better he could go to school in the village. Every one was well pleased with the plan, for, though some of the village people thought old Roger rather odd, from the way he had of talking about heaven as if it were quite near, and of Bible people as if they were still alive, yet no one doubted his goodness; and kind Cousin Salome promised to pay for Beppo's schooling. So it seemed that the poor little boy, after his long wanderings, would have a happy home and kind friends, and would soon forget his troubles. Bryda was at first very patient with her pupil, who, to do him justice, was not stupid; but what puzzled her most was that it did not seem natural to the Italian child to say the English words as she did.

Uncle Jack, coming one day into the room where these lessons were going on, found Beppo with tearful eyes, while Bryda appeared to have at that moment thrown the reading-book to the other end of the room, where it lay looking like a book in disgrace in the corner, gaping wide open, with a leaf or two scattered on the way, for it was an old one.



Bryda appeared to have thrown the reading book to the other end of the room.—Page 160.

Bryda appeared to have thrown the reading book to the other end
of the room.

"What is this noise about?" said Uncle Jack, with a

face of amusement; "what's the matter now?"

"Beppo's *too* stupid, Uncle Jack—and I—I lost patience."

"Lost, a valuable temper," said Uncle Jack, with a serious face; "at least I mean 'Lost, a good temper, of no value to any one but the owner. Is very cheerful, and marked with a capital B. The finder, if poor, shall be handsomely rewarded on bringing it to——'

"*Don't*, Uncle Jack!" Bryda stood on tiptoe and put her hands over his mouth, while Beppo picked up the book and put in the scattered leaves. "But really I can't make him understand some things. He spells c-a-t, and then calls it 'cart,' and when at last I get him to say 'cat,' he goes on m-a-t, 'mart!'

"I suppose Miss Quillnib never had any such worries in teaching Bryda?" said Uncle Jack slyly. Bryda looked a little ashamed.

"But do you know that it is natural to him to say cart and mart instead of cat and mat, and you will have to teach him gradually that English does not sound like Italian, Bryda? Now suppose, by way of variety, that *you* say this simple little sentence after me:

"'Aldiborontiphoscophornio!—where left you Chrononhotonthologos?" "'Aldiboronti'—I don't know any more!"

"*That's* not English, Uncle Jack!"

"Well, I assure you it comes out of an English play. So, naturally, the actor has to say it. Try something easier:

"Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper;

A peck of pickled pepper Peter Piper picked.
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper,
Where's the peck of pickled pepper Peter Piper picked?"

"Which of us three will say that very fast three times without a mistake?"

They all tried, and all failed, and the lesson ended in such shouts of laughter that both the grannies hobbled in—helping each other—to see what the fun was.

CHAPTER XIV.

BEPPO IN TROUBLE.

A far worse trouble than "cat" or "mat" came to poor Beppo a few days afterward. He worked away diligently and steadily in the garden and was always delighted to bring home his little earnings—six silver shillings every week—and give them to old Roger. Hayes, the gardener, was kind to him, and so was every one, except Jim Dawson, who also worked in the garden.

But then, Jim Dawson was kind to no one, not even to his sister Moll, for whom he seemed to have a sort of rough affection. Still, Jim Dawson did his work well enough; he was very strong and got through a good deal, if he *did* idle sometimes when Hayes' back was turned. So Hayes was glad to have him.

Now Hayes had a peach tree of which he was particularly proud. It was like his child to him, for he had grown it from a very little thing, and had watched it day by day in the spring, when its beautiful pink buds became pinky-white flowers, and then dropped, and gave way to little hard balls, green and round, that would one day be peaches. He had taken off some of these, so that the rest might be finer, and now there were just four beautiful velvet peaches on the little tree. Such beauties they were! and soon would come the fruit-show; and how delightful it would be to see in the county paper that "Mr. Hayes, head-gardener to Mr. Seymour, had the first prize for a splendid dish of peaches grown out of doors!"

Every morning and every evening, and several times in the day, came Mr. Hayes looking after those treasures of his.

Can you fancy what Mr. Hayes' good-tempered face looked like when one day, about twelve o'clock, he came past, having already paid "his babies" a visit once that morning and found only three? Only three! The finest of all was gone; neatly gathered from the tree; so that there could be no suspicion of accident in the matter. It was too bad.

Stooping down, Mr. Hayes carefully examined the ground to see if there were any traces of footsteps by which he could discover the thief.

In one or two places the ground looked a little disturbed, as if some one had hastily covered over the traces of steps with some loose earth. Certainly a cunning thief had been at work, and Mr. Hayes' rage grew more and more violent; but his rage was quite useless. Storm at the two boys, Jim and Beppo, he could, and he did; question all the other gardeners, and the grooms, and John the coachman, and the kitchenmaid, and the laundrymaid, and

the girl who fed and plucked the fowls; all this he did, but nothing could bring back his peach, and every one seemed equally innocent in the matter. Mr. Hayes was very angry, and for two days he remained so, spending much of his time in walking about that part of the garden, with his sharp eyes very wide open, and a thick stick in his strong hand.

Woe betide the unlucky thief who had gone near the peach tree on those days!

But by the third day Mr. Hayes' wrath had cooled a little; besides, he had very good news from a brother in Australia by the morning post; and so on that day he took a look at the three peaches that were left, and then went away whistling "Rule Britannia!" It was about the only tune he knew, and he whistled it whenever things went well.

It was a pity that a dark cloud should come up again that day over the sunny landscape of Mr. Hayes' broad red face; but it is a fact that, on coming again to visit his darlings, he found no longer three, but only two; and under the brick wall were again traces of steps carefully dusted over with earth, as before.

If Mr. Hayes had been angry before, he was now simply beside himself with passion. He did not storm, neither did he stamp this time—he was too angry for that.

Striding along the garden walk, without any distinct idea of where he meant to go or what to do, Mr. Hayes encountered Beppo, who rose up from his weeding, and looked as if he were about to speak. But the child shrank from the furious face that looked down at him—shrank away, and grew pale with fear.

Hayes looked at him steadily for a moment, then spoke fiercely, though quietly, trying to control himself. "Well, boy, what have you to say for yourself?"

Guilt was clearly painted on Beppo's face, and in every line of his trembling figure as he stammered out. "P'ease—Mr. Haye—I—so sorry. Not—mean—do it, sir!

"Not mean!" answered Hayes in a voice like suppressed thunder. "Sorry! what can your sorrow do, I'd like to know? Do you know what you have done? mischief that can never be mended!"

"Yes, sir," said Beppo humbly.

"Yes, sir! No excuse! You little foreign brat! you come along o' me, and get the best thrashing you ever had. Come on, I say!"

He seized Beppo by the collar, and marching him in front, strode toward the garden tool-house. There were plenty of sticks there that would answer his purpose of severely punishing the wretched little criminal, whose cries, moreover, would attract less notice there, he thought.

Coming toward them, the angry man and his prisoner met Bryda, singing merrily.

Her song soon stopped when she saw the poor little criminal in the strong grasp of Mr. Hayes who was policeman, judge, jury, lawyers, jailer, and executioner, all at once.

"What *is* the matter? What has he done?" she gasped, quite frightened.

Hayes stopped.

"Done! The little varmint!" giving Beppo a shake as he held him still. "Done, Miss Bryda! Will he dare look you in the face again? Stolen my peaches, two of them, one after the other—heartless, greedy, thankless little monster as he is! Stolen my peaches that I hoped would get the prize—ay, he can't deny it!"

"I not stolen them!" cried Beppo, in bitter distress. "Oh, Miss Bryde! I not—I never done *that*! I often bad boy—never stole! Never! No! No! No!"

Bryda remembered the baker's roll, and quite believed him. He was hungry then, but he did not steal.

"Oh, Hayes! Indeed, indeed, I am sure he is telling the truth!" she said earnestly. "Please don't be angry with him till you are quite sure, at least."

"Lor', Miss Bryda," said the gardener impatiently, "you're that taken up with the sly little rascal you don't believe butter would melt in his mouth. But he spoke up and said he was sorry when I taxed him with it first. It's only the sight of you makes him bold, thinking you'll take his part through thick and thin. A sneaking, lying little thief! Never does he do another day's work here!"

"Miss Bryde," said Beppo, with flashing eyes in which there were no tears, "I not—I never did—not could—think I—steal—tell lies! I speak de truth now, and then, both, only I did think Mr. Hayes found something else, and I did want tell him——"

Here Jim Dawson, who had been looking on at the little scene, stepped up to Beppo suddenly, slipped his hand into Beppo's pocket, and drew out a peach-stone.

Silence fell on the little group. Bryda, distressed

beyond words, looked from one to the other. Beppo, with a strange expression of face, looked at Jim, who stood grinning; and Hayes, after looking at the stone for some seconds, as if to be perfectly certain of Beppo's crime, pushed his hand more firmly into the boy's collar, strode to the garden-house, put him in, and said, before he closed the door, "Now, my lad, it's for your good. You bide there and think of the flogging you'll get so soon as I've time to give it to you."

Locking the door on the outside, he strode away, with the key in his pocket, leaving Beppo to his miserable expectations of the flogging that he would get; no light punishment it would be from the heavy hand of an angry man.

If Beppo was guilty, then miserable enough he was likely to be, with the burdens of a theft and a lie on his mind, and the prospect of punishment to come.

If, as he said, though appearances were against him, he was innocent, then he need not be very miserable, for a good conscience would be his companion, and the Friend of little children would send him comfort.

Crouching down in a wretched little heap on the floor, he remained so for some time, not crying, not trembling, but apparently thinking. Then slowly rising, he knelt down in a corner, and, clasping his hands, looked through the little window up to the blue sky.

He need not look to any beautiful angel now, whose help he used to hope for. He had another—better Friend, and quietly he said, half aloud, "Kind Lord Jesus, don't forget Beppo. I in great trouble, Lord Jesus!"

Was he guilty, or not? We shall see.

CHAPTER XV.

UP A TREE.

What did Bryda do when her little playmate was in such trouble? Quite as miserable as if she herself were the criminal, she stood still for a few minutes in the garden path. Would there be any chance of coaxing Hayes to forgive Beppo? That was not very likely. Mr. Hayes, with a face that was simply one frown all over, had walked off in the other direction, and his very back frowned as she looked after him. No, she could not appease Hayes; but some one else might persuade him that Beppo was not guilty. Who could do this? Should Bryda go indoors and tell the grannies all about it? That would not be of much use. It would take so long to make them understand; and perhaps even then they would not wish to interfere. Uncle Jack? He had gone out. Cousin Salome would be very sorry; but she could not come out and talk to Hayes.

There was old Roger!

Bryda would run off to him and soon get him to come up with her and talk to the angry Hayes. But she must be quick; she did not know how soon Hayes might carry out his threat of coming back to punish the poor little prisoner.

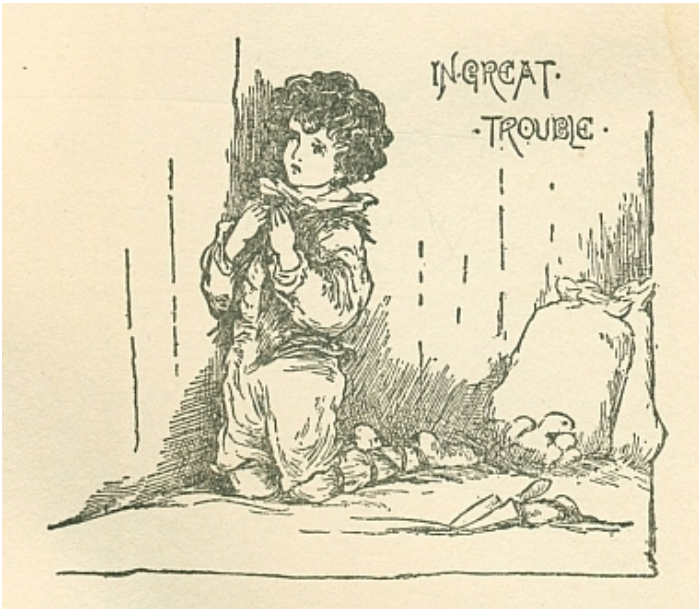
Bryda firmly believed he was innocent. She did not understand why Mr. Hayes said he had confessed to having stolen the peaches; if he had done so she was sure it was from fright.

"And I am sure Hayes' face was enough to frighten any one," she said to herself.

Without stopping to think any more, off Bryda ran to the village, as fast as her feet could carry her.

She did not go by the shrubbery walk, but down the lane that led from the bottom of the garden past Farmer Veitch's house.

This farm was about halfway between the garden and the village, and Bryda, out of breath, walked slowly as she passed it. To her great terror she heard behind the hedge a low, deep growl. That was Farmer Veitch's bulldog, and he was known to be savage.



Poor Bryda was not as brave as she used to be, since her adventure with the bull, and this low growl made her

start violently. Well, if the gate was only shut the bulldog might growl on till to-morrow behind it, and she would be quite safe.

But no, the gate was open just a little way—quite enough to let a bulldog through—even a pretty big one, as this was; and in another moment the animal was at Bryda's heels, sniffing at her, and still growling in a horrid, savage way that was worse than a torrent of barks, and showing those white teeth of his that could give such dreadful bites.

Poor Bryda's courage quite gave way. To run was no use, the dog could run faster. Screaming would no doubt make him bite her at once, instead of taking his time about it. It was as bad as the adventure with Paddy; and what made it worse was that Bryda was strictly forbidden to go into this lane at all, because there had been some infectious illness at Farmer Veitch's. A bull*dog* seemed as bad as a bull.

Should she try the power of the human eye? She had heard various stories of people who had subdued savage dogs by simply gazing at them fixedly till the brute nature quailed before the human intellect.

But that must require wonderful courage; and probably it would not answer at all if the gazer were to look at all afraid. And poor little Bryda was simply terrified.

At this moment she caught sight of a tree close to her that had low branches, most convenient for climbing. Dogs cannot climb trees, and the cats know it—just as cats cannot fly, and the birds know it, and act accordingly.

In another moment, with a breathless spring and scramble Bryda was up in the tree. The dog sprang at her, and tore a large piece of her frock, but she was unhurt; and

you may suppose she felt glad that there was only a bit of stuff in the sharp white teeth instead of a bit of herself!

She lost a shoe, too, in the scramble; and the dog scratched it and snuffed at it. Breathless, torn as to garments, with one shoeless foot, she climbed up a little higher, so as to be quite safe, and looked down at the dog.

Of course he would go away now there was no chance of biting her. And then she would jump down and run for her life to the village. From her secure height she grew bold, and spoke valiantly to the dog.

"Poor fellow! good dog, then! Go home, sir! Go to kennel! Home, sir!"

The dog only growled the more, but did not go away at all. He did not seem to care to go home. Well, then, perhaps he would like to hunt cats, after the cruel fashion of dogs?

"Hunt!" went on Bryda. "Good boy! Cats! Puss, puss! Cats! After them! catch them, good dog!"

But this bulldog was a strange animal. He did not seem to care for cats; but curled himself round at the foot of the tree, and kept his eye on Bryda, who was really almost as much a prisoner as Beppo.

Really, this was dreadful—when Bryda was in such a hurry, too! Perhaps she would not be in time to save Beppo. Where were all the people of the farm? She would call loudly to them: "Mrs. Veitch! Farmer!"

Directly she began to call, the dog jumped up barking, and sprang at her. True, he could not quite reach her, but he came dreadfully close, and his barks were enough to drown her calling.

By and by, however, the farmhouse door opened, and an old woman looked out. She was the only person near, for it was harvest, and all the men were busy, and all the women binding sheaves with them. Her dim eyes caught sight of a figure in the tree, and when Bryda called again to her she laughed and shook her fist.



Bryda called to the old woman, who laughed and shook her fist.

"Ay, ay!" she said. "Young thieves from the village arter farmer's apples! Well, you bide there a bit, it'll gie ye

something to remember."

So saying, and laughing to herself over this capital punishment for apple-stealers, she went back into the house and shut the door.

So there was Bryda, like Mahomet's coffin, hung between the sky and earth; and there she sat, feeling very angry with the old woman, very much vexed about Beppo, and very much afraid of the dog.

That amiable animal made himself a sentinel, and declined to move. No scolding, no coaxing on Bryda's part, had any effect. There he was and there he meant to be; and Bryda sat on a branch, swinging her long black legs, and wishing she had wings, so that she might fly away from all her present troubles.

She might have been rather amused but for two things that much distressed her. One was Beppo's peril, and the other the knowledge that the grannies would be vexed at her being in the lane at all, when she had for such a good reason been forbidden to go there.

At last she felt so downhearted that she was very much inclined to cry, but that she would not do, because the horrible dog would see her, and probably he would feel pleased. So there she remained.

"I wonder where Bryda is?" said grandmother. She had been waiting ever so long for her knitting, for which she had sent her granddaughter to the garden.

"I hope she is not in mischief," said Mr. Seymour.

"Most likely she forgot," said Uncle Jack, who had come in again. "I will go to the garden and look for the little puss."

In the garden he did not see Hayes, but met Jim Dawson, and asked if he had seen Miss Bryda. Jim told him that she had gone down the lane, and off he went in pursuit.

You may suppose Bryda was glad to hear his firm steps on the hard ground, and to call to him as he came down the lane without fear of his going off and leaving her.

But Uncle Jack, though he sent the dog off and helped her down, suppressed any inclination he may have had to laugh, and asked for grandmother's knitting very gravely. Nor did he seem to think that Beppo's threatened punishment justified her disobedience.

"If he stole the fruit he deserved to be punished, and you ought not to try and screen him, Bryda. You may be sure Hayes would be careful not to punish him else. He has boys of his own."

So Bryda, very downhearted, walked by his side back to the house. He would not interfere, nor let her go on to Roger, and all she could do was to fetch the knitting, and hope the grannies would forgive her disobedience.

Perhaps the reason why Bryda, with the best intentions, got into trouble when she least expected, was because she did not stop to think, but went off in a great hurry to carry out her plans.

By the time she reached the garden, three quarters of an hour, or perhaps an hour, had passed. She went straight to the tool-house. Beppo was not there. She called, and no one answered; the gardeners had gone to their dinner, so Bryda, rather slowly and sadly, went in to get ready for her own.

CHAPTER XVI.

POOR MOLL!

While Bryda was running wildly down the lane Cousin Salome had a very unusual sort of visitor. An untidy girl, who had taken more time to put ribbons in her hair than to brush it, and whose necklace of glass beads matched ill with her unmended frock, stood by the couch of the gentle invalid. It had taken a long while for Moll Dawson to gather courage to come up to the house, though Cousin Salome had sent many messages by her maid; but here she was at last, looking half-impudent, half-bashful, and altogether uncomfortable, till Cousin Salome gradually melted her shyness by talking about the adventure of the bull, and about Bryda, and Beppo, and various other things. Then gently she began to talk about the girl's own past life, and again Moll spoke in the hard, defiant voice, which told how truly unhappy she was.

"Did you ever go to church?" asked Cousin Salome.

"Yes, I went into a church once," said Moll thoughtfully, "'an' I heard a preachin', and the parson talked about children of wrath, and the bad place waiting for 'em."



"Oh, yes, I can read and write after a fashion," she went on, in answer to Cousin Salome's questions. "I went to school only half-time, and worked in the factory the other, so as not to have too much school."

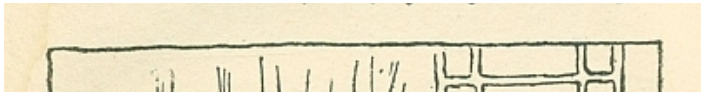
And Moll drew herself up, and laughed and showed her white teeth, and was, to all appearance, quite proud of being so naughty. But all the same she gave a little sigh as she looked again at the invalid's white, sweet face, and pitying eyes.

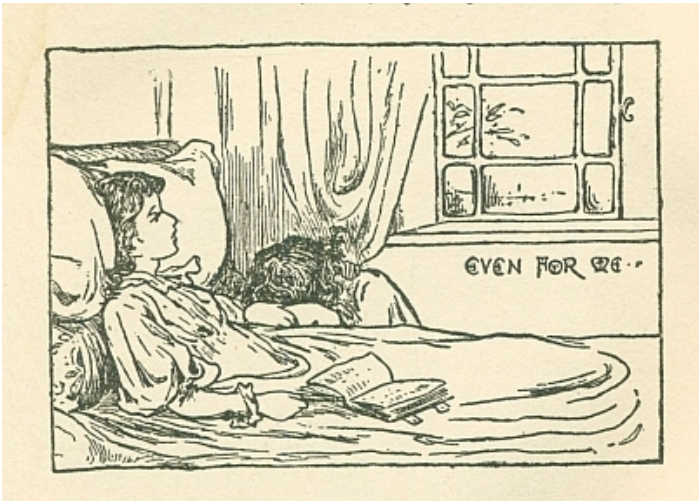
"I reckon you've always been good," she went on rapidly. "It isn't hard for the likes of you neither."

She looked round the white, quiet room, and Cousin Salome looked, too, and she sighed a moment before she smiled again with a happier thought. Ah, there were temptations in that still, comfortable room, too. Evil spirits would enter even there, and whisper discontent, and fretfulness, and impatience to the sufferer who had lain there so long; but Salome smiled again, because she knew that the promise was for her and for poor Moll, "When thou passest through the waters I am with thee."

And in her gentle, low-toned voice she began to tell the poor ignorant girl of that good Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep.

"Even for me!" said Moll, at last, and buried her face in her hands and sobbed. It seemed too good to be true.





Cousin Salome's maid, hearing the sobs, came from the next room, fearing that the invalid would be over-tired; and, by way of making a change of conversation, began to tell how she had been in the garden, of Hayes' wrath; and Beppo's punishment.

"And no wonder he should turn out badly, ma'am," she said; "they tramping foreigners aren't likely to come to good. Let him go to the Union, I say."

Moll Dawson had listened attentively. Now she rose, put on her crushed hat, and smoothed its showy but shabby red feather.

"I'll come again—may I, miss?" she said. "It's like going to heaven to come in here."

Salome gave her a ready welcome, and Moll's heavy step became a careful tiptoe walk as she crossed the room.

Once outside the house, however, Moll walked fast enough to the garden, and there went all round the walks

till she found Mr. Hayes. He had finished his round of the vineries, and was going to the tool-house, to carry out his threat to Beppo, when this wild looking girl met him.

"Mr. Hayes," she said, "you let that foreign boy go, will you? He never took your peaches, no more nor you did yourself."

"Oh!" said Hayes, looking at her with no pleased eyes, as she spoke thus boldly; "perhaps you know who did take them, if you're so sure it wasn't Beppo?"

"Perhaps I do!" retorted Moll coolly; "anyhow, you'll not flog a boy as hasn't done anything, I suppose?"

"Unless I know who was the thief I shall suppose it was Beppo," replied Hayes sulkily. "Why, he owned it himself; but if you can prove some one else did it, and that the stone came into his pocket quite by accident, why, then, of course, I shall believe you, Moll Dawson."

He spoke in tones of utter contempt; indeed, poor Moll was not often treated with much respect.

She stood still a moment, with her eyes cast down; then, as Hayes began to move, with a great effort she said, "Well, there, then, I took them; will that satisfy you?"

"You did?" said Hayes, scowling at her. "I fancy you are telling lies, Moll Dawson; they come easier to you than the truth, I know."

Moll colored crimson, but did not answer.

"I suppose you put the stone into Beppo's pocket so as he should be accused," went on Hayes, looking searchingly at her.

Moll nodded in silence.

"I don't know who to believe, or what to to believe," he answered; "I *know* somebody's telling lies, and perhaps it's both of you. Anyhow——"

Here he walked off to the tool-house and unlocked the door.

"Come out!" he said roughly. And Beppo came looking quite collected now.

"Look here, young un," said Hayes in a very much softened tone, "I've boys of my own, and I'd be sorry to flog one of them if he didn't deserve it. Just you look up at me now, and tell me the whole truth."

Beppo looked up in the gardener's face, and his dark eyes were calm and clear; he did not look like a criminal.

His broken English was rather funny, but Hayes soon understood that he had in truth done a small piece of mischief. His foot slipped as he was working, and he fell against a melon-frame and broke a pane of glass. A cut on one finger showed that he spoke the truth. As to the peaches, he would rather starve than touch one of them. "And I very sorry for you, Mr. Hayes," he added.

Hayes was quite touched.

"Go home and get your dinner. I quite believe you, my boy," he said. "Stay, come in and have a bit of dinner with my wife and young folks."

Beppo went, and from that day forward had a steady friend in Hayes.

"As for you, Moll Dawson," said the gardener sharply,

"you get along out of this. And if ever I catch you anywhere near the garden again you'll go before the magistrate, as sure as my name's Hayes."

Moll turned away without a word, and went slowly back to the village.

Light was coming slowly to her dark mind as the dawn comes on a troubled sea. She had told a lie to Hayes—for what reason we shall see; but she did not understand yet that it was a sin. "A white lie," she called it, a lie told for a good purpose. Thinking over all that Cousin Salome had said to her, she went slowly home and sought her brother Jim. Close to the house she met him.

"Jim," she said, "I've told a lie to save you to-day; now you do something for me."

"All right, old girl," said Jim, indifferently; "one lie more or less don't matter much, I reckon. What do you want out of me?"

"I said *I* stole the peaches, instead of you," said Moll, going on with her story.

"My stars!" cried Jim. "What a go! I wonder old Hayes didn't half murder you! What did he say?"

"Never you mind," said Moll. "I've got you out of a hole, and that's enough for you. Now you do something for me—tit for tat, Jim."

"What's up now?" asked her brother, struck by a gentleness in her tone which was quite new.

"Leave yon old carpenter and his coin alone," said she. "Look here, Jim, I never asked you to leave a good job like that for me before, but do you give up robbing him, there's

a good lad."

"Why, whatever has come to the girl? And you the first to put it in my head to get in at night, and make the old chap show where he keeps those miserly savings o' his you say he hides in his house!"

"Do you let him alone, Jim," entreated Moll. "I know you and Harry Crowther mean to get in to-morrow night, and no one'll hinder, for the old man's house stands a bit away. I'll not help in the job, Jim, and if you give up too ——"

"What will you give me?" sneered Jim. "Make it worth my while, Moll, and I might think of it."

"How can I?" said Moll. "Give it up, Jim. Suppose you got caught?"

"You mean to round on me!" said Jim savagely, seizing her arm as he spoke, and crushing it in his strong fingers till Moll had to set her teeth not to scream aloud. "You want to get your brother a nice pleasant time in jail! You're a nice loving sister, you are! Now, look you here, Moll; you do that, and I'll break every bone in your body as soon as ever I get out again."

"I'm not *quite* so mean," answered Moll; "I never would get you into trouble, Jim, and that you know as well as I do. But I'll do my best to get you and Harry Crowther, too, to let an old man alone. What's to be done with yon little dark-eyed chap, him they call Beppo, or some such outlandish name, if you get all the old man's savings? Precious little you care who starves so long as you get all you want. Come now, do this one thing for me, like a good lad, Jim," she went on, with a rough effort at coaxing him.

But Jim only told her to mind her own business. So Moll went away and left him.

All the rest of the day she kept wondering how this robbery could be prevented, and at last, as the evening closed in, an idea struck her. If no inducement could prevail on Jim, she had this plan to fall back on.

She would not "round on" Jim; that is, she would tell no tales. She would not tell tales, or give warning to his intended victims, but she had an idea of her own. Whether she was able to carry it out with success we shall see.

CHAPTER XVII.

"WHERE THIEVES BREAK THROUGH."

Two or three nights after this, Roger and Beppo—who was now as happy as possible—had gone to bed quietly as usual, and had both fallen asleep, when Beppo awoke with a start, and sat up in bed. He did not know at first why he had awakened so suddenly, and he could hear, by the old carpenter's quiet and regular breathing, that he still slept. But Roger was a little deaf, and the noise that woke Beppo was not loud enough to rouse him. It was, indeed, not meant to rouse anybody, for, as Beppo was falling to sleep again, he heard it once more, and this time sat up in bed and strained his ears to catch the sound.

There could be no doubt about it: stealthy footsteps were moving outside; whispering voices speaking close to the house; then the latch was lifted very gently, and let

down with a little click. Poor Beppo, sitting up in bed, felt his heart beat so loud that he fancied the people outside must hear it, although the room in which he slept was divided from the kitchen into which thieves were trying to break.

For a moment he sat overcome by terror, but it was only for a moment. Quietly and quickly he stole out of bed, and proceeded to dress himself as noiselessly as possible. He would creep out of another window—the window of the bedroom—without disturbing Roger! And in order to delay the thieves, in case they should get into the kitchen before he could bring help, he bolted the bedroom door on the inside. Then, not waiting for shoes or stockings, he gently opened the casement window, and began to try and wriggle through.

It was no easy matter, especially as the window was very small, and he dared not make a sound. The house stood so much apart that he felt it would be useless to call aloud for help; it was probable no one would hear him except the thieves, who would not give him time for more than one shout. All the neighbors would be sleeping the sound sleep of working men and women, and the only chance of rousing them would be to hammer on their doors and rattle their windows till they woke. A policeman would take longer to find. Beppo's hasty plan was to run for the nearest neighbors—John Broome, the blacksmith, and Alick Thornicroft, the shepherd.

With much difficulty he was squeezing through the tiny window, when, in the faint starlight—for the night was very dark, except for the pale rays of a few stars shining between spaces in the clouds—he caught sight of a most extraordinary object. The window of the bedroom through which he was wriggling was at the side of the house, and he could hear the thieves working away with some tools to

force open the front window. Suddenly the slight noise they were making ceased, and it seemed as if they too were looking at the very strange figure that now appeared in sight.

Slowly it came out of the shade of some dark, thick trees; a very tall, straight figure, with one arm extended, pointing to the place where the housebreakers stood.

Beppo, half out of the window, gazed, horror-stricken, at this object, which, with the superstition of his country, he felt sure was an evil spirit, come to terrify, or perhaps to carry off, the evildoers. They seemed frightened too, for as the figure very slowly moved along, not, however, coming near as yet, Beppo heard them whispering to each other.

"Let's go home; I don't like the look of that—that thing!"

"Who's afraid?" sneered the other voice.

"Hush! it's speaking," said the first.

"Jim Dawson," said a low, deep tone that seemed to come from the figure, "I know you!"

"Come away, Jim," whispered one of the thieves. "I'm off."

"Stop, Harry Crowther!" said the figure.

"Harry, you simpleton, come back!" cried Jim Dawson in the same low, cautious tone in which he had all along spoken. "Look here, lad."

As he spoke he stooped and picked up a heavy and rather sharp stone, which with his whole strength he flung at the figure that stood, still pointing at him, only a few

yards off.

When the stone struck the figure, it fell with a deep groan to the earth; and it lay in a confused heap, motionless.

"Well done, Jim!" said Harry Crowther; and the worthy couple went to work again on the window frame.

Beppo delayed no longer, but got quietly out of the window, dropped carefully to the ground, stole away till he reached a dark shadow, avoiding the spot where the heap lay, and then was off like the wind, down the lane, and up the blacksmith's garden path.

Meantime, the burglars easily made for themselves an entrance through the window, and went searching the kitchen, poking into every nook and corner to find the old carpenter's hidden riches.

"This is no go!" said Crowther at last, finding absolutely nothing but a very old silver watch, which he promptly pocketed. "We must wake the old boy, and ask him where the 'swag' is."

"Right, mate! Misers always have some queer hole of their own to put their tin in," answered Jim, still hunting about the kitchen.

The sound of a saucepan falling, which Jim's clumsy hands let go, woke old Roger, who, seeing a light in the kitchen, suddenly appeared in the doorway with an old coat hastily thrown over his shoulders.

"Look! he's saved us the trouble," said one of them.

"Ah!" growled the other. "He'll know us now, and we'll be had up for this."

Jim Dawson seized the poker, and, advancing to the old man, brandished it above his head.

"Now, look here, old Roger," he said, "we want your money, but we don't want your life—that's no use to us. Now, just give us up those savings, quiet and peaceable, and off we go, if you promise first to hold that tongue of yours."

"Old miser!" went on Harry Crowther, "where do you keep all your gold? Out with it!"

"I have no gold, my lad," answered old Roger. His voice trembled a little; it may have been from cold, or from fear, or both.

"That's a lie!" cried Jim. "Who told little miss at the house up here about all the treasure he kept hid away? Come now, out with it quietly, before I make you."

"Ah! I understand," said old Roger quietly. "There's plenty of *that* treasure for thee, my lad, enough and to spare. It's all in here—all in here."

He tottered slowly across the floor—such a feeble old man he seemed!—till he reached his little workshop on the opposite side of the kitchen. Into this room the thieves followed him, with eyes full of greedy expectation. Roger went up to a little table, and took therefrom an old book in strong, plain binding, that seemed to have been much used.

There were probably banknotes hidden between the pages, thought the burglars, and Jim Dawson snatched it from his hand roughly.

"It's all there, 'where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal,'" repeated Old Roger.

Jim Dawson rapidly searched the book, holding it upside down, that anything loose might fall out, and examining the cover, to see if there were any secret place. But it was only an old Bible, and with a yell he sprang at the defenseless old man, and would have injured him seriously, had it not been at this moment there came a sound of the door opening, and footsteps in the kitchen.

Beppo had come with the blacksmith and the shepherd, and a sturdy young farmer whom he had met on the way back.

The thieves were caught in a trap. Beppo, creeping quietly through the larger window, had let in these kind friends; and before Jim Dawson and his bad companion could think of escape they were seized by strong hands and held fast.

A policeman was soon brought, and as they and their captors were leaving the house they passed that queer heap.

"What's this?" said Thornicroft; "some one been following you?"

"Some one who tried to frighten me," said Jim Dawson sullenly; "so I up with a stone."

"And killed your own sister," said the blacksmith, raising the figure gently.

It was indeed poor Moll; but she was not dead, only stunned and senseless.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"FRIEND, GO UP HIGHER!"

There came at last, next day, a governess for Bryda; and she, remembering Miss Quillnib, the only teacher she had ever had, except mother, expected an elderly lady with prim dress and iron-gray curls. But it is hard to say if she was most surprised or pleased to see a bright-faced young girl who could not be more than twenty-one or twenty-two, who was nicely dressed, and looked as if she could enjoy amusing things quite as well as Miss Bryda herself.

Bryda put her through a short catechism when her shyness had worn off a little, which was by the time that she and the governess had settled down to tea in the cosy schoolroom.

"Miss Mervyn, do you like jam?" she asked, so very gravely that the young lady burst into an extremely merry laugh.

"Very much," she said, trying to be as grave as her pupil; "especially raspberry! We used to call that 'real jam,' at my home."

"Did you?" said Bryda. "But do you like lessons better than play?"

"Certainly not!" said Miss Mervyn. "Only the play would get very stupid if it went on every day, all day long. So I like some lessons, too. How should you like to live on jam without any bread, Bryda?"

"Not at all."

"Well, I think the working part of the day is the bread

to make the play seem nice. How would a cake be that was only currants and sugar?"

Bryda laughed, and then she grew solemn again. "But I *don't* like dates," she said.



Bryda laughed, and then grew solemn.

"No more do I," answered Miss Mervyn. "That is, I don't like too many at once. But I suppose you never remember your birthday, Bryda?"

"Twenty-first of June!" said the pupil promptly. "But then I know all about that, and it's a very nice sort of day!"

"Well, if I were to give you a packet of sweeties every year on the day of the battle of Waterloo, would it be easy to remember?"

"It might," answered Breda.

"Then let us try to divide the day between lessons and play, so that we may have the proper quantities of bread and jam? Shall we, dear?"

"Yes, that will be nice! And, oh! Miss Mervyn," burst out Bryda, "will you sometimes come and see old Roger?" She had thought of little else all day.

"Who is old Roger?" asked Miss Mervyn. "Who is old Roger?" asked Miss Mervyn.

Bryda poured out all the story of Roger and of Beppo, and of her first adventure in the Dawsons' cottage, and of all that had happened since.

The story lasted till there came a knock at the door, and Uncle Jack entered.

"Well, Uncle Jack! what have they done to Jim Dawson?" cried Bryda.

"Jim has been sent to prison," answered Uncle Jack; "when his time of punishment is over we will see what can be done for him. And Moll is not dead, Bryda; that is what I came up to tell you—that and something else. Moll will recover, and when she leaves the infirmary Cousin Salome has a little plan for her, which will take her away among kind people, who will teach her and help her to be good."

"What was the something else, Uncle Jack?"

"The something else was that old Roger would like to see you to-morrow morning, if Miss Mervyn will be good enough to take you there, as early as possible," he said. "Roger is going to his palace, Bryda, and he may start to-morrow, so he would like to say good-by."

"How nice for Roger," said Bryda. "Aren't you glad he is going, Uncle Jack? You spoke quite sadly. I suppose you will miss old Roger; I am sure I shall."

"Yes, I am very glad," said Uncle Jack, in a voice that shook a little. Evidently he would miss old Roger very much indeed.

"Poor Liz!" said Bryda, as she went to bed, "I am so sorry she cannot go too!"

When Miss Mervyn and Bryda went down to Roger's cottage in the morning, it seemed wonderfully quiet. There was no sound of the carpenter's diligent work—all his tools were neatly laid aside. The cottage looked as though it were Sunday. Roger was going home; he would need his tools no more.

Going into the inner room, they found old Roger in bed propped up with pillows, while Beppo, crouched at the foot of the bed, kept his big, dark eyes fixed, with a very sorrowful look, on the old man's face.

Then, and not till then, did Bryda suddenly understand what it all meant; and with a little cry of "Oh, Roger, don't die!" she sprang to the bedside.

"Gently, dear," said Miss Mervyn following her.

"Oh, I will be still!" sobbed Bryda; "but, oh, Roger, I

never thought you meant dying, when you told me about your palace. And it was because I did not understand, and told Moll Dawson about your treasures, that all this has happened! Oh, it's my fault!" she sobbed.

"No, dear," said Miss Mervyn gently. "It is not your fault. But next time things puzzle you, Bryda, ask some one to explain them."

There was a smile as beautiful as the calm light of a summer's sunset on the old man's face. How glad he seemed to be going Home! With something of an effort he spoke:

"They shall see the King in His beauty ... the land that is very far off. In My Father's house ... many mansions ... a place for you ... that means one for me too, Miss Bryda!"

"And one for Liz," said Bryda quickly.

"Ah! Liz will be able to show me round, she's been there for so long ... she'll teach me the ways o' the place, and the new song they sing there. She was always a good singer, was Liz, and loved it."

"For Beppo one place, too," said a little voice from the foot of the bed.

"One place for all the children of the King, if they have kept their garments white," said Miss Mervyn.

"Yes," went on Roger faintly, "where the Lord God giveth light... Wipeth away all tears... One thing more... What is it?" His memory seemed to fail, then again returned.

"Yes, that's it... Not all rest and singing... His servants shall serve Him ... work for old Roger ... work for Beppo

... for all, work and rest. But there's something more ... something good——"

His voice failed completely.

"Yes, there is," said Miss Mervyn; "the best thing of all! 'They shall see His Face!'"

A smile of exquisite delight came over the old man's face. He spoke no more, but lay back on his pillows, gazing before him and folding his hands, as if already he had some foretaste of that wonderful promise, given long ago to the pure in heart, "They shall see God!"

And then, from utter weakness, he fell info a gentle sleep, like that of a child, with that same smile on his face.

Thus Miss Mervyn, and even Bryda and little Beppo, as they looked, could understand how true are the words of the Apostle, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

They would try to be of the number of those for whom the many mansions are prepared; of those, like Roger,

"The guileless in their way,
Who keep the ranks of battle,
Who mean the things they say."

They stood watching old Roger's sleep for a little while, and then Miss Mervyn gently drew Bryda away; and Beppo and Mrs. Mears, the kind parish nurse and Bible woman, were left to watch the sleeper.

Before that day was ended old Roger had set out on his journey—had gone to join Liz in the Palace of the King.

The shock of Jim Dawson's attempted robbery, and a chill caught at the same time, were more than Roger's enfeebled frame could stand.

Cousin Salome wrote a little poem about him; but she said, and all agreed with her, that the old man's life and death were a better poem, written in God's book of history, where perhaps the names that we think great and famous are not the most conspicuous.

His body was laid beside that of Liz and Bryda gathered the freshest flowers and made two wreaths every Sunday morning.

And Beppo? A well-to-do farmer's wife, who had no child, offered to adopt him, and make him quite like her own child. Cousin Salome was not sure if the plan would work well, so she proposed that the boy should go for a month at first. And he went; and at the end of the month the farmer's wife declared that she must be allowed to keep him, if only because he was such a capital advertisement of her good milk and butter, since he had grown so much fatter and stronger. Now and then he was allowed to come and spend the day with Bryda, for the grannies said he was "a perfect little gentleman, who could do Bryda no harm."

Bryda had no more need to complain of being lonely, or of having nothing to do. By the time that she had done her lessons diligently, and played heartily with Miss Mervyn, who was very good at battledore and shuttlecock and other capital games, and had found time to do "something for someone else," in which Miss Mervyn was always ready to help her, why the day was gone, and it was bedtime. That is the great secret of not getting into scrapes, to have plenty to do, and Uncle Jack was obliged to confess one day, when Bryda insisted on an answer to her question, that he could no longer truthfully say that she

"lived in a jar of Mixed Pickles."

THE END.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK MIXED PICKLES ***

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG™ LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase "Project Gutenberg"), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/ copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. "Project Gutenberg" is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg

electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating

derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

> This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees

or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the

official Project Gutenberg website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, "Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."

- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to

the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.

- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a

computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu

of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg

Project Gutenberg is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg's goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 41 Watchung Plaza #516, Montclair NJ 07042, USA, +1 (862) 621-9288. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations ($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against

accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate.

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how

to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.