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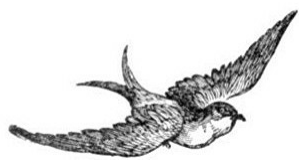
A FLIGHT WITH THE SWALLOWS

Or, Little Dorothy's Dream

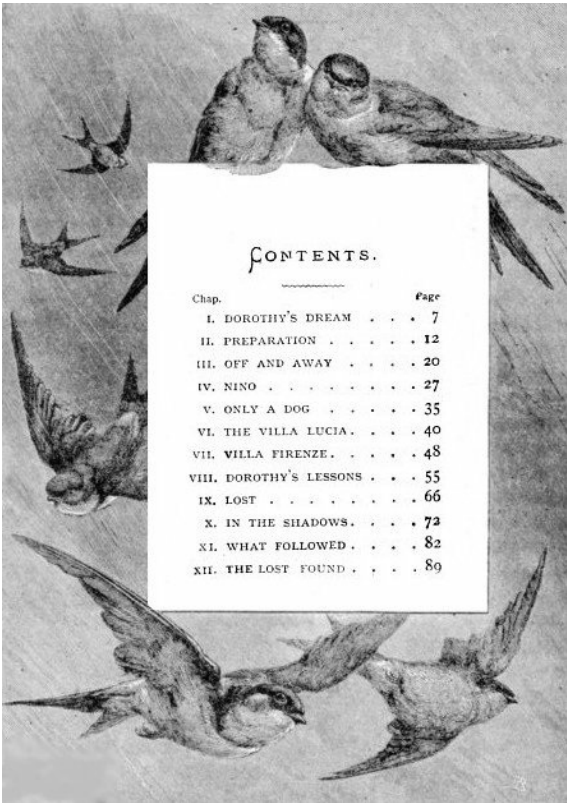
BY

EMMA MARSHALL

Author of "Poppies and Pansies," "Silver Chimes," etc., etc



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A FLIGHT WITH THE SWALLOWS.

CHAPTER I.

DOROTHY'S DREAM.

In a deep window seat, hidden by crimson curtains from the room beyond, a little girl was curled up, looking out upon a trim garden, where the first autumn leaves were falling one September afternoon. The view was bounded by a high wall, and above the wall, the east end of Coldchester Cathedral stood up a dark mass against the pale-blue sky. Every now and then a swallow darted past the window, with its forked tail and whitish breast; then there was a twittering and chirping in the nests above, as the swallows talked to each other of their coming flight. Little Dorothy was an only child; she had no brothers and sisters to play with; thus she made playmates of her two fluffy kittens, who were lying at her feet; and she made friends of the twittering swallows and the chattering jackdaws, as they flew in and out from the cathedral tower, and lived in a world of her own.

The position of an only child has its peculiar pleasures and privileges; but I am inclined to think that all little girls who have brothers and sisters to play with are more to be envied than little Dorothy. To be sure, there was no one to want Puff and Muff but herself; no one to dispute the ownership of Miss Belinda, her large doll; no one to say it was her turn to dust and tidy Barton Hall, the residence of Miss Belinda; no one to insist on his right to spin a top or snatch away the cup and ball just when the critical moment came, and the ball was at last going to alight on the cup.

Dorothy had none of these trials; but then she had none of the pleasures which go with them; for the pleasure of giving up your own way is in the long run greater than always getting it; and it is better to have a little quarrel, and then "make it up" with a kiss and confession of fault on both sides, than never to have any one to care about what *you* care for, and no one to contradict you!

As little Dorothy watched the swallows, and listened to their conversation above her head, she became aware that some one was in the drawing-room, and was talking to her mother.

She was quite hidden from view, and she heard her name.

"But how can I take little Dorothy?"

"Easily enough. It will do her no harm to take flight with the swallows."

"You don't think *she* is delicate?" she heard her mother exclaim, in a voice of alarm. "Oh, Doctor Bell, you don't think Dorothy is delicate?"

"No, she is very well as far as I see at present, but I think her life is perhaps rather too dreamy and self-absorbed. She wants companions; she wants variety."

Dr. Bell knew he was venturing on delicate ground.

"Dorothy is very happy," Mrs. Acheson said, "very happy. Just suppose San Remo does not suit her, does not agree with her; then think of the journey!"

"My dear madam, the journey is as easy in these days as if you could fly over on the backs of the swallows—easier, if anything. You ask my serious advice, and it is this, that you lose no time in starting for San Remo or Mentone."

"San Remo is best," said Mrs. Acheson, "for I have a friend who has a house there, and she will be there for the

winter."

"Very well; then let me advise you to be quick in making your preparations. I shall call again this day week, and expect to find you are standing, like the swallows, ready for flight. Look at them now on the coping of the old wall, talking about their departure, and settling."

When Dr. Bell was gone, Mrs. Acheson sat quietly by the fire, thinking over what he had said. She had tried to persuade herself that her cough was better, that if she kept in the house all the winter it would go away. She had felt sure that in this comfortable room, out of which her bed-room opened, she must be as well as in Italy or the south of France. Dr. Bell was so determined to get his own way, and it was cruel to turn her out of her home. And then Dorothy, little Dorothy! how hard it would be for her to leave Puff and Muff, and her nursery, and everything in it. And what was to be done about Nino, the little white poodle, and——

A host of objections started up, and Mrs. Acheson tried to believe that she would make a stand against Dr. Bell, and stay in Canon's House all the winter.

Meantime little Dorothy, who had been lying curled up as I have described, had heard in a confused way much of what Dr. Bell said. "A flight with the swallows." The swallows, her uncle, Canon Percival, had told her, flew away to sunshine and flowers; that the cold wind in England gave them the ague, and that they got all sorts of complaints, and would die of hunger, or cramp, or rheumatism if they stayed in England!

"As easy a journey as if you were on a swallow's back," the doctor had said; and Dorothy was wondering who could be small enough to ride on a swallow's back, when she heard a tap at the window, a little gentle tap.

"Let me in, let me in," said a small voice, which was like a chirp or a twitter, rather than a voice.

And then Dorothy turned the old-fashioned handle which closed the lower square of the lattice window, and in came the swallow. She recognised it as one she knew—the mother-bird from the nest in the eaves.

"Come to the sunny South," it said. "Come to the sunny South."

"I can't, without mother," Dorothy said.

"Oh yes, you can. Get on my back."

"I am much too big. I am nearly eight years old."

The swallow twittered, and it sounded like a laugh.

"You are not too big; just get on."

And then the swallow turned its tail towards little Dorothy; and, to her surprise, she saw her hands were tiny hands as she put them round the swallow's neck, and tucked a pair of tinier feet under its wings.

"Are you ready?" said the swallow.

"I don't know. Stop—I——"

But in another minute she was flying through the air on the swallow's back. Over the great cathedral tower, over the blue hills, away, away. Presently there was water beneath, dancing and sparkling in the western sunshine; then there were boats and ships, looking so tiny. Everything did look so small. Then it grew dark, and Dorothy was asleep—she felt she was asleep—and presently the swallow put her down on something very soft, and there was a great light, and she sat up and found herself, not in the sunny South, but on her mother's knee by the bright fire in the drawing-room.

"Why, Dorothy, you are quite cold," her mother said. "I did not know you were curled up in the window seat, and so

fast asleep."

"Why, mother," said Dorothy, rubbing her eyes and giving a great yawn, "I thought I was flying off to the sunny South with the swallows. How funny!" she exclaimed. "It was, after all, a dream! I heard Dr. Bell talking about your taking flight with the swallows, and then I thought I got ever so wee and tiny, and then the old mother-swallow carried me off. *Are you going to fly off with the swallows, mother, to the sunny South?*"



CHAPTER II.

PREPARATION.

"Well, Dorothy Dormouse!" exclaimed Canon Percival, when he came into the drawing-room after dinner that evening.

"Don't call me Dorothy Dormouse, Uncle Crannie."

"Oh, but we call people what they are; and when little girls roll up into a ball, and sleep away their time, they are like nothing so much as—dormice."

"Mother has been telling you at dinner all about my dream, Uncle Crannie. I know she has, else how do you know?"

"Oh, perhaps one of the swallows told me. I say, Dorothy, I have to talk seriously to you for once. I am not joking this time."

Dorothy looked up in her uncle's face, and saw that he really did look grave—almost sad.

"Before mother comes into the room, I want to tell you that Dr. Bell thinks her cough is a bad cough, and that Coldchester is not the right place for her to live in during the winter months. So poor Uncle Crannie will be left alone all the long winter, and you must go with mother and Ingleby to the sunny South—to Italy; think of that!"

"I don't want to go," said Dorothy. "I mean—I mean I don't want to leave Puff and Muff and old Nino, and——"

"Poor old Uncle Crannie; but, my dear little niece, this is not a question of what you *like* or what you *want*. It is a question of what is *right* to do. Perhaps, little Dorothy, neither mother nor I have taught you enough the meaning of the word duty. It means, what you owe to others of service or love. Now, you owe it to your mother to be as merry and happy as a bird; and, after all, many little girls would jump for joy to be off to San Remo."

Dorothy was silent. "How long will it take to get there," she asked—"to the sunny South?"

"Well, you won't go quite as fast as the swallows, but I daresay we shall get there in less than a week; it depends upon the weather, and upon how your mother bears the journey. You must ask God to-night to bless your dear mother, and to make you a very good, helpful little daughter to her. Will you do this?"

"Yes," Dorothy said—"yes, Uncle Crannie. Why won't you stay with us there all the time?"

"Well! the cathedral might run away if I was not here to prevent it; and what would the old Canons do if I deserted them?"

"You are the young Canon, I know," Dorothy said. "Ingleby says that's what you are called."

"Ah!" said the Canon, rubbing his bald head, "there are degrees of comparison, and I am afraid it is old, older, olderer, and oldest, in the cathedral chapter. But I wanted to tell you that at San Remo you will have playfellows—nice little girls and boys, who are living there with their grandmother; and that is what we cannot find for you in Coldchester."



"YOU ARE THE YOUNG CANON"

Click to [ENLARGE](#)

"I don't want any little girls and boys," Dorothy said. "I shan't play with them."

"Oh, nonsense! you will learn to play with them—Hoodman Blind, and Tom Tickler's ground; won't that be jolly?"

Dorothy made no response, and her mother coming into the room, with her shawl wrapped closely round her, she slipped down from her uncle's knee and took up her position at her mother's feet, with one of the kittens in her lap, saying—

"Read, mother; please read."

"Your mother can't read to-night, Dorothy," said the Canon, who had taken up the *Times*. "She has coughed so much to-day, and is very hoarse."

Dorothy pouted, and her mother, clearing her throat, said—

"Oh, I will try to finish the chapter we left unfinished last night. That will not hurt me."

It was a pity that Dorothy was so seldom denied anything. It was simply that there was no absolute necessity for

refusing her what she asked, and she had no idea yet that giving up her own will was a sweet gift the youngest child may offer to her Father in heaven—the Father of the dear Lord Jesus Christ, who offered Himself in life and in death for the sinful, sad world He came to save. So Mrs. Acheson finished the chapter of the story, and then it was time for Dorothy to go to bed, for Ingleby appeared at the door, and said it was past eight o'clock, and much too late for a little girl to be in the drawing-room.

I daresay you wish to know what Dorothy was like, and as she goes up the wide staircase of Canon's House, she makes a very pretty picture. She had long, silky, fair hair, which was not frizzed and crimped, but hung down to her waist, and even below it, with soft, curled ends.

As Ingleby had no other child to look after, it was natural that she should bestow much pains on Dorothy's appearance. She wore a pretty white cashmere frock, with a wide rose-coloured sash, her black silk stockings fitted her legs precisely, and her dainty shoes had pretty buckles.

Puff and Muff had been sent to bed downstairs, and only old Nino was allowed to come into the nursery. He was a favoured dog, and slept at the foot of his little mistress's bed.

Dorothy went slowly upstairs, heedless of Ingleby's repeated "Come, my dear, come!" And when at last they had reached the nursery, Dorothy seated herself in the old rocking-chair, put her head back, and swinging gently backwards and forwards, said seriously, almost solemnly—

"Jingle"—it was her pet name for her faithful nurse—"I hate 'playmates,' as Uncle Crannie calls them. If I go to the sunny South, I shall not play with any one."

"Well, that will be very uncivil, my dear, though, to be sure, you are an odd child, for when the little Miss Thompsons and Master Benson came to tea on your last birthday, it did not seem to make you happy."

"It made me miserable," said Dorothy. Then, with a sudden impulse, she got up, and throwing her arms round her old friend's neck, she said, "I want nobody but you and mother, and Puff and Muff, and Nino."

Ingleby was certainly flattered by her darling's preference, and took her on her knee and undressed her as if she were seven months, instead of nearly eight years old, and brushed and combed the silky hair with great pride and pleasure. Dorothy's face was rather too thin and colourless for childhood; but her features were regular, and her large, blue eyes, shaded by dark lashes, were really beautiful.

"She is too much of a little woman," the Miss Thompsons' mother said; "the child wants companions, and to be roused from her dreams;" while Master Benson went away from the birthday party declaring it was slow and stupid, and that Dorothy was a stiff starched little thing, and he longed to shake her!

Dorothy could not remember her father; he had died when she was scarcely a year old, and just at that time her uncle, Canon Percival, went to live in Canon's House, at Coldchester, and invited his sister to come and take up her abode there, with her little girl, and Ingleby, her nurse.

Canon Percival was a bachelor, and till Dorothy came he had never had much to do with children. His friends pitied him, and said that for the most part children were noisy and troublesome, and that he would find the peace of his house disturbed. But Dorothy—Dorothy Dormouse, as he liked to call her—set these preconceived notions at defiance. She was quiet and gentle, and she and her uncle Cranstone—Crannie, as she called him—were great friends. She would sit on one of the red leather chairs by her uncle, at his great writing table, and draw pictures by the hour of birds, and butterflies, and flowers, and portraits, too—of Miss Belinda, and Puff and Muff, and even of her uncle himself. Then she would walk with him to the service in the cathedral, and sit demure and quiet while the prayers were said and the organ rolled its waves of music overhead.

The Canon's little niece was a great favourite with the old vergers, though they would say, one to the other, that she was too wise and knowing for a little one.

"It all comes of being with old people. There ain't enough of young life about her. It's a thousand pities she has not some playmate."

So it seemed, you see, a general opinion that Dorothy wanted companions; and when she got to the sunny South the companions were ready for her.

But it took some time to prepare for flight. People can get to the south of France and Italy very quickly, it is true; but they are not like the swallows, who don't want any luggage, and fly with no encumbrance.

Ingleby's preparations were very extensive indeed, and Dorothy had also a great deal in hand. She had to put Barton Hall in order, for one thing, and to put up a notice on the door that this house was to let furnished. Then Belinda had to have a little travelling ulster and warm hat, like her mistress's, and Puff and Muff had to be settled comfortably in their new quarters; for though they did not sleep in the nursery, they were there all day, and were carried about the house by their little mistress, while Nino trotted behind. The preparations were an amusement to Dorothy, and she began to feel that if anything prevented her going to the sunny South, she would feel sorry and disappointed after all!

Ingleby grew more and more serious as the time drew near. She murmured a good deal about "foreign parts," and once Dorothy felt sure she heard her say something about going away to die. Could these words possibly refer to her mother? Poor little girl! She had lived so securely with her mother, and had never been accustomed to think of her as apart from her own comfort and pleasure, that a sharp pain shot through her heart as she heard Ingleby's murmured words.

Once, too, when Ingleby thought she was asleep in the inner nursery, she heard her talking in low tones to the housemaid.

"The child has no notion that her mamma is so ill. Childlike!" said Ingleby.

"Well, I don't call it childlike," was the reply. "Miss Dorothy is not childlike; she is just eaten up with herself."

"She is as dear a lamb as you could find anywhere," said Ingleby, wrathfully; "a dear, sweet lamb. I suppose you like rampaging, noisy children, like your own brothers and sisters in your mother's farmhouse?"

"I like children," said Susan, bravely, "to think of other folks a little, as well as themselves. But there! it's not the poor child's fault; everyone in the house spoils her, and you are the worst of all, Mrs. Ingleby."

"I tell you what, Susan, I'd advise you, as a friend, to mind your own business. If you are such a blind bat as not to see what Miss Dorothy is—well, I am sorry for you, and I can't help it."

"I did not mean any offence, I am sure," said Susan, as she left the nursery. "As I said, it's not the child's fault; but it would be hard lines for her if she lost her mamma, and you too, Mrs. Ingleby."

A few minutes later, Ingleby was startled by the appearance of a little white figure in the doorway.

"Jingle," she said, in a low, choking voice, "is—my—mamma so very ill? I want to know."

"Ill? why, no. She has got a cough which shakes her rather. But, bless your little heart—don't, Miss Dorothy, my sweet, don't."

For, in a passion of weeping, Dorothy had thrown herself into her nurse's arms.

"Am I such a spoiled child?—am I, Jingle?"

"You are a dear little creature; nothing could spoil you. There, there; let me put you back to bed. Don't cry."

But Dorothy did cry, and when Ingleby had left her at last, she buried her face in the pillow, saying over to herself—

"Oh, is my mamma so ill? Will she die? Will she die? And I am such a spoiled child. Oh dear, oh dear! I never thought of it before—never, never."

There are times when many older people than little Dorothy catch suddenly, as it were, a glimpse of their true selves, and are saddened at the sight, with what results for the future depends upon the means they take to cure themselves of their faults.

There is but one way for the children and for those who have left childhood far behind—only one way—to watch and pray, lest they enter into temptation.



CHAPTER III.

OFF AND AWAY.

The excitement of preparation for departure is always infectious, and, however much Mrs. Acheson and little Dorothy had at first disliked the idea of leaving home for the winter, before the actual day for saying good-bye arrived, they were both in a measure reconciled to the coming change.

Dorothy had packed a large box, with things she *must* take, and Ingleby, glad she should be so amused, did not prevent her, as she really ought to have done; for such a strange medley as that box contained had surely scarcely ever been collected for transportation across the Channel: paint-boxes; new and old picture-books, coloured by her own hand; Belinda's wardrobe—an extensive one; pencils; india-rubber; her desk; her workbox (which last, by-the-bye, was seldom used); her "Little Arthur's History" and "Mrs. Markham's History;" boxes of dominoes and draughts; magnetic ducks and geese and fish; and many more things of the like kind, which would take me far too long to enumerate.

When the luggage stood in the hall on the morning of departure, Canon Percival shrugged his shoulders, and gave a low whistle. "As I am courier," he said, "and must look after the luggage, I am rather alarmed to see so many boxes. What is that old box with brass nails, Ingleby?"

"Oh, that is Miss Dorothy's, sir; she packed it herself."

"With toys, I suppose, and rubbish. No, I shall not be answerable for that. If we take Nino and Belinda, that must suffice."

Ingleby looked doubtful. "The best way will be, sir, to get it carried into the servants' hall before the poor child comes down; she is breaking her heart, as it is, over Puff and Muff."

"Nonsense!" said Canon Percival, impatiently. "Dorothy must be more reasonable; we have spoilt her long enough."

Ingleby dreaded a scene, and began to drag away the box into a remote region behind the red baize door, hoping to get it out of sight, and out of mind, before Dorothy and her mother appeared.

She had just succeeded, and was returning breathless, when Dorothy, with Belinda in her arms and Nino toddling behind, came downstairs.

The luggage was packed on a fly, and Mrs. Acheson, Dorothy, and Canon Percival drove to the station in the carriage. All the servants were gathered in the hall, and were saying good-bye, with many wishes that Mrs. Acheson would come back soon quite well. A little telegraph boy, with his bag strapped across his shoulder, came gaily up to the door. Then he took out of his bag the dark orange envelope which often sends a thrill of fear through the hearts of those whose nearest and dearest ones are separated from them, and handed it to Canon Percival.

"A paid answer, sir," said the messenger.

And Canon Percival, after scanning the few words, took out his pencil and wrote—

"Yes, with pleasure."

"What is it, Cranstone? nothing wrong?"

"Oh no, only that our travelling party is to be enlarged in London. Little Irene Packingham is to spend the winter at San Remo with her grandmother, and the telegram is from Mrs. Baker, the child's schoolmistress, saying Lady Burnside had telegraphed to her to communicate with me."

"How very odd not to write! It must be a sudden determination."

"Yes; but we shall not get to Paddington, much less to San Remo, if we dawdle about here any longer; come, make haste."

They were off at last, and at the station several friends appeared, who came to wish them a safe journey. Ingleby and the footman had got the luggage labelled and in the van; and Dorothy and her mother were comfortably seated in a first-class carriage, while Canon Percival stood by the door, exchanging a few last words with a gentleman; and then the guard came up with the familiar question—"Any more going?" Canon Percival jumped in, and they were gliding quietly out of the station and leaving Coldchester far behind.

For the convenience of early crossing the English Channel the next morning, the party were to sleep at the Charing Cross Hotel; and here, under the charge of one of Mrs. Baker's governesses, little Irene Packingham was waiting for them.

Dorothy's curiosity had been roused when her mother told her of a little travelling companion, but the two children stood looking at each other, shy and speechless, while Canon Percival and Mrs. Acheson were engaged talking to the governess.

She was a prim, stiff-looking, elderly woman, who was the useful governess in Mrs. Baker's school. She only taught the little girls, looked after the servants, and met girls at the station, or, as in this instance, accompanied one who was leaving the school.

"Irene has not been very well of late," Miss Pearce was saying; "and Colonel Packingham seems to have written to Lady Burnside that he wished her to spend the rest of the term till after the Christmas holidays at San Remo. Mrs. Baker had a letter from Lady Burnside, requesting us to prepare Irene to start with you to-morrow morning. It is very short notice, but I hope she has her things all right."

After a few more words of a like kind, Miss Pearce said she must hasten back to St. John's Wood, and bade her little charge good-bye.

"Good-bye, Irene; I hope you will be a very good girl, and give no trouble; you have your keys in your pocket, and mind you keep the comforter well round your neck on the boat."

Then a kiss was exchanged, not a very warm one on either side, and Miss Pearce departed.

Rooms had been engaged on the upper floor of the big hotel through which so many people pass coming and going from the Continent. The party went up in a lift, which was a great novelty to Dorothy, who all this time had not spoken a single word to Irene.

A little bedroom next the one which had been arranged by Ingleby for her mistress was found for Irene. And in a very independent, methodical way she began to lay aside her hat and jacket, take out her keys, and unlock her small travelling-bag.

Dorothy, who had seated herself by the window, and was looking down into the square below, watching with deep interest the rapid passing and repassing of cabs and carriages in and out the station, did not invite any conversation.

The contrast between the two children was a very strong one, such as we generally notice between those who from their babyhood have been, as it were, little citizens of the world, and those who have been brought up, as Dorothy had been till nearly her eighth birthday, with every care and every luxury, in a happy, quiet home.

Irene was tall for her age—nearly ten; and she had a determined expression on her face, as if she knew there were rough places and troubles to meet in her daily life, and that she had set herself to overcome them. She had heard a murmur of Ingleby's—"Another child to look after on the journey." And she was determined to give no trouble; she had no long hair to smooth and comb, for her hair was cut short, and her plain blue serge dress was quite free from any adornment. After Dorothy had done with the square, she turned to watch Irene's movements, and regarded her companion with a mingled wonder, and a feeling that was certainly not admiration.

Presently Dorothy called to Ingleby in the next room—

"When are you coming to undress me, Jingle? and when are we to have our tea?"

"I'll come directly, but I am busy getting your mamma's things put for the night; she must go to bed early, and so must you."

"Where's mother?" was the next question asked.

"In the sitting-room opposite."

"I want to go to her."

"Wait a few minutes; she is lying on the sofa, and I want her to rest."

"Where's Belinda to sleep, and Nino?"

"Dear me," said Ingleby, impatiently, "I don't know; here's the cork come out of your mamma's eau-de-Cologne flask, and everything in the travelling basket is soaked. Dear, dear!"

Dorothy now began to snatch at the buttons of her travelling ulster, and threw off the scarf round her neck.

"Let me help you," said Irene. "I am quite ready."

Dorothy was not very gracious, and as Irene tugged at the sleeves of the ulster, a lock of the silky hair caught in a button, and Dorothy screamed—

"Oh, don't! you hurt me. Oh, Jingle!"

Ingleby came running in at the cry of distress, and began to pity and console.

"I am very sorry," Irene said, moving away to the window, where, through the gathering haze of tears, she saw the gas-lights beginning to start out all round the square below.

A sense of desolation oppressed her; and she wished—oh, how she wished she had stayed at Mrs. Baker's! At first it had seemed delightful to go to grannie, but now she thought anything was better than being where she was not wanted. She was roused by Ingleby's voice—

"You are to have tea in the sitting-room with Mrs. Acheson. The Canon is gone out to dine at St. Paul's Deanery; and as soon as you have had your tea, you are to go to bed."

Dorothy, shaking back her beautiful hair, ran away to a room at the end of the passage, never thinking of Irene, who followed her with the same uneasy sense of "not being wanted" which is hard for us all to bear.



CHAPTER IV.

NINO.

Mrs. Acheson roused herself to talk to the little girls, and was kindly anxious that Irene should not feel strange and unhappy. But Irene was not a child to respond quickly, and Mrs. Acheson could but contrast her with her own little Dorothy, who was so caressing and tender in her ways, and had a gentle voice, while Irene had a quick, decided way of speaking.

"Have you been unwell long, my dear?" Mrs. Acheson asked.

"I have had a cough, and—and father does not wish me to keep a cough, because of mother."

"You don't remember your mother?"

"No. I have a stepmother, you know, and two little brothers."

"You will like being with your grandmamma and your cousins at San Remo. Your grandmamma is such a dear old lady. Do you know, the thought of being near her reconciled me to spending the winter abroad."

Irene's face brightened at this.

"I am glad you know grannie," she said. "Your cough is very bad, I am afraid," Irene continued, as Mrs. Acheson was interrupted by a fit of coughing.

"Mother's cough is much better," Dorothy said, hotly. "Jingle says so, and *she* knows better than *you* do."

Irene made no reply to this, and soon after Ingleby came to put them both to bed.

Irene had been too much accustomed to changes to be much affected by this change, and as soon as her head touched the pillow, she was asleep. But Dorothy tossed and fidgeted, and besought Ingleby not to leave her, and persisted in holding her hand in hers, though her nurse sorely wanted rest herself, and to get all things forward for the early start the next morning.

At last Ingleby disengaged her hand from Dorothy's clinging clasp, and went downstairs to cater for some supper. But her disappearance soon roused Dorothy; she began to cry and call, "Jingle! Jingle!" This woke Irene, who jumped out of her own bed in the next room, and coming to her, said, "What do you want?"

"I don't want *you*," was the somewhat ungracious reply. "I want Jingle or mother."

"Are you ill? have you a pain anywhere?" asked practical Irene.

"No, but I want Jingle. Oh dear, dear!"

"If nothing is the matter, I think you ought to go to sleep, and not cry; it may frighten your mamma."

"It is so horrid here," said poor little Dorothy; "and I wonder how Puff and Muff are; and I want Nino. Why did Jingle take him away? Oh dear, dear! and there's such a buzzing noise in the street, and rumble, rumble; oh dear!"

"Do you ever try saying hymns to get yourself to sleep?" Irene asked. "If you like I'll repeat one, and then you can say it over when I get back to my own bed."

Dorothy turned her face away on the pillow, and was not very encouraging; but Irene repeated this beautiful evening hymn for a child, which I hope all the little girls and boys who read my story know with their hearts as well as their heads:—

"On the dark hill's western side,
The last purple gleam has died;
Twilight to one solemn hue
Changes all, both green and blue.

"In the fold, and in the nest,
Birds and lambs have gone to rest;
Labour's weary task is o'er,

Closely shut the cottage door.

"Saviour, ere in sweet repose
I my weary eyelids close,
While my mother through the gloom
Singeth from the outer room,

"While across the curtain white,
With a dim uncertain light,
On the floor the faint stars shine,
Let my latest thought be Thine.

"'Twas a starry night of old
When rejoicing angels told
The poor shepherds of Thy birth,
God became a Child on earth.

"Soft and quiet is the bed
Where I lay my little head;
Thou hadst but a manger bare,
Rugged straw for pillow fair.

"Saviour, 'twas to win me grace
Thou didst stoop to this poor place,
Loving with a perfect love
Child and man and God above.

"Thou wast meek and undefiled:
Make me gentle, too, and mild;
Thou didst foil the tempter's power:
Help me in temptation's hour.

"Thou didst love Thy mother here,
Make me gentle, kind, and dear;
Thou didst mind her slightest word,
Teach me to obey, O Lord.

"Happy now, I turn to sleep;
Thou wilt watch around me keep;
Him no danger e'er can harm
Who lies cradled in Thy arm."

When Ingleby came up, she found Dorothy sound asleep, and her arm round Irene's neck. Both children were in profound slumber. Ingleby gently lifted Irene and carried her back to her own room, Dorothy murmuring as she turned

round on her pillow, "Away with the swallows, off to the sunny South."

They were off in good earnest the next morning—a bright and beautiful morning. The sea was blue, and the sky clear; only a brisk wind chased the waves shoreward, and gave just that motion which to good sailors is so delightful.

There were, of course, some unhappy people who could not bear even that gentle motion, and had to take flight to the cabin. Poor Ingleby was one of these, and in spite of all her brave attempts to keep up, she was obliged to leave the children to Canon Percival's care, and retreat with her mistress to the lower regions.

Dorothy and Irene sat together on the middle seat of the deck, with their faces to the dancing waves, over which some white birds were darting, who had their nests in the face of the cliffs of Dover. It had all the delightful sense of novelty to Dorothy, but Irene was already a traveller. In a dim, dreamy way she was thinking of her voyage home, four years before; she remembered the pain of parting with the dark-skinned ayah, and her father's sad face, as they drew near England.



"OH, WHAT A CROSS LITTLE DOGGIE!"

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Those white cliffs brought it all back to her, and she recalled how her father said,—

"England was your dear mother's home, and she loved it, but she is in a better home now; I must not wish her back again."

After that her life at Mrs. Baker's was dull and monotonous; going on and on day after day, week after week, year after year, with but little to mark the passing away of time.

Irene was not particularly attractive to strangers, and the passengers who turned upon Dorothy admiring glances, and even, in that foolish way some people have, exclaimed, "What a lovely child!" scarcely gave a thought to her companion.

"A plain girl," one lady said; "they cannot be sisters!"

Then one of the ladies ventured to put her hand on Nino's head, who was curled up under the rug which was tucked round both little girls' legs, with his head and ears and black nose just appearing. Nino growled, and Dorothy made a gesture as if to get a little farther away.

"Oh, what a cross little doggie!" was the remark.

"He is not cross," Dorothy said, pressing Nino closer.

"Don't you think so?" the lady said, in an offended tone. "Perhaps he has learned of his mistress to be cross."

She laughed, but Dorothy did not laugh, or even smile.

"He is a spoiled little dog," said the younger of the two ladies, reaching forward to give Nino another pat.

Another growl, followed this time by a snap.

"Horrid little beast!" was the next exclamation. "Children ought not to be allowed to take pet dogs about with them, to the annoyance of other people."

Dorothy edged away, closer and closer to Irene, who, to Dorothy's surprise, spoke out boldly.

"Nino did not growl till you touched him," she said; "no one ought to pat strange dogs."

"My dear, your opinion was neither asked for nor wanted," was the reply. And Dorothy struggled from the rug, and hastened to call her uncle, who was talking to a gentleman.

"Uncle Crannie, do come and move our seat; there are some very rude ladies who hate Nino."

But Canon Percival was busy talking, and did not immediately listen to Dorothy. Nino had toddled off to inspect the boat, and by some means, how no one could quite tell, had slipped over the side of the steamer, and was engulfed in the seething waves below. Irene saw what had happened, and cried out,—

"Oh! Nino has fallen through that open place. Nino will be drowned."

Then poor little Dorothy, turning, saw Irene rushing to the place, and called aloud,—

"Nino, Nino will be drowned! Nino, Nino, my Nino! will nobody save him? Oh, Uncle Crannie, Uncle Crannie, save him!"



CHAPTER V.

ONLY A DOG.

"It is only a dog!" the passengers on the steamer exclaimed, some with a sigh of relief, for at first it was rumoured it was a child.

"Only a dog!" and Canon Percival said that to stop the steamer and lower a boat was out of the question. They were much behind as it was, and there would be barely time to catch the train to Paris.

There was no sign of Nino, and the surging waters had closed over him. Poor Nino! Two or three fishing smacks were in sight, and almost within speaking distance, but there was no hope of saving him.

"Only a dog!" but the heart of his little mistress felt as if it would break. She rushed down into the cabin, and with a wild cry of distress threw herself into her mother's arms.

"Nino! my Nino is drowned. Oh, Nino! Nino!"

Poor Ingleby roused herself from her sickness to comfort her darling.

"Oh! Miss Dorothy, perhaps it is all for the best; he would have been unhappy, and in the way, and——"

But Dorothy refused comfort; and by the time they were in the train, which there was a great rush to catch at Boulogne, Dorothy was exhausted with crying, and was only too glad to be tucked up on a seat near her mother, and soothed to sleep and forgetfulness of her trouble.

Irene felt very sorry for Dorothy, but she had never had a home and pets, either dogs or cats; and she could not therefore enter into the extent of Dorothy's grief. Having offered all the consolation in her power, which had been repulsed, Irene resigned herself to a book that Ingleby had given her out of her well-stocked basket, and before long she, too, was asleep.

"Perhaps we can buy another white dog in Paris," Mrs. Acheson suggested to Canon Percival.

"Oh no! that would not answer. I don't think you want any more trouble, and if poor old Nino was troublesome sometimes, a young successor would be certain to be ten times more troublesome. As a rule, dogs are unwelcome visitors in other people's houses, and Lady Burnside may dislike the race. I am sorry for Dorothy's trouble, and for the poor little creature's end, but, as Ingleby says, there are worse sorrows than the loss of a dog."

"I suppose he was drowned at once," Mrs. Acheson said; "I do hope he did not struggle long for life."

"He was probably sucked under the steamer, and it would be over directly, let us hope." Then Canon Percival pulled his travelling-cap over his eyes, and was soon wrapped in profound slumber.

When the party arrived at Paris at Meurice's Hotel, Dorothy's tears broke forth afresh, and she had to be conveyed to her room by poor Ingleby, followed by Irene, who carried Miss Belinda and a number of other miscellaneous articles.

Mrs. Acheson, tired and worn out, was forbidden by Canon Percival to go to Dorothy, and again and again did Mrs. Acheson wish that she had followed her brother's advice, and left poor Nino at home.

It was not till the two children were left together, after partaking of crescent-shaped rolls and coffee, that Irene ventured to say anything to Dorothy.

"Don't cry any more, Dorothy; it makes other people so unhappy—and," said Irene, wisely, "it won't bring Nino back!"

"I know that! I know that! What do you tell me *that* for? Oh, dear! oh, dear!"

"Well," Irene said, "I want to tell you anything which will make you try to stop crying."

"*That* won't," said Dorothy, crossly; "you never, *never* had a dog; how should *you* know what I feel?"

"I am not thinking so much about what *you* feel," Irene said, with refreshing frankness; "I am thinking of your mamma,

and how vexed and grieved *she* is about you."

At this moment a door from another room opened, and, rattling a big bunch of keys, a pretty, bright *femme de chambre* came in.

"Ah!" she said, in her broken English, "Ah! what pains little ma'm'selle? Is she ill? Does she want a doctor?"

"No," Irene said; "her favourite little dog was drowned as we crossed the sea. He fell over the edge of the steamer, and we never saw him again."

"Ah! but that is sad; but oh! dear *petite*," the kind woman said, going up to Dorothy, "think what grief my poor mother has, for my little brother Antoine fell into the river when all the flowers were coming out in May, and was dragged out cold and dead. Ah! but that was grief."

"How old was he?" Dorothy said.

"Five years old, ma'm'selle, and as lovely as an angel."

"What did your mother do?" Irene asked; "your poor mother!"

"She comforted my poor father, for it was when cutting the rushes with him that Antoine fell into the water. She dried her eyes, and tried to be cheerful for his, my father's, sake. The pain at her poor heart was terrible, terrible, but she said to me, 'Jeanette, I must hide the pain for the sake of the dear father. I only tell it to God.'"

Both the children listened to Jeanette's story with keen interest, and Irene asked,—

"How is your poor mother now?"

"She is calm, she is quiet; she does her work for them all, and her face has a look of peace. M. le Curé says it is the peace that comes of bearing sorrow, as the Lord Jesus bore the cross, and that is the way for us all; little and young, or old, it is the same. But I must go; there is so much work, night and day, day and night. See, dear little ma'm'selle"—and Jeanette foraged in the deep pocket of her white apron—"here are some bon-bons, chocolate of the best; see, all shining like silver."

She laid some round chocolate balls, covered with silver paper, in Dorothy's hand, and said,—

"Try to sleep away your sorrow, ma'm'selle, and wake fresh and happy for madame's sake."

"Every one tells me that," said Dorothy, "except mother. She does not tell me I don't care for her; she does not tell me to be happy for her sake. As if I could—could—forget my Nino!"

"No one thinks you can forget him," Irene said; "but if crying makes you ill, and makes your mamma miserable, you should try to stop."

Dorothy began to taste the excellence of Jeanette's chocolate, and offered some to Irene, saying,—

"That was a pretty story of Jeanette's about her poor little brother. Didn't you think so, Irene?"

"Yes," Irene said, thoughtfully; "I hope God will comfort Antoine's poor father."

"It's the *mother* that cared the most—it was the mother who was so miserable."

"Ah! but it was the father who let the little boy slip into the water; it was a thousand times worse for him," Irene said.



CHAPTER VI.

THE VILLA LUCIA.

"Well, grannie, is she coming?—is Irene coming?"

The question was asked eagerly by a boy of nine years old, who came into the pretty sitting-room of the Villa Lucia at San Remo, with his hands full of pale lilac crocuses. "Is she coming, grannie dear?"

"Do not rush into the room before your sister, Willy. See, you have knocked the basket out of her hand."

"And all my flowers are upset, grannie," said a little plaintive voice. "Every one!"

"Pick them up, Willy; do not be so rough. Ah! look!"—for a third and very important personage now toddled into the room, having struggled down from his nurse's arms; and before any one could stop him, Baby Bob had trampled on Ella's flowers, so that scarcely one was fit to present to grannie.

Quite unrepentant, and, indeed, unheeding of the cry—"Oh! Baby Bob! what are you doing?"—Baby Bob stumped up to grannie, and deposited in her lap a very much crushed and flattened crocus, saying—

"Kiss me for it; it's for *you*."

"You darling!" Lady Burnside said. "Thank you. The poor little flower is sadly squeezed; but it is a token of baby's love all the same."

"Now, grannie," exclaimed Willy, "I want to hear about the cousin, because, you see, I never even thought about her till the other day, and I want to be ready—what do you call it?—*prepared* for her."

"After all, Willy," said a grave-eyed maiden of twelve, who was lying on a couch in the window, "it won't make much difference to *you* what Irene is like. A rough and noisy boy like you can't expect a stranger to put up with him as *we* do."

"She's not a stranger," said Willy. "She is a *cousin*, and who knows? she may like me better than anybody. She may be a jolly girl, who isn't made of sugar and salt, like Ella!"

"I am not made of sugar and salt," pleaded Ella, who had patiently gathered up her flowers, and was answering the call of their nurse to go with Baby Bob to take off his jacket and hat.

"No, that's true," said Willy; "you are all salt and vinegar, no sugar. Now, grannie, as the little ones are cleared off at last, tell me about the cousin."

But Lady Burnside said gravely, "Willy, I wish you would try to please me by being more considerate and gentle to your sisters."

"Ella is so whiny piny! she is always saying '*Don't*', and '*You shan't!*'"

"Not always, Willy. Do you remember how ready she was to give up her turn to you to play draughts with Constance last evening? Do you remember how kindly she helped you to find those places in the map for Mr. Martyn?"

"Yes, grannie," Willy said. "I will go and tell her I am sorry I have been so cross; but she *is* provoking, and you don't know *how* provoking."

"Well, making all allowance for that, I still think that you should never forget you are a boy and she is a little girl, and should for that very reason be gentle and forbearing, because it is a rule, which all noble-hearted people recognise, that the weak should be protected by the strong."

Willy gave his grandmother a rather rough kiss, and said,—

"I'll go and stroke Ella the right way, and *when* I come back you *will* tell me about the cousin."

When Willy was gone, Constance laid down the book she had been reading, and said,—

"I do not envy Irene Pakingham coming here. Willy is an awful tease, and if she is a prim little thing, turned out by a boarding-school, she will have a bad time of it."

"I think you are hard upon Willy, dear Constance," was the gentle reply. "He is a very high-spirited boy, very much like what your father was; and then Willy has the great disadvantage of having no brother near his own age."

"I think," said Constance, "he ought to go to school. Mr. Martyn thinks so also, I know. It is such a pity mother is so set against schools."

"There is a reason for it, and you must remember your mother's great grief."

"Poor Arthur's dying at school, you mean; but he was a very delicate boy, and Willy is as strong as a horse. I wish I were strong—half as strong! Here I lie, week after week, and my back does not get a bit better. I had the old pain this morning when I just moved to take my work from the little table;" and Constance's eyes filled with tears.

She was the eldest living child of Lady Burnside's eldest daughter, who had married a gentleman high in the Civil Service in India, and who had always lived there. As so often happens, the children could not bear the climate after a certain age, and they had been committed to their grandmother's care, who lived during the winter at San Remo, and of late years had not returned to England in the summer, but had spent the hot season in Switzerland.

The first detachment of children had been Arthur and Constance, both very delicate. Arthur had been sent to school near London, and had died there, to the great grief of his father and mother. He had caught a chill after a game of cricket, and died before any of his relations could reach him. Although no one was really to blame, poor Mrs. Montague found it hard to think so, and she lived in perfect dread of sending Willy to school, although he was a robust, vigorous boy.

The next detachment which came to be committed to Lady Burnside's care were little Ella and Baby Bob. Mrs. Montague had brought them to San Remo herself, now more than two years before this time, and with the help of Mrs. Crawley, the old and trusted nurse, who had lived with Lady Burnside for many years, their grandmother had been able to bear the burden of responsibility. Constance had lately complained of a pain in her back, and had been condemned to lie down on an invalid couch for the greater part of the day; but Willy and the baby were as healthy as could be desired,

and Ella, although not strong, had seldom anything really amiss. She was a gentle, sensitive child, and apt to take a low view of herself and everybody else. But Lady Burnside did not encourage this, and while she held Willy in check, she was too wise to let Ella look upon herself as a martyr to her brother's teasing and boisterous mirth.

Presently Constance said,—

"Is Irene like Aunt Eva, I wonder?"

"Not if I may judge by her photograph," Lady Burnside said.

"Why did not Uncle Packingham let Irene live with you, grannie, as we do?"

"Perhaps he thought I could hardly undertake another grandchild, and you know Irene has a second mother; and her home will be eventually with her and her little brothers when her father leaves the service."

"And our home will be with father and mother one day," Constance said. "Not that I wish to leave you, dear grannie," Constance added. "Indeed, I often think I have the grandmotherly sort of feeling about mamma, and the motherly one about you!"

Lady Burnside laughed.

"Your mamma would be amused to hear that. I always think of her as so young and bright, and she and Aunt Eva were the light of my eyes."

"I hope Irene will be nice," Constance said; "and then there is another girl coming. We forget that."

"I do not forget it. I have been with Crawley this morning to look at the Villa Firenze; it is all in nice order for Mrs. Acheson, and there are two good Italian servants, besides Stefano and his wife, who, being an Englishwoman, understands the ways of the English thoroughly, especially of invalids, so I hope the travellers will be pleased when they arrive."

"What is the girl's name? do you remember, grannie?"

"Yes, her name is Dorothy. I saw her when she was a very little girl, and I remember she had beautiful silky hair; she was a pale, delicate child."

"Dear me!" said Constance. "Every one seems to be delicate. Irene Packingham is coming because of a cough, and so is Mrs. Acheson, and really the only strong ones are the boys. I suppose Irene takes after Aunt Eva in being delicate?"

"Yes; her father thought she would do well to escape the fogs of London, and have the advantage of the sunshine here; but I hope we shall send her back in the spring quite well."

"*Take* her back, grannie, say take her back, for I should so like to go to England."

Lady Burnside shook her head. "I do not think I shall return to England next spring with the swallows. What a flight that is!" she said, looking out of the window, where a long line of birds could be seen flying across the blue sea.

"Happy birds!" said Constance, wearily; "I wish I could fly with them!"

Lady Burnside made no rejoinder to this, and sat knitting quietly by the wood fire, which was pleasant at sunset, when the chill is always great in southern countries. After half an hour's quiet, there were sounds of coming feet, and Baby Bob, in all the glory of a very short frock and wide sash, came in with a shout, which would have shaken the nerves of any one less accustomed to children than Lady Burnside.

Behind him came Ella, with a little work-basket in her hand, with which she went up to Constance's couch, and

seating herself there, took out her little bit of cross-stitch, and settled herself to work.

Baby Bob took possession of his grandmother, and she had to go over one of his picture-books, and tell for the hundredth time the story of Mother Hubbard, which, illustrated with large coloured pictures, was Baby Bob's great favourite.

He would ponder over the pictures with wondering interest, and wish that the dog had not cheated, and made believe to be dead, because no good people or dogs could cheat. Crawley said so, and Maria said so, and Willy said so, Willy being the great authority to which Baby Bob always referred in any difficulty.

Willy was doing his work for Mr. Martyn in the study, and making up for lost time. This was his general habit. He would put off his lessons to the last moment, and then, as he said, "clear them all off in a twinkling."

Willy was clever and quick at everything, but this way of getting over work is not really satisfactory. Time and thought are necessary to fasten what is learned on the mind, and what is gathered up in haste, or, rather, sown in haste, does not take deep root.

That night, when Ella was getting ready for bed, she consulted Crawley about the new-comer.

"How is it we know so little of the cousin, Crawley?"

"Well, my dear, her papa married a lady who thinks schools and all that sort of thing necessary. At least, that's what your dear grandmamma has told me, and I daresay you'll find little Miss Packingham very forward with her books. So you must make haste and learn to read better. For you are getting on for eight years old."

Ella sighed.

"I *can* read," she said, "and I can speak French and Italian; I daresay Irene can't do that."

"Well, *that's* nothing," said Crawley, "for I can talk French after my fashion, just because I have lived with my dear mistress out of England so long. But there's another little lady coming, you know. Her mamma knew your mamma. She used to be a pretty creature, and I daresay she's like her."

"She mayn't be like her, for grannie says Irene isn't like Aunt Eva. I want to see her. I wish to-morrow would come."

And Baby Bob murmured from his little bed in the corner, "Wish 'morrow would come."



CHAPTER VII.

To-morrow came, and brought with it the tired travellers, who arrived at San Remo, after a night journey from Marseilles, as Ingleby said, "more dead than alive."

This was a figure of speech on Ingleby's part, but there is no doubt that the two sleepy, tired, way-worn children who were lifted out of the carriage which had been sent to the station to meet them gave very little sign of life or interest in what happened.

Canon Percival, who took the management of everything, promptly ordered a bath and bed, and the kind English wife of Stefano showed every wish to be accommodating, and carried Dorothy herself to the room prepared for her and Irene.

Two little beds stood there, with a white net cage let down over them. The children were too sleepy to notice them then, but when Dorothy opened her eyes, she was greatly amused to see that she was looking through fine net, like the net she had seen made for fruit in England to protect it from wasps.

The western sun was lying across the garden before the villa when Dorothy felt it was time to get up. She called Irene, who answered at once,—

"Yes! what do you want? Can I help you?"

"I want to get up," said Dorothy, "but I can't get out of this white cage."

"Oh yes, you can," said Irene, who drew a bit of narrow ribbon, which hung inside her own bed, and then the net curtain was lifted, and she said,—

"Look! you have the same bit of ribbon; pull it!"

Dorothy did as she was told, and, to her delight, the net was raised in a pretty festoon.

"Isn't it funny?" she said; "what can the curtains be for? Are they just for prettiness?"

"No, for use; they are mosquito curtains; and I remember some very like them in India."

"What are mosquitoes?"

"Little gnats, very, very thin and small, but they sting dreadfully, and especially at night, and make big bumps on your forehead, and the curtains shut them out. I should like to get up now," Irene said; "for I ought to go to grannie."

"Oh, I don't want you to go to your grannie; you must stay with me."

"I don't think that would do," Irene said, "for father wished me to live with grannie and the cousins."

"I'm so sorry," Dorothy exclaimed, "for I know I shan't like the cousins. I think—I really do—you are the only playmate I ever cared for; not that we've *played* together, but that's the word every one uses. Dr. Bell said I wanted playmates; and Ingleby says so; and Uncle Crannie says so; and so did that dreadful Mrs. Thompson. Ah! when I had my Nino, and Muff and Puff, I wanted nobody;" and Dorothy was beginning to cry, when Ingleby, hearing the children's voices, now came from another room, where she had begun unpacking, bearing in her arms a bundle of clean, fresh clothes for Dorothy.

"Well, you have been asleep ever since eleven, and it is nearly four o'clock. You must want your dinner, I am sure; and then Miss Packingham is to go to her grandmamma's house. Your box was taken there, my dear, and so I cannot give you fresh things, but I must brush your frock and bend your hat straight."

The children were ready in a few minutes, and presented a strong contrast, as usual.

Dorothy was a little *too* smart in her pale blue cashmere with grebe trimming, and it was hard to believe she had been in the train all night; for they had left Paris in the morning of the preceding day, and had reached San Remo at half-past ten. Irene, on the contrary, looked travel-worn, and she was a good deal more tired than Dorothy, who had slept off her fatigue and her sorrow for poor Nino's loss, and looked—so Ingleby said to herself—"as fresh as any daisy."

When the two little girls reached the sitting-room, which, like Lady Burnside's, opened on a verandah, they heard voices outside, and presently a boy and a girl stepped into the room.

Ella shrank back, but Willy, who never knew what shyness meant, said,—

"Grannie said we might come and fetch Irene—she is to come home now, if she is ready."

As Willy surveyed the two girls, he wondered which was his cousin. The thought passed through his mind, "I hope it is the pretty one!" and advancing, he said to Dorothy,—

"Grannie has sent us to take you to the Villa Lucia; are you ready?"

Ingleby, who was busy looking after the travelling basket, from which she was taking some of Dorothy's favourite biscuits, said,—

"Your cousin, Miss Packingham, had better take her dinner before she goes with you; perhaps you will sit down with her and Miss Dorothy. Now, my dear," Ingleby continued, addressing Dorothy, "I hope you will be able to fancy something," as Stefano brought in a tray with coffee and crescent-shaped rolls, and a dainty omelette done to a turn by his wife.

Willie now put his hand out to Irene, and said, in a tone in which there was a little ring of disappointment,—

"Then *you* are my cousin?"

"Yes," Irene said, "and I am very glad to come and see you all—and grannie."

"Do you remember her?" Willie asked.

"Just a *very* little, but she always writes me very kind letters, so I feel as if I remembered her."

"Come, Ella, don't be so silly," Willy said, pushing his sister forward; "go and speak to Irene."

Irene took Ella's hand, and then, at Ingleby's advice, they all sat down to their meal together.

Two thick-edged white cups were brought by Stefano, and Willy and Ella enjoyed the good things more than the two tired travellers did.

Irene could scarcely touch the omelette, and Dorothy, in spite of Ingleby's entreaties, only nibbled a quantity of her own biscuits, which were, as Ingleby said, "not fit to make a meal of." They were those little pink and white fluffy light balls, flavoured with vanilla and rose, a large tin of which had been bought in Paris, and were Dorothy's favourite food just then.

They found favour with Willy, and he took a handful from the box several times. Dorothy did not approve of this, and said to Ingleby,—

"Put the lid on the box, Jingle; there won't be any biscuits left."

This was not very polite, and Willy shrugged his shoulders, and said to himself, "After all, I am glad she is *not* my cousin."

Irene was really thankful when Willy said it was time to go, for her head ached, and she was far more tired than Dorothy was.

And now poor Dorothy began to cry, and say she did not want Irene to go away—that she must stay with her, and not go and live with that big boy who was so greedy.

"Hush! hush! my dear," said Ingleby; "you must not forget yourself."

"I don't mind," said Willy, good-temperedly; "she is only a baby, and is tired."

"A baby!" sobbed Dorothy. "I am *not* a baby, and I love Irene, and she is *not* to go away with you."

Ingleby was anxious to cut the parting short, and said to Irene, who was trying to comfort Dorothy,—

"Make haste and have it over. She will forget it, and——"

"I shan't forget Irene. You said I should forget Nino—dear, dear Nino. I don't forget him, and now—now I have lost him, I want Irene, I do!"

"I shall see you very often," Irene said, kissing her; "don't begin to cry again."

"Dear me!" Willy said, as they left the house; "she is worse than you, Ella. At first I thought her so pretty, and now I find she is only a little spoiled thing. However, we will soon teach her better, won't we, Ella?"

Ella, who had possessed herself of Irene's hand, said,—

"You must not be so rude to Dorothy as you are to me, Willy, or you will make her cry."

"No, I'll cure her of crying. But here we are. This is Villa Lucia."

Irene followed Willy into the house, and very soon Irene felt she was no longer lonely—a stranger in a strange land.

Irene had not seen her grannie for some years, and, with the instinct of childhood, she had discovered, without being told, that her father did not care much for her grannie. He rarely mentioned her, and, indeed, he always called her step-mother's mother "grannie" when he had occasion to write of her.

Till Irene had seen Lady Burnside she felt no difference between them. Mrs. Roscoe was a very grand, fashionable lady, who had called on her at Mrs. Baker's sometimes, and sent her large boxes of chocolate and French sweets.

But *that* did not make Irene feel as if she belonged to her; and now, when the gentle lady by the fire rose to greet her and folded her in a warm embrace, Irene felt a strange choking sensation in her throat, and when she looked up at her grannie she saw tears were on her cheeks.

"I feel as if I had come home," she said, simply, "and it *is* so nice."

Happily for every one, a loud voice was heard at the door—"Let me in! let me in!" And when Ella ran to open it, there was Baby Bob, who came trotting across the room to Lady Burnside, and said,—

"I want the cousin; is that the cousin?"

"Yes. Go and give her a kiss, and say you are glad to see her."

But Baby Bob sidled back towards his grannie, and suddenly oppressed with the solemnity of the occasion, hid his round, rosy face in her gown, and beat a tattoo with his fat legs by way of expressing his welcome, in a manner, it must be said, peculiar to himself.



CHAPTER VIII.

DOROTHY'S LESSONS.

Every child who reads my story must have felt how quickly strange things begin to grow familiar, and before we are reconciled to what is new it becomes almost old.

So it was with Dorothy, and in a less degree with Irene.

It was New Year's Day, and Dorothy was seated at the table in the schoolroom at Villa Lucia, writing to her uncle Cranstone.

She wrote a very nice round hand, between lines, thanks to the patient teaching which Irene bestowed on her. To be sure, the thin foreign paper was rather a trial, as the pen was so apt to stick when a thin up-stroke followed a firm down-stroke; but still the letter, when finished, was a very creditable performance to both mistress and pupil.

Lady Burnside had wisely decreed that Irene should have no lessons while she was at San Remo, for she was very forward for her age, having gone through the regular routine of school, and writing at ten years old almost a formed hand, while Dorothy had only *printed* words when Irene took her up as a pupil.

"It will be a nice occupation for Irene to help Dorothy with her lessons," Lady Burnside said; and Dorothy felt the importance of going to school when, every morning at ten o'clock, she was escorted by Ingleby to the Villa Lucia, and joined the party in the schoolroom.

Dorothy had a great deal to learn besides reading and writing and arithmetic, and as she had never had any one to give up to, she found that part of her daily lessons rather hard.

Baby Bob, in whom Irene delighted, tried Dorothy's patience sorely, and, indeed, he was a young person who required to be repressed.

Dorothy had just finished her letter to her uncle, and with aching fingers had written her name at the bottom of the second sheet, when Baby Bob appeared, followed by Ella.

"We are to have a holiday, because it is New Year's Day, and go on donkeys to La Colla."

"Yes," said Willy; "I have been to order Marietta's donkeys—the big brown one for me, the little white one for Dorothy, the little grey one for Ella, and the old spotted one for Irene. It's such fun going to La Colla, and we'll put Ingleby and Crawley on as we come down, and——"

But Willy was interrupted by a cry from Dorothy—

"He's got my letter! Oh, my letter!" and a smart slap was administered to Baby Bob, who, I am sorry to say, clenched his fat fist, and hit Dorothy in the mouth.

"Put the letter down at once, you naughty child!" Crawley said. "How dare you touch Miss Dorothy?"

The letter was with difficulty rescued from Baby Bob, in a sadly crumpled condition, and Irene smoothed the sheet with her hand and put it into a fresh envelope.



THE DONKEY EXPEDITION TO LA COLLA.

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"I was only going to the post," Baby Bob said. "Grannie lets me drop her letters in the post, o' course."

"Well, wait till you are asked another time, Bob; then you won't get into trouble; but I don't think you deserved the hard slap," Ella said.

Dorothy, who was still crying and holding her apron up to her mouth, now drew herself up and said, "I shall go home to mother, I shall. I shan't stay here, to be ill-treated. Mother says Bob is the naughtiest spoiled boy *she* ever knew."

"She has known a girl as much spoiled, anyhow," said Willy.

"Come, Dorothy, forget and forgive," said Irene; "and let us go and get ready for our donkey ride."

"I shan't go," persisted Dorothy; "I don't want to go; and just look!"

There was undoubtedly a tiny crimson spot on Dorothy's apron, and she began to sob again at the sight, and say she must go home that minute to Ingleby.

"Go along, then," said Willy, roughly; "we don't want a cry-baby with us. Look at Bob; he has quite forgotten the thump you gave him, and wants to kiss you."

I am sorry to say Dorothy turned a very unwilling cheek towards Baby Bob, who said—

"I'll never take *your* letter no more, Dolly."

Dorothy had, as we know, several nicknames from her uncle, but she had a particular aversion to that of "Dolly," and just touching Baby Bob with her lips, she said, "I hate to be called Dolly."

"Well," Willy said, "here come the donkeys, and Marietta and Francesco, and no one is ready. Come, make haste, girls."

"Come, Dorothy," Irene said, "let me put on your skirt." For the children had each a neat little blue serge skirt which they wore for their donkey expeditions. "Come, Dorothy," Irene pleaded. But Dorothy said she should stay with Lady Burnside till Ingleby came for her.

"You can't stay with grannie—she is very *busy* with *business*; and Constance has one of her headaches, and is in bed."

"Then I'll wait here till Jingle comes."

There was a wonderful amount of obstinacy expressed in that pretty, fair little face; and then Crawley came in to say the donkeys must not be kept waiting. Irene, finding it useless to say more, went to get ready, as Ella had already done, and left Dorothy in the sitting-room playing a tattoo on the window as she curled herself up in a circular straw chair.

Ella made one more attempt when she was dressed for the ride.

"*Do* come, Dorothy dear. We have got three baskets full of nice things to eat at La Colla, and the sun is so bright, and——"

"Go away," said Dorothy; adding, "Good-bye; I hope you'll enjoy jogging down over those hard rough stones on the donkeys."

A little girl, the daughter of a friend of Lady Burnside, came with her brother to join the party, and Dorothy watched them all setting off, Crawley holding Bob before her on the sturdy old brown donkey; Willy and Jack Meredith riding off with Francesco running at their heels, with his bare brown feet and bright scarlet cap; then Ella and Irene under Marietta's guidance; Ella looking back and kissing her hand to as much as she could see of Dorothy's hair, as she sat by the window under the verandah.

Then Dorothy was alone; it was no punishment to her, and she fell into one of her old meditations.

The chirp and twitter of swallows were heard, for, as we know, Dorothy had taken flight from England with them. And as one perched for a moment on the big aloe which grew just outside the verandah, Dorothy said, "I wonder if that's my old mother swallow; it looks just like her."

Presently another joined her, and the two twittered, and chirped, and wagged their restless forked tails, and turned their little heads from side to side, and then darted off in the warm sunshine. Glancing at the little timepiece which stood on the table, Dorothy saw it was not yet eleven, and Ingleby never came till twelve o'clock.

After all it was rather dull, and there was no need for her to wait for Ingleby, who often did not come till half-past twelve. A little more meditation, and then Dorothy uncurled herself and put down her legs slowly, first one, then the other, and then, with something very like a yawn, which ended in "Oh, dear!" her eyes fell on the letter which had been put into the envelope by Irene. It had a stamp on it, but was not addressed.

So Dorothy thought she would address it herself, and taking the pen, made a great blot to begin with, which was not ornamental; then she made a very wide C, which quite overshadowed the "anon" for "Canon." "Percival" would by no means allow itself to be put on the same line, and had to go beneath it. As to "Coldchester," it was so cramped up in the corner that it was hardly legible, but imitating a letter which she had seen Mr. Martyn address one day, she made up for

it by a big "England" at the top. The envelope was not fastened down, and Dorothy remembered Irene said she had seen some dear little "Happy New Year" cards at a shop in the street, and that she would ask Ingleby to take her with Dorothy to buy one, and put it in the letter before it was posted.

"I'll go and get a card," Dorothy thought, "and post my own letter, and then come back, or go home to mother. I'll go and get ready directly."

As it happened, Dorothy's hat and pretty velvet jacket, trimmed with lovely soft fur, were kept in a little closet, with a window in it, behind the schoolroom. They were put there when she came to the Villa Lucia every morning by Ingleby, who never failed to send her in to see Lady Burnside, drawing secret comparisons between the appearance of her darling and that of Miss Packingham or little Miss Ella Montague.

Dorothy had some difficulty in getting herself into her jacket, and her hair notched into the elastic of her hat, which, springing back, caught her in the eyes, and made them water. Then, when she thought she was ready, she remembered she had not taken off the apron which was stained with the little crimson spot. A little rim of white showed under the jacket between the fur and the edge of her frock, but she pushed it up under the band, and then went softly down the hall to the glass door, and lifting the *portière*, or thick curtain, which hung over the outer door, she found herself in the road. For the Villa Lucia did not open into the garden which lay between the Villa and sloping ground and the blue sea, but from the back, into a road which led towards the old town of San Remo.

Dorothy held the letter firmly in her hand, and walked on with some dignity. It was rather nice to go to the post by herself, and she measured the distance in her own mind, as she had often been there with Ingleby and Crawley.

The shop where the New Year's cards were sold was near the post-office, and she had two shillings in her little leather purse at the bottom of her pocket.

Several Italian women, carrying heavy burdens on their heads, passed her and smiled, and said in a pleasant voice, "Buon giorno!" and one young woman, with a patient baby tightly swathed and fastened to her back, called out,—

"Ah, la piccola bella!"

Somehow Dorothy was so lost in meditation upon herself and her own cleverness in finding the way to the post, that she missed the first turning which would have led her down to the English part of the town. She took the next, but that brought her out beyond the shops and the post-office.

She did not at first notice this, and when she found she was much farther from home than she expected, she began to run, but still she did not get any nearer the shops and the post-office. Now the street of the English part of San Remo runs almost parallel with the sea, and there are several narrow lanes between the houses, which lead down to the quay, where all the boats sail from the pier, and where a great many women are mending the holes in the brown nets.

There are streets also leading up to the old town—that quaint old town, which was built on the steep sides of the hill, long, long before any English people thought of erecting their new houses and villas below it.

The streets of the old town are so steep that they are climbed by steps, or rather ridges, of pavement, which are set at rather long intervals. These streets are very narrow, and there are arches across them, like little bridges, from one house to another.

The houses in old Italian towns were built with these arches or little bridges because they formed a support to the tall houses, which were sometimes shaken by earthquakes.

Now it happened that as Dorothy was wondering how it could be that she had missed the post-office, she caught sight of a little white fluffy dog, with brown ears, running up towards the opening of one of these narrow streets.

"My Nino! my Nino!" she exclaimed. "It must be Nino." She did not stop to consider that Nino would have answered

her call, if, indeed, it had been he. She did not stop to consider that he was old, and could never have run so fast uphill as this little dog could run. She turned out of the broad street into one of the narrow ones, and chased the little white dog till she was out of breath.

There were not many people about, and no one took much notice of her; and she never stopped till she found herself in the market square of the old town, where, out of breath and exhausted, she sat down on a flight of steps, hopeless of catching the dog, who had now quite disappeared.

An old and dirty-looking church was before her, and several peasant women, with their baskets on their heads, were passing in and out. Red and yellow handkerchiefs were bound round their dark hair, and some of them wore pretty beads round their necks. One or two stopped to look at Dorothy, and talked and made signs to her; but she could not understand what they said, and they smiled at her and passed on. The streets leading up from the market square looked very dim and very steep, and Dorothy began to feel lonely and frightened, especially when an old woman, who might have been a hundred years old, so wrinkled was her face and so bowed her back, stopped before her as she sat on the steps, and began to mumble, and make grimaces, and open her mouth, where no teeth were to be seen, and point at Dorothy with her lean, bony, brown fingers.

Dorothy got up and began to run down towards the town again as quickly as she had come up, when, alas! her foot caught against the corner of a rough stone step before one of the tall houses, and she fell with some violence on the uneven, rugged pavement, hitting her head a sharp blow.

Poor little Dorothy! Getting her own way, and doing exactly as she wished, had brought her now a heavy punishment. While Ella and Willy and Baby Bob, with their two little friends, were enjoying the contents of the luncheon basket at La Colla, Dorothy was lying all alone amongst strangers in the old town of San Remo!



CHAPTER XI.

LOST.

Ingleby arrived at the Villa Lucia at the usual time, and went, as was her custom, to the schoolroom door, and knocked.

She was generally answered by a rush to the door by Ella and Dorothy, and a cry of—

"Grannie says she is to stay to luncheon to-day," or, "Don't take her away yet."

But to-day silence reigned, and when Ingleby looked in, the schoolroom was empty.

She turned away, and met the maid who waited on Constance with a tray in her hand and a cup of cocoa, which she was taking upstairs.

"Where is Miss Dorothy, and where are the children?"

"All gone out on donkeys to Colla," was the answer. "Her ladyship was glad to get the house quiet, for Miss Constance has had a very bad night."

"Talk of bad nights!" exclaimed Ingleby; "my mistress has done nothing but cough since four o'clock this morning. Well, I hope Miss Dorothy was well wrapped up, for the wind is cold enough out of the sun, though Stefano is angry if I say so. I wish we were back in England. I know, what with the nasty wood fires, and the 'squitoes, and the draughts, and——"

Ingleby was interrupted here by Lady Burnside, who came out of the drawing-room.

"Good-morning, Ingleby; how is Mrs. Acheson?"

"But very poorly, my lady; she has had a bad night."

"Ah! that is why you have not gone to Colla with the party. But I am sure Crawley will take care of Miss Dorothy, and Miss Irene is quite to be trusted."

"I knew nothing of the party going to Colla, my lady. I hope it is not one of those break-neck roads, like going up the side of a house."

"It is very steep in some parts, but the donkeys are well used to climbing. Give my love to Mrs. Acheson, and say I will come and see her to-morrow."

Ingleby walked back rather sadly. She wished she had known of the expedition, for there was safety for her darling when she could walk behind the donkey going uphill, and by its head coming down again. What did it matter that the fatigue was great, and that she panted for breath as she tried to keep up? She held Dorothy's safety before her own, and all personal fatigue was as nothing to secure that.

If any little girls who read this story have kind, faithful nurses like Ingleby, I hope they will never forget to be grateful to them for their patience and kindness in their childish days when childhood has passed away, and they no longer need their watchful care. Ingleby's love was not, perhaps, wise love, but it was very true and real, and had very deep roots in the attachment she felt for her mistress, whom she had served so faithfully for many years.

Between Stefano and Ingleby no great friendship subsisted, and when she returned alone from the Villa Lucia, he said,—

"Where's the little signora, then?"

"Where? you may well ask! gone up one of those steep mountains to Colla on a donkey."

"*Si!* well, and why not?"

"Why not? Because it is very dangerous, and I think fellows who take other people's children from them ought at least to give notice of it."

"*Si!* well," was Stefano's rejoinder, "that's a fine ride up to Colla, and there are more books there than there are days in the year, and pictures, and——"

"Come now, Stefano," his wife called, "it is time to stop thy talking, and to get the luncheon ready. Gone to Colla, do you say, Mrs. Ingleby?—a very pretty excursion; and there, high up in the heart of the hills, is a wonderful library of

books, and many fine pictures, collected by a good priest, who starved himself to buy them and store them there."

But Ingleby was not to be interested in any details of the library at Colla, which is visited with so much delight by many who spend a winter at San Remo. She was anxious about Dorothy, and Stefano said,—

"It will be wonderful if they are home before sunset."

"Home before sunset!" exclaimed poor Ingleby; "well, I should think Mrs. Crawley will have sense enough for *that*, though I don't think much of her wisdom, spoiling that baby of three years old as she does."

Stefano chuckled.

"Ah, *si!* but others are spoiled, as well as *Bambino Bobbo*."

Ingleby had now to go to Mrs. Acheson, and tell her that Dorothy was not coming home to luncheon.

As this often happened when she stayed at Lady Burnside's, Mrs. Acheson was not anxious. Ingleby kept back the expedition to Colla, and Mrs. Acheson asked no questions then.

But as the afternoon wore on, and Dorothy did not return, escorted as usual by Willy and Irene Packingham, Mrs. Acheson told Ingleby she had better go to Lady Burnside and bring Dorothy home with her.

"I have not seen the child to-day," she said, "except when I was half asleep, when she came to wish me a 'Happy New Year!' And this present has arrived for her from her uncle at Coldchester. Look, Ingleby; is it not sweet? I could not resist peeping into the box. Won't she be delighted!"

The box contained two little figures like dormice, with long tails and bright eyes, in a cosy nest. The head of each little mouse opened, and then inside one was the prettiest little scent-bottle you can imagine, and inside the other a pair of scissors, with silver handles, and a tiny thimble on a little crimson velvet cushion.

How Ingleby wished Dorothy Dormouse, whose name was written on the card tied to the box, was there, I cannot tell you; but how little did Ingleby or any one else guess *where* she was at that moment!

Ingleby put off going to the Villa Lucia till the last moment, and arrived at the gate just as the donkeys came merrily along the road.

Francesco could not resist the delight of sending them all at full trot for the last quarter of a mile, and Crawley, grasping Baby Bob tightly with one arm, and with her other hand holding the pommel of the saddle, jogged up and down like any heavy dragoon soldier; while Irene, and Willy, and Ella, and the Merediths came on urging their tired steeds, and asking Crawley if it was not "jolly to canter," while poor Crawley, breathless and angry gasped out that she had a dreadful stitch in her side, and that she would never mount a donkey again.

Marietta came on behind, with the ends of her scarlet handkerchief on her head flapping in the wind, and though apparently not hurrying herself, she took such strides with her large, heavily-shod feet, that she was soon at the gate.

There was the usual bustle of dismounting, and some scolding from Crawley, and a few sharp raps administered by Marietta to Francesco for making the donkeys canter; while poor Ingleby's excited questions were not even noticed.

"Miss Dorothy—where is Miss Dorothy?—do you hear me, Miss Packingham?—do you hear me, Master Willy?—speak, won't you?—has she fallen off one of these brutes?—is she—is she—Master Willy—Miss Ella—Miss Irene!"

Then Ella turned from giving a parting pat to her donkey, and seeing Ingleby's distressed face, said,—

"Dorothy did not come with us; she is not hurt?"

"Oh, Miss Ella, Miss Ella!" exclaimed poor Ingleby, holding up her hands and sinking back against the wall. "Oh, Miss Ella, Miss Ella! oh, Miss Irene!"

"Why, what is the matter, Mrs. Ingleby?" said Crawley, who had set down Baby Bob to toddle into the house, and was settling the payment for the donkeys with Marietta. "Why, you look like a ghost."

"Miss Dorothy! Miss Dorothy! Where can she be?"

"Well, she is safe enough, isn't she?"

"No," said Ingleby; "she is gone! she is lost! she is lost!—and oh, what will become of me?"

"*Lost!*" the children all repeated; "she can't be lost."

And then they all ran into the house, and Lady Burnside, who was sitting with Constance in the room upstairs came hurriedly down.

"What do you say?—little Dorothy has not been with you to Colla? She must have gone home, then."

"No, no, my lady," Ingleby said. "No, no; I have been waiting for her there till ten minutes ago. She is lost—lost—and oh! I wish we had never, never come to these foreign places; and the mistress so ill!"

Lady Burnside was indeed greatly distressed, but she took immediate action. She sent Willy to fetch Stefano, anxious that Mrs. Acheson should not be alarmed and she despatched him at once to the Bureau of Police, and told him to describe Dorothy, and to tell every one that she was missing.

Ingleby tried to follow them, but her legs trembled, and she sat down on a bench in the hall and burst into tears.

And this was the trouble which little Dorothy's self-will had brought upon every one; this was the end of her determination to do as *she* liked best, without thinking what it was right and best to do, and what other people liked best—a sad end to a day that might have been so happy; a hard lesson for her to learn!



CHAPTER X.

IN THE SHADOWS.

At first Dorothy was scarcely conscious of what had happened to her, and when she really recovered herself she found she was in a dark, low room, where she could hardly see.

There was a great chatter going on around her, of which she could not make out a word. As her eyes got accustomed to the dim light, she saw the figures of two women, a boy, and an old crone sitting by a wood fire. The room seemed very full, and was very hot; a smell of smoke, and dried fish, and of tar, made Dorothy gasp for breath. She was lying on what seemed to her a wooden shelf, but was in reality a bed, and she felt something cold on her head. She put up her hand, and found her forehead was bandaged with a wet cloth.

"I want to go home," she said, struggling to get down from the bed; but she was seized by a pair of strong arms, and a great many words were addressed to her as she was almost forced again to lie down.

But Dorothy now began to cry and scream, and presently the narrow doorway was filled with inquiring faces, and the strife of tongues became more and more loud and noisy.

Not one word could Dorothy understand, except, perhaps, "signorina," with which she had become familiar, and a few words which she had caught up from Stefano.

The brown hands which held her down were firm, if gentle, and, though she fought and struggled, she could not regain her feet. Presently she felt something warm trickling down her cheek, and then there were fresh exclamations, and Dorothy, putting up her finger, saw it was stained with crimson blood.

She gave herself up for lost, poor little girl, and began to sob and cry most bitterly; then, to her surprise, the pair of strong arms lifted her gently from the bed, and carried her to the smoking embers on the hearth; and, looking up, she saw a kindly face bending over her, and she was rocked gently to and fro, just as Ingleby had often rocked her by the nursery fire at Coldchester. More wet bandages were put to her forehead, and the boy, drawing near, touched the long, silky hair, and said,—

"Bella, è bella."

"Oh! do let me go home—take me home—please—please——"

But no one knew what she said, and the woman only began to sing as she rocked, in the soft Italian language, while the rest talked and chattered, and raised their hands in wonder, and gazed down at the child with their large dark eyes; and if Dorothy could have understood them, she would have known they only intended to be kind.

To be sure, they told Giulia that the little signorina must belong to rich English, and she would get a reward; and that she ought to go down to the town and inquire at the hotels and the villas.

A good deal passed through Dorothy's mind as she lay in the arms of the rough though kindly Italian woman. How long ago it seemed since the morning, since she had been angry with Baby Bob, and had refused to go to Colla. Oh, how she wished she had gone now. How she longed to say she was sorry, to kiss Baby Bob, to throw her arms round Irene, and to tell mother she would never, never be naughty again! Convulsive sobs shook her, and she clung to the kind woman's neck, praying and entreating to be taken home.

But where *was* home? No one knew, and no one could understand her; and at last, worn out with crying, Dorothy fell fast asleep.

Neighbours came in and out, and looked curiously at the little golden-haired signorina, whose head seemed to make a spot of light in the dark dwelling.

"They will miss her, and search for her," the neighbours said, "and then you will get a reward, Giulia. She is like an angel with the light round her head in the window in the church."

"She is like a sorrowful little lost kid bleating for its mother," said Giulia.

So the hours went on, and the sunset gleamed from behind the old church, and brightened the grey walls of the houses

in the square, and made the windows glitter and shine like stars.



"DOROTHY FELL FAST ASLEEP."

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But Dorothy did not wake, and still Giulia sat patiently with her in her strong brown arms, and crooned over her the words of a hush-a-bye with which the dark-eyed boy, who stood notching a stick by the open fireplace, had been lulled to sleep in his turn—

"Ninni, ninni, nanna,
Allegrezza di la mamma!
Addormentati, addormentati,
Oh, mia bella!"

This answered to the "Hush-a-bye, baby," which we all know, and really meant—

"Joy of thy mother, sleep, sleep!
My pretty one, sleep."

The sunset faded from the sky, and the smouldering wood ashes and embers on the hearth now shone with only a dim red eye in the middle; and still Dorothy slept, and still Giulia swayed her body to and fro, and sang on in a low, soft voice.

It was really very kind of Giulia, for a heap of brown net and a ball of stout twine, into which a huge bone netting-needle was thrust, lay by the rough wooden bench near the small window. And Giulia did very much want to finish that net, and send her boy down to the quay with it to the master fisherman who had given her the order to make it.

But Giulia could not find it in her kind, motherly heart to risk waking the child by laying her down on the bed again, and she dreaded to hear the cries in the English tongue, which she could not understand, and so could not heed.

It was nearly dark when at last Dorothy opened her eyes and sat up, with a prolonged yawn. The sleep had refreshed her, and she had been so quieted by it, that she did not resist or cry when Giulia put her down on a low wooden stool; and throwing another bit of wood on the fire, a flame leaped up, which was pleasant and cheerful, and made the red petticoat which the old crone by the fire wore look bright and warm.

Then Giulia lighted a small lamp, which was hung to a hook on the ceiling, and putting a big iron pipkin on the fire,

began to prepare some broth for the little signorina.

Dorothy watched her as if she were still dreaming, and saw how the big gold earrings bobbed up and down, and wondered why Giulia had such a very wide waist, and why any one who had such a shabby petticoat should wear earrings, and have shining gold pins in the handkerchief which was bound round her head.

Dorothy did not like the smell of the soup at all, and when Giulia crumbled into it some dark bread, and finally offered it to her, with a large wooden spoon, she turned away in disgust.

But Giulia persisted, and Dorothy, having tasted nothing since breakfast, was really hungry, and swallowed a few spoonfuls.

An orange which a neighbour brought in hanging on the bough, with its dark green leaves, was much more tempting, and when she took it from the woman who offered it to her, she said, "Grazia"—she knew that meant "Thank you"—for Francesco always said "Grazia" when he took the little copper pieces of money, which seemed so many, and were worth so little, from her hand or Irene's when they had dismounted from the donkeys.

Presently a familiar voice at the door made Dorothy stop eating the orange, and she turned her eye anxiously towards the new-comer.

It was Francesco himself, who began to tell what grief there was in Villa Firenze, and how a little signorina was lost, and he held up a crumpled wisp of paper, and said he had picked it up in the market square.

"Oh! it is mine, it is mine, Francesco. Don't you know me, Francesco? It is my letter to Uncle Crannie. Francesco! Francesco!"

The boy began a series of jumps of joy and springs of delight, and clapped his hands.

"Trovata! trovata!—è la piccola signorina" ("Found! found! the little lady is found"), he said.

"Let me go with him! he knows where I live. Oh, tell them—tell them to let me go with you!"

A voluble stream of Italian was poured forth by every one, which Dorothy could not understand; but Giulia got Dorothy's hat, and the white scarf, and the pretty velvet jacket, and then she was dressed—not without many expressions of profound admiration for the soft white feather and the velvet—and made ready to start with Francesco. Not alone. No; Giulia was not going to trust her to the donkey-boy without her, and Francesco made a funny face and showed his white teeth between his bright red lips, and whispered in Dorothy's ear the one English word he perfectly understood—

"Money! money! she get money for the signorina—ah! ah! ah!"

I will not say that there was no thought in Giulia's mind that the mother whom Francesco had described as crying bitterly for her lost treasure might not add some silver coins to her stock kept in the old stone pipkin in the cupboard—a store which Giulia liked to see grow, because, when her Anton was big and strong, she would pay it to the good master fisherman who employed her to make and mend his nets, and had often said her dark-eyed Anton was born to be a sailor.

Dorothy felt strangely dizzy and bewildered when she began to walk, and though she held fast to Giulia's strong hand on one side, and to Francesco's on the other, she tottered and tumbled about from side to side, and was not sorry when Giulia took her up in her arms and carried her with swift, firm steps down into the wide street of San Remo.

It would have been quite dark now if it had not been for the light of a crescent moon, which hung like a silver bow over the sea. Just as they reached the upper road the doctor who attended Mrs. Acheson passed them quickly. He turned as he passed the group, and recognised Francesco, who was a little in advance of Giulia and her burden.

"Hi! Francesco," he said; "has anything been heard of the little lady?"

"Oh, Dr. Forman! Oh, Dr. Forman!" exclaimed Dorothy.

"Why, here is the lost lamb," said the doctor. He had a little girl of his own, and he was as delighted as possible that Dorothy was safe. "Why, Dorothy," he said, "your poor mamma has been made quite ill with fright; and your nurse, and Willy Montague, and that nice little friend of yours, have been hunting for you high and low. Where have you been?"

But Dorothy was sobbing too much to speak, and Giulia told Dr. Forman, who understood Italian as well as his own language, the story of Dorothy's fall, the cut on her forehead, and how she had taken her into her house and done all she could for her.

"Well, bring her home," the doctor said; "and, Francesco, run off and try to find the searching party; they must be worn out."

"Please, Dr. Forman," Dorothy gasped, "this woman has been very, very kind to me." Then she lifted her little hand, and stroking Giulia's face, said,—

"Grazia, grazia."

"The little angel!" Giulia said. "She is just an angel, and I am glad I found her; that I am."

In another five minutes the doctor and Giulia, carrying her burden, arrived at the gate of the Villa Firenze. A group was collected there, for, as we all know, when we are waiting for anyone about whose coming we are anxious, we always go out to watch, and hope that every minute they will arrive. They don't come any the quicker for this, but it is a comfort in some unexplained way.

"Let me take her to her mother," Giulia said to Dr. Forman; and he could not refuse. So he led the way to the drawing-room, opening the door gently, and standing for a moment behind the screen which protected the room from the draught of the door.

Lady Burnside, who had been with Mrs. Acheson all the afternoon, rose to see who was coming.

Oh! what a relief it was to hear Dr. Forman saying,—

"The child is safe; here she is;" and then Giulia strode in, and kneeling down by the sofa where poor Mrs. Acheson lay, she put Dorothy into her arms.

You may be very sure that Giulia's store of coins in the pipkin was increased, and that the delicate English lady put her arm round the Italian one's neck and kissed her, saying the pretty word by which Dorothy had won her heart—

"Grazia, grazia."



CHAPTER XI.

WHAT FOLLOWED.

The consequences of self-will do not always pass away as quickly as we hope and expect. Sometimes we have to suffer by seeing the suffering of others, and feel bitterly that we have caused it. I do not think any pain is more keen than that sorrow which is caused by seeing the pain we have given those we love.

Lady Burnside had been afraid on the first evening of Dorothy's return that, in the rapturous joy of poor Ingleby and the general delight of every one, Dorothy might be brought to think lightly of the fault which had caused so much trouble.

Seated in a low chair, her hand in her mother's, and the other children gathered round her, while Ingleby stood feasting her eyes upon her darling, Dorothy became something of a heroine; and no one, in the first joy of receiving her safe and sound, could find it in their hearts to reprove her for what had passed.

Lady Burnside felt that it was not for her to speak seriously to Dorothy; and yet, when she saw her carried away to bed by Ingleby, with her uncle's present clasped in her arms, and heard her say, "I feel *quite* like Dorothy Dormouse now," she did long to say more than Mrs. Acheson did—"Dorothy will never run away by herself again and frighten poor mother."

As it proved, the fright and long watching had a very serious effect on Mrs. Acheson. The next day Dr. Forman ordered her to keep in bed; and her cough increased so much that for some days there was great anxiety about her. Dorothy was so accustomed to see her mother ill that it did not strike her as anything unusual; but one morning, when she was starting gaily for the Villa Lucia, Ingleby called to Stefano from the top of the stairs that he must take Miss Dorothy, for she could not leave her mistress.

"I can go alone," Dorothy said; for neither Stefano nor his wife were very great favourites of hers.

"No, no," Stefano said; "the little signorina is not to be trusted;" and taking her hand in his, he prepared to lead her along the sunny road to the Villa Lucia.

But Dorothy snatched away her hand, and said, "You should not speak like *that* to me."

"Ah," Stefano said, "someone must speak, someone must speak at times to little signorinas who give pain and trouble."

Dorothy felt her dignity much injured, and repeated, with emphasis,—

"You should not speak like that to *me*."

Stefano only shrugged his shoulders; and as they had reached the door of the Villa Lucia, he left her, saying,—

"The little signorina will have to hear hard things, like the rest of us, one day."

Irene met Dorothy with the question—"How is your mother? Grannie is so anxious to know."

"Mother is not up yet," Dorothy replied. "Jingle is sitting with her."

The other children now came clustering round Dorothy with the same question; and Irene, after helping Dorothy to take off her jacket and hat, said,—

"Come and see grannie."

"Before my lesson?"

"Yes; she wants to speak to you."

Dorothy felt a strange misgiving at her heart, and said, sharply,—

"What for? What is she going to say?"

"I think," said Irene, gently, "she wishes to comfort you; your mamma is very, very ill."

"No, she isn't!" said Dorothy, desperately. "No, she isn't; not a bit more ill than she often is. I saw her last night, and she looked *quite* better—her cheeks pink, and her eyes bright."

"Well," Irene said, "I know Dr. Forman thinks her very ill, and he has sent for Canon Percival."

"For Uncle Crannie? for Uncle Crannie?"

"Yes," Irene said, "two days ago."

Dorothy stood irresolute for a moment, and then, with a great effort to control herself, said,—

"Let me go to your grandmamma; let me go."

But Irene put her arms round Dorothy, and whispered,—

"I have been asking God to make your mamma better, and I think He will. Have *you* asked Him and told Him all about it?"

"About what?" Dorothy said.

"Everything—how sorry you are that you gave your mamma such anxiety; and have *you* asked to be forgiven?"

But Dorothy said,—

"I never *tell* God anything. I say my prayers, but I did not, could not, tell Him about such things as my slapping Baby Bob, and getting angry, and staying at home while you went to Colla. He is so far off, and besides——"

"Oh, Dorothy!" said Irene, seriously, "God is very near, Jesus is very near, and He cares about every little thing."

"Are you *sure*?" said poor little Dorothy. "Then He knows and cares about mother—mother——"

A sob choked her, and yet she tried not to give way; to cry very much would show that she believed her mother was very, *very* ill, and she could not, *dare* not believe it! But she said simply—

"I *know* I am not good; but I love—oh! how I *do* love mother!"

Lady Burnside received Dorothy with her calm, sweet smile, and Constance, lying on her couch, put out her hand, and said, "Come and kiss me, Dorothy."

Constance had not generally taken much notice of Dorothy. She had looked upon her as a spoiled little thing, and had felt, like many invalids who have been accustomed to be the centre of attraction and attention, a little vexed that every one admired the child, and were, as she thought, blind to her faults. Even Willy, though he was blunt and rough to Dorothy sometimes, was really devoted to her. So was Jack Meredith, and as to Irene and her own little sister Ella, they were ridiculously fond of her. Irene particularly would always give up to Dorothy, though she was so much younger than herself. Baby Bob had, in his own way, the same feeling about Dorothy that Constance had. He strongly objected to anyone who could possibly dethrone him from the position of "King of the Nursery," which was Crawley's favourite title for her youngest child. Baby Bob had ruled with despotic power, and was naturally unwilling to see a rival near the throne. But Constance was now touched by the sight of the little figure in the blue dress, over which the cloud of light silky hair hung, when she saw the wistful questioning glance in those blue eyes, which were turned entreatingly to Lady

Burnside, as she said,—

"Tell me *really* about—about mother."

Then Lady Burnside drew Dorothy close to her, and said,—

"Your dear mother is very ill, Dorothy, but we must pray to God to make her better."

Dorothy stood with Lady Burnside's arm round her, still gazing up at the dear, kind face bending over her; and then, after a pause, she said, in a low tone,—

"Is it *my* fault? Is it all my fault?"

Lady Burnside made Dorothy sit down on a low chair by her side, and talked so kindly and wisely to her. She told her that her mother had passed a very bad night of coughing the night before New Year's Day; that when the news came of her loss, which Stefano had abruptly told her, Mrs. Acheson had, forgetting how easily she was chilled, run out into the garden with only a shawl thrown over her; that it was with great difficulty she had been persuaded not to go herself to look for Dorothy; that she had paced up and down the room in her distress; and that that night, after the excitement and joy of her return were over, she had been very faint and ill, and now she had inflammation of her lungs, which she was very weak to bear up against.

Lady Burnside had gone through many troubles herself, and she had the sympathetic spirit which children, as well as grown-up people, feel to be so sweet in sorrow. There were no reproaches, and no hard words, but I think little Dorothy never forgot the lesson which she learned from Lady Burnside that morning, and often when she was beginning to be self-willed and irritable, if that self-will was crossed, she would think of Lady Burnside's words,—

"Take care when the first temptation comes to pray to resist it."

She did not return to the Villa Firenze that night, nor did Irene take her into the schoolroom that day. She read to her, and amused her by dressing a doll and teaching her how to crochet a little frock for it.

Early the next morning Canon Percival arrived, and Dorothy was taken by him to see her mother.

As they were walking up the road together, Dorothy said,—

"Uncle Crannie, do you know *all*, all that happened on New Year's Day?"

"Yes, Dorothy; I have heard all."

"Oh, Uncle Crannie, to think of Baby Bob's taking my letter to you beginning all the trouble!"

"Nay, my little Dorothy, it was not Baby Bob who began the trouble; it was *you*. We must never shift the blame from our own shoulders, and say, if *he* had not said that, or she had not provoked me, *I* should not have done what I did."

"But it *was* tiresome to squeeze up your letter, which I had taken such pains to write."

"Yes, very tiresome; but *that* does not alter your fault."

"Oh, Uncle Crannie, Uncle Crannie! I *wish* I had not run off; but then I thought I saw Nino."

"Poor Nino!" exclaimed Canon Percival; "in all the trouble and sorrow I have found here I forgot about Nino. I have something to tell you about him, but——"

Canon Percival was interrupted by meeting Dr. Forman.

A few words were exchanged between them, and then little Dorothy, with a sad, serious face, was taken by her uncle into her mother's room.



CHAPTER XII.

THE LOST FOUND.

Many days of deep anxiety followed, and poor little Dorothy's heart was sad and troubled. Irene proved a true and loving friend, and, with wisdom far beyond her years, encouraged Dorothy to go on with her little lessons, and learn to knit and crochet. "To make a shawl for mother by the time she gets well" became an object of ambition; and Irene helped her out of difficulties, and turned the troublesome corners at the four parts of the square, and would read to her and Ella while she pulled the soft Pyrenean wool in and out the long treble stitches.

They were very busy one morning a week after Canon Percival's arrival, when they saw his tall figure coming up the garden. He looked happier than he had done for some time, and when Dorothy ran to meet him, he said,—

"Good news to-day; mother is really better; and Dr. Forman thinks she may soon be as well as she was before this last attack of illness."

Good news indeed! If any little girl who reads Dorothy's story has ever had to feel the weight upon her heart which a dear father's or mother's illness has caused, she will know how, when the burden is lifted, and the welcome words are spoken, like Canon Percival's, all the world seems bright and joyful, and hope springs up like a fountain within.

"Yes," Canon Percival said, as Dorothy threw her arms round his neck, "we may be very thankful and glad; and now, while I go and see Lady Burnside, will you get ready to take me to visit the old town, and——"

"Giulia, and the old woman, and Anton!" exclaimed Dorothy.

Oh yes! the children were soon ready, and they all set off towards the old town, all except Willy, who had to wait for Mr. Martyn, and who looked with longing eyes at the party as they walked away.

"*Bother* this horrid sun!" he said; "it *won't* come right. What's the use of asking such ridiculous questions? Who cares about the answer?"

But Willy got the answer right in spite of his grumbling, and had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Martyn tell his

grandmother that he had improved very much of late, and that he would take a good place at a school when he was sent to one.

It was a lovely spring morning, that beautiful spring of the sunny South, which comes early in the year with a sudden burst of flowers of all colours. All the acacias and mimosas in the gardens before the villas were waving their golden tassels in the breeze, and the scarlet anemones and the yellow narcissi were making a carpet under foot.

Dorothy danced along in the gladness of her heart, and Canon Percival, when he thought of what *might* have been, felt thankful and glad also. As they climbed the steep street leading to the square before the big church, a little white dog with brown ears toddled out.

"Oh, that is the dog I thought was Nino! How could I think so?" Dorothy exclaimed; "his legs are so ugly, and he has such a mean little tail. Ah! my poor Nino was beautiful when compared with *you*," she said, stooping down to pat the little dog. "And, Uncle Crannie," she said, "do you remember that sad, dreadful day, when you took me to see mother, you said you had something to tell me about Nino, and then you left off."

"Ah!" Canon Percival said, "I believe I did say so, but, Dorothy, can you wait to hear what it is?"

"I don't know," Dorothy said, doubtfully, "I don't know; it can't be anything very happy."

"Well, I advise you to wait," Canon Percival said.

Dorothy looked up at her uncle, and said,—

"Is it that his dear dead little body has been found?"

But Canon Percival only repeated, "I advise you to *wait*."

"How long?"

"Till we all go back to England."

They were at Giulia's house now. She was sitting on the doorstep, netting so fast, and such a big brown net lay in a heap behind her. Anton was the first to see the visitors, and exclaimed,—

"Madre! madre mia! la signorina!"

Giulia flung down her netting, and starting up, to Dorothy's surprise, caught her in her strong arms once more, and kissed her.

And now, what seemed to the children very wonderful, Canon Percival began to talk to Giulia as fast in Italian as he did in English. And such a history was poured forth by Giulia, and then followed such gestures, and such exclamations! and Anton was caught by the arm, and shaken by his mother, and then she pointed to Canon Percival, and when Dorothy caught the word "Grazia," she knew that her uncle was promising to do some kind thing. Ella, who from long habit could understand a great deal of what passed, told Irene and Dorothy that Canon Percival was promising to pay the money for Anton's apprenticeship to the master boatman, and that he was writing the name in his pocket-book, and that he said he would go down to the quay and harbour to find him, and if he gave a good character of mother and son, he would have an agreement made, and the boy should be made an apprentice, without touching that store of silver pieces in the old pipkin in the cupboard.

Then they all went into the house, and Dorothy showed the bed where she had been placed, and Ella and Irene quite agreed with her that it was very stuffy in the little low room, and the smell of tar and smoke anything but nice.

Then there was the old crone by the chimney-corner, who muttered and murmured, and beckoned Dorothy to her side.

Poor little Dorothy bore the kiss which was given her with great composure, but she could not help giving a little shudder, and told Ella afterwards the smell of garlic and tobacco was "dreadful."

Canon Percival said a few words which were not intelligible to Dorothy, but Irene whispered to her—

"He is speaking to them all about the Lord Jesus; that's why Giulia is crossing herself. That is her way of showing reverence."

Poor Giulia's eyes were full of tears as Canon Percival went on. He was telling the story of the Cross, simply and earnestly, to these poor people, as they seldom, if ever, heard it, in their own tongue, the soft Italian tongue, which is so musical.

When they left the house they were all very quiet, and could Dorothy have understood what Giulia was saying as she stood on the large stone step, watching them down the narrow street, she would have known she was praying in her own fashion that blessings might follow them.

Canon Percival next went down to the harbour, and there, from the pier, is a most beautiful view of the old town, rising up, higher and higher, to the crest of the hill till it reaches the large church which belongs to the lepers' hospital. Canon Percival inquired for Angelo Battista, the master fisherman; and a fine sailor, with a face as brown as a chestnut, and big dark eyes, smiled when Canon Percival disclosed his errand.

"Yes, Anton was a good boy; his mother had a long tongue, but she was very industrious—industrious with tongue and fingers alike," he said, and then he laughed heartily, and two or three men standing near joined in.

At last all was settled, and Angelo Battista was to bring up a written document that evening to the Villa Firenze, and bring little Anton with him, to make the needful declaration required in such cases by the notary, that he agreed to the terms proposed.

Canon Percival left San Remo the next day, saying that Coldchester Cathedral could not get on without him. He was so cheery and so kind, the children all lamented his loss.

But now golden days came for them all, as Mrs. Acheson got, as Ingleby expressed it, "nearer well" than she had been for years. She took long drives in the neighbourhood, and they visited several old Italian towns, such as Taggia and Poggio.

The road to them led along the busy shore of the blue Mediterranean, and then through silvery olive groves, where flowers of every brilliant colour were springing.

And when May came, and the swallows twittered on the roofs of the villas, and were seen consulting for their flight northward, the whole party set off with them, *homewards*.

Canon Percival met them at Paris, and they stayed there a week, and saw many of its wonders—the beautiful pictures in the Louvre, and the noble galleries at Versailles, where the fountains play, and the long, smooth avenues which lead to La Petite Trianon, which are full of memories of poor Marie Antoinette.

Nothing made more impression on the children than the sight of her boudoir in the palace at Versailles, where whoever looks up at the glass panels sees, by their peculiar arrangement in one corner, the whole figure without the head. It is said the young girl Dauphiness glanced up at this, and starting back with horror, said—"Ah! J'ai perdu ma tête!" A strange coincidence, certainly, when one remembers how her head was taken off by the cruel guillotine in later years—the bright hair grey, the head bowed with sorrow, and the heart torn with grief for her husband, who had preceded her, and still more for the children she left behind.

At last the time came to cross the Channel once more, and the passage was calm, and the children enjoyed the short voyage.

At Folkestone a very great surprise awaited Dorothy. She hardly knew whether she was dreaming or awake when in the waiting-room at the station she saw a man in a fisherman's blouse with a white dog in his arms.

"Nino! Nino! Oh, it must be my Nino!"

There could be no doubt of it this time, for the little dog grew frantic and excited, and leaped whining out of the fisherman's arms, and was in ecstasies at again meeting his mistress.

This, then, was Canon Percival's secret. And he told the story of Nino's discovery in a few words.

The day when he was at Folkestone, on his way to San Remo—summoned there by Mrs. Acheson's illness—he saw a fisherman on the pier with a little white dog by his side. It seemed hardly possible, but the fisherman explained that, near one of the Channel steamers, in his smack, he had seen a little white dog fall over the side, that he had looked out for him as they crossed the precise place, and found his little black nose just above the water, making a gallant fight for life. They lowered a little boat and picked him up, and read the name on his collar, "Nino."

That collar he still wore, and it was evident that the sovereign Canon Percival gave him did not quite reconcile the man to the parting. "His children had grown so fond of the little beast," he said.

But Nino, though he gave the fisherman a parting lick of gratitude, showed his *old* love was the stronger; and I do think it would be hard to say which was the happier at the renewal of affection—Dorothy or her dog Nino.

Certain it is, we always value anything more highly when we *recover* possession of it, and Nino went back to Coldchester full of honours; and the story of his adventures made a hero of him in the eyes of the vergers of the Cathedral, who in past times had been wont to declare this little white dog was a deal of trouble, rushing about on the flower-beds of the Cathedral gardens.

With the homeward flight of the swallows we must say good-bye to Dorothy. A very happy summer was passed in the Canon's house, brightened by the companionship of Irene, and sometimes of Ella and Willy and Baby Bob. For Lady Burnside took a house for a few months in the neighbourhood of Coldchester, and the children continually met. But it was by Mrs. Acheson's express desire that Irene did not return to Mrs. Baker's school. She pleaded with Colonel Packingham that she might have her as a companion for her only child; and they shared a governess and lessons together.

Irene had the influence over Dorothy which could not fail to be noticed in its effects—the influence which a child who has a simple desire to follow in the right way *must* have over those with whom she is associated.

Dorothy's flight with the swallows had taught her many things, and with Irene for a friend, she had long ceased to say she did not care for playmates. She was even known to devote herself for an hour at a time to share some rioting game with *Baby Bob*, while Nino raced and barked at their heels.

THE END.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE

Inconsistencies in hyphenation have been retained. The picture of the YOUNG CANON, which faces the contents page in the printed book, has been moved to the appropriate place in the text. The following additional change was made:

Dorothy edged away, closer and closer to Irene, who,
Dorothy's surprise, spoke out boldly.

Dorothy edged away, closer and closer to Irene, who, **to**
Dorothy's surprise, spoke out boldly.

[The end of A Flight With the Swallows by Emma Marshall]