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Содержание

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CHAPTER FIRST

ENGINE 33 was kept in a substantial brick building that stood on a little hill in a pleasant part of the city. The brass shone so brightly that you could see your face in it, and not a speck of dust or rust was to be seen on any part of it, as it stood ready for use at a moment's notice. Directly over the shafts hung the harnesses, to be lowered down upon the horses when they took their places in front of the engine; and this was the work of an instant.

The floor was just as clean as the engine; and so were all parts of the building. Three strong beautifully groomed gray horses stood in their well-kept stalls, ready to dart out at the sound of the gong and fall into their places before the engine.

Not a boy or girl in that part of the city but thought that Engine 33 was superior to all the other engines in the big city. She was always the first at a fire, and she could throw a stream higher than any of the others. One boy made a little verse on the subject, and his companions thought it very beautiful, for it expressed their views about Engine 33. This is the verse,—

"Number Thirty-three

Is fine as she can be.
She's never late
And plays first-rate."

Not only did the children think there was no other engine equal to theirs, but so did Jack the Fire-Dog. Why, it was *his* engine! Jack lived in the engine-house and went to all the fires just as the horses did. He never ventured far from the engine-house, but kept within hearing of the gong that struck the alarm. How fast he raced back when he heard that well-known sound, to be ready to start with the engine! So eager was he to be on hand, that on one occasion when he could not get the screen door at the head of the stairs open, he went *through* it. Sometimes in winter Jack was harnessed to a little sled and carried salt for the firemen to melt the snow on the hydrants, to keep them clear in case of a fire.

Jack was a dog of no particular breed, spotted black and white like a coach-dog, but larger and heavier in build. Those who knew Jack did not care if he were not a well-bred dog, they loved him for his intelligence and affectionate nature. The children in the neighborhood were as proud of him as they were of the engine.

Our story opens on a cold evening in winter. The wind had been blowing fiercely all day, catching up the light snow and scattering it wildly about, until it was hard to tell whether it were snowing or not, so full of snow was the sharp air. Toward the latter part of the afternoon the wind began to go down, but as it

grew less the air became colder, and the mercury fell lower and lower, until it reached zero. It went even lower than that, and at seven o'clock stood at eight below. A dreadful night for our brave firemen to work in, but they never fail us.

Below, in the engine-house of Number 33, stands the engine ready for duty, her shining brass reflecting a hundred-fold the lights that shine on her. The horses are warm and comfortable in their stalls, and still, except when one gives an occasional stamp or rubs against the side of his stall. On the floor above, in their cosey, warm room, the firemen are assembled. Some are reading, others talking together. One young man is putting Jack through his tricks, of which he has a long list. He has just told to what engine he belongs,—not in words, for Jack cannot speak the human language. When he is asked what is his engine, and the numbers of several are mentioned, he is silent until Number 33 is called, then he gives a sharp bark.

This evening no sooner has he given his answer than the gong below strikes, and in an instant men and dog are on their feet, and on the way to the floor below. Jack rushes headlong down the long, steep flight of stairs, while the firemen take a shorter cut by sliding down the pole. In a very few seconds the horses have taken their places in front of the engine, the harness is let down and fastened into place. The fire is started under the boiler of the engine, the driver is in his seat, the men in their places, and the three splendid grays dash out of the engine-house, Jack circling about in front of them, almost crazy with excitement, or running

ahead to bark indignantly at any team that happens to be in their path. Not long does he keep up his circling and barking, for by the time they are at the foot of the hill the horses have broken into a run, and Jack has all he can do to keep up with them. He has worked off his excitement and is ready for business.

Such a stinging, cold night! The engine-wheels crunch the frozen snow with a sharp, creaking sound, and the warning notes of the bugle ring out loud and clear on the still air.

Sometimes an answering bark comes from the houses they pass, as the engine dashes by. No dogs are out on such a night, but they all know Jack and envy him his position as engine-dog. It is not always such fun for Jack as they think it is, particularly on such a night as this. However, Jack has a duty to perform as well as the firemen have, and he does it just as fearlessly and nobly as they do.

The fire is at one of the extreme ends of the city, a small theatre in a narrow street where tenement-houses and small shops are crowded together regardless of regularity,—a court here and a narrow alley-way there, but every square inch taken up with a building of some kind. When our engine arrives, it is to find others that have not come from such a distance hard at work, the deep throbs of the working engines reaching far through the crisp air.

Engine 33 takes her stand, and while her men are attaching the hose to the hydrant and preparing for action, Jack, as is his custom, makes his rounds to see if all is going on as it should. He

sees the horses standing with their legs drawn closely together under them, as they always do in cold weather, and well blanketed by the men who are detailed for that purpose. Frozen pools and rivulets are standing on the sidewalks and streets, and as the water comes out of the hose it is turned to frozen spray. Jack's thin coat of hair does not keep out the cold very well, and he shivers as he steps over the icy ground. There is no time to be wasted, however, and as soon as he is satisfied that all is in working order, the Fire-Dog joins his own company. They are ordered into a tenement-house that adjoins the burning theatre, and from which smoke is thickly pouring.

The inhabitants of the tenement-house have thrown their bedding and many other articles from the windows, or carried them down to the street. Groups of people, lamenting and terrified, are huddled about their property, hoping to save it. Scantily clothed in their sudden exit, they shiver and moan in a manner pitiable to behold. Many children are among the number, either in their mothers' arms or huddled together among their household goods, vainly trying to escape from the biting air.

The men of Engine 33 are ordered to the roof of the tenement-house; and in they rush, dragging the hose after them, plucky Jack keeping close behind them. They have no easy task, for the narrow halls and stairways are filled with smoke that blinds and suffocates them. It is slow work, too, for they must stop occasionally to take breath at an open window. Sometimes, too, one of them sinks to the floor, overpowered by the thick smoke.

On they go, however, dragging the long hose after them, with valiant Jack always close behind them. At last the upper story is reached, and the skylight through which they must reach the roof is thrown open. Here, however, Jack stops, and running up to a closed door sniffs for a moment, and then begins to whine and scratch.

It is only a kind of store-room, without windows or any opening to admit the light, and is built under the stairway leading to the roof. It seems impossible that any one could be there, but Jack's whines and scratching must mean something, and one of the men throws the door open.

Through the smoke and darkness nothing is seen at first; but in rushes Jack, pounces upon something in one corner, tugging at it until he succeeds in dragging it to the door. Then they see what it is,—a child; and one of the men, the young man who put Jack through his tricks in the engine-house, picks it up. Through the smoke and darkness they make out that it is a boy, tall enough for a boy of seven, but how thin and light! He is either in a stupor from the effects of the suffocating smoke that filled the close room in which he was found, or else in a faint. At all events, he lies motionless in the fireman's arms.

It takes more time to write the event than it took for it to transpire. The other men mount to the roof through the skylight, while the man who picked up the boy forces his way through the blinding smoke down to the street, closely followed by Jack. If it were not for the responsibility for the boy he discovered, Jack

would have followed the men to the roof, for wherever they went he always followed.

The young fireman bears the motionless form of the boy to the street, and singles out the group of tenants who had succeeded in escaping in safety from the tenement-house.

"Which of you has left this child behind?" he sternly asks, looking at the different family groups crowded together, vainly trying to keep warm. "Whose is he?"

They are silent, and after waiting in vain for an answer he continues,—

"If you can't answer, there are those who will know how to make you. You can't leave a child shut up like that in an out-of-the-way room without being called to account."

"Why, it's the blind kid!" exclaims one of the men. "I forgot all about him."

"People are not apt to forget their children at such a time," replies the fireman, looking about him at the children who are crowding around their mothers. "This case shall be looked into."

"He doesn't belong to any of us," replies the man.

"How came he to be shut up in that hole under the stairs, then?" asks the fireman. "If it hadn't been for the dog, he'd have been dead by this time."

"He followed some of the children home," replies the man, "and has been sleeping there for a few nights. I don't know anything about him. I forgot he was there, or I'd have looked out for him."

The cold air seems to revive the child, for he stirs and moans.

"It's the smoke," says the fireman. "You are all right now, ain't you, young chap?"

"Yes," replies the boy in a faint voice, but he makes no attempt to rise to his feet.

"I'll fix you up in good shape," replies the fireman, carrying him toward the engine. A wagon with blankets for the horses stands near by, and a few are still left. One of these the fireman wraps about the boy, and lays him on the floor of the wagon.

"Watch him, Jack!" he says to the Fire-Dog; and in an instant he is back in the tenement-house to join his company on the roof and help them fight the fire.

Faithful Jack cast a longing glance after the fireman's retreating figure, for it was the first time he had failed to follow at his heels; then with a deep sigh he turned to the duty before him. With one bound to the shaft of the wagon and another to the seat, he jumped down beside the still form rolled up in the blanket.

Jack had heard the conversation between the fireman and the man from the tenement-house, and he understood that this was a child without friends or home, and with another sigh of disappointment he crept up to the little figure that lay so still in the bottom of the wagon. The blanket was drawn over the boy's head, but Jack pushed his nose in to see whether the little fellow were alive, he lay so quietly. He found he was alive, though, for he started when Jack's nose touched his face. He felt very cold, and the Fire-Dog crept closer still and lay beside him, hoping to

add some warmth to the cold little figure.

For a time the two lay silently there, Jack keeping his intelligent eyes open to everything that went on. He shivered with the cold, but still kept his post. The horses stood with heads drooping and tails hugged closely to them, and the deep, loud thuds of the working engines stationed near the burning building seemed echoed by those at work farther off. After a while the glare and showers of sparks ceased, and dark volumes of smoke rose in their stead. Then the Fire-Dog knew that the fire was out, and that Engine 33's men would before long be released. The engines still played upon the smouldering embers, however, and it was some time before he was relieved.

They took the boy with them to the engine-house, for they knew that the homeless tenants of the empty house could not take care of him, even if they had been inclined. He could stay at the engine-house that night, they decided, and in the morning they would hand him over to the public charities. So he was wrapped up well and brought home in the wagon, while Jack ran along by the side of the engine. Jack always started out, as we have seen, bounding and circling in front of the horses, but he came home sedately. The excitement was over, and he was as tired as the men were.

They brought the boy into the engine-house and carried him up to the warm room where we first made Jack's acquaintance. He was placed in a chair and the blanket taken off.

"Now let's see what you look like," said the fresh-faced young

man who had rescued him. “How are you now?”

“I’m all right,” replied the boy.

“Well, that’s hearty,” said the man.

He did not look hearty, though. His face was very pale and thin, and he did not look about him as children do who have the use of their eyes.

“Can’t you see anything at all? Can you see me?” asked the young man.

“I can see a little mite of light if the lamps are lighted and if the sun shines very bright,” replied the boy.

“I suppose you are hungry, aren’t you?”

“Not very,” replied the boy.

“When did you eat last? What did you have for supper?”

“I didn’t have any,” replied the boy.

“Well, what did you have for dinner, then?”

“I didn’t have any dinner, either.”

“Didn’t have any dinner, either?” repeated the young fireman. “When did you eat last, for goodness’ sake?”

“Some of the children in the house brought me some of their breakfast. They were very kind to me.”

“Well, that beats the Dutch!” exclaimed the young man. “You sit right there till I come back!” and he rushed out of the room as speedily as he answered the summons of the big gong below. In a short time he was back with his arms full of packages which he proceeded to open hastily. In one were sandwiches of thick rolls with pieces of ham in between, in another a loaf of bread,

some butter in another, and a small can of milk in another. These he proceeded to place on a small table which he drew up before the blind boy.

"There, begin on that," he said, placing one of the sandwiches in the boy's hands.

"Thank you, sir," said the boy; "you are very good."

"You needn't call me sir," replied the young man; "my name is Reordan."

"You don't intend to have the kid eat all that stuff, do you, Reordan?" asked one of the other firemen.

"Why, he hasn't eaten anything since morning, and this such a cold day," replied Reordan.

"That's no reason why you should kill him. He ought to come around to it gradually. That's the way they do when people are starved."

So the boy was given another sandwich followed by a glass of milk, and the firemen and Jack made a lunch off the rest. Then a bed was made up for the boy in a snug corner, and he was covered with plenty of warm clothing. He was so comfortable, from the warm air of the room and the hearty meal, that it was not many minutes before he was in a deep sleep. The Fire-Dog seated himself near by and watched him earnestly.

"I'd give a good deal to know what Jack is thinking about," said one of the men.

"He's probably thinking over what's best to do for the kid, and will settle it in his mind before he goes to bed himself," replied

Reordan.

Jack responded by an appreciative glance and a wag of his tail, that said as plainly as words could have done,—

"That is just it!"

CHAPTER SECOND

THE next morning when the firemen were up and dressed, the blind boy was still asleep. He looked even paler by daylight than he had the night before, and his thin cheeks and the dark circles under his eyes gave him a pathetic look.

"It would be a pity to send the blind kid off while he looks like that. Let's put some flesh on his bones and some color into his cheeks first," said soft-hearted Reordan.

"How do you propose to manage? Taking care of kids and running fire-engines don't go very well together," said the captain.

"The work sha'n't suffer," replied Reordan. "A chap of his age, and blind at that, that has looked after himself, won't need much tending, and the little he'll need to eat won't lighten my pocket much."

"Well, then, keep him for a day or so if you like, I've no objections," replied the captain. "Here's something toward his keep;" and he placed a bill in Reordan's hand.

"We'll all chip in," said another. "Here, Jack, pass around the hat for the blind kid."

The Fire-Dog took the hat in his mouth with great alacrity, and gravely went from one to another of the men, each one of whom put in some change.

"Reordan shall be treasurer of the blind kid's fund," said one.

"There's enough already to buy more than he can eat in a week," replied Reordan, shaking up the hat to enjoy the jingling sound of the coins.

"Please will you show me where I can wash?" asked a gentle voice; and there stood the blind kid, who had approached unnoticed. "If you will show me once, I can find it for myself afterwards."

"Here you are, young man," replied Reordan, leading him to the sink where the men washed. "Here's the water-faucet, and here's the soap; and while you're making your toilet I'll step out and fetch your breakfast."

"Why not take him along with us?" asked one of the men.

"He isn't in just the rig for a cold morning," replied Reordan. "The looks of the thing, to say nothing of his own feelings, goes against it. Wait till he has a hat and coat. I'll fetch his breakfast, and while he's eating it we'll go for ours."

"And when we come back we'll hear his story, and see what account he has to give of himself," said another.

The boy made himself quite tidy, considering the poor clothes he had on; and the men, after seating him at the table with a good breakfast before him, went out for theirs.

How good it did taste to the poor little waif! Only hot coffee and buttered rolls, but it was a feast for the poor child, who for several weeks had eaten his meals whenever he could get them, and little enough at that.

As the boy sat contentedly eating his breakfast, a slight sound

near his feet attracted his attention. “Is that you, Jack?” he quickly asked.

Jack replied by licking his hand and pressing closely to his side.

“Dear Jack!” said the blind boy, fondly laying his cheek upon the faithful dog’s head. “If you hadn’t nestled so closely to me last night and kept me warm, I believe I should have frozen to death. Here, you shall have part of my breakfast, I don’t need it all;” and he offered the Fire-Dog a generous piece of his buttered roll.

Jack took the offering very reluctantly, as if he would have preferred to have the blind boy eat it himself, but accepted it in order not to hurt his new friend’s feelings.

“You eat so slowly, I don’t believe it tastes so good to you as it does to me, Jack,” said the blind boy, as Jack slowly chewed the soft roll, “and it has butter on it too. I should think you would like that.”

Jack was trying hard to dispose of a mouthful his kind little friend had just given him when the firemen returned from their breakfast. In fact, Jack *did* like the bread, but he thought he ought not to take the blind boy’s breakfast. He looked really ashamed of himself when the men entered and Reordan remarked,—

“Why, you mustn’t give your breakfast away to Jack, young chap, you must eat it yourself. We’ve brought him some leavings from the place where we take our meals, that he likes a great deal better than what you’ve got. Aren’t you hungry, kid? Don’t you like your breakfast?”

"Yes, indeed," replied the boy, quickly. "It tastes splendid; but Jack was so good to me last night that I wanted to give him some of it."

"Don't you worry about him, Sonny," replied one of the men. "We'll look out for Jack all right;" and he opened a package of bones and scraps of meat which he set before Jack.

"Now, if you've had all you want to eat," said the captain, who just then entered, "suppose you give an account of yourself."

"Yes, sir," replied the boy.

"Well," said the captain, after waiting a moment in vain for the boy to begin his story. "Where do you come from, and what's your name? Haven't you got any father and mother?"

"My name is William," replied the boy, "William Blake. I haven't got any father. He used to go to sea, and his ship got lost and they were all drowned."

"Haven't you got any mother?" asked the captain.

The boy hesitated a moment. Then his lips began to tremble with emotion, and after making several attempts to answer, he put his hands before his sightless eyes and burst into violent weeping.

The tender-hearted men were overcome at the sight of the child's grief. He tried to stifle the sobs that shook his slender frame, but his grief was too great for him to master. The brave men who never hesitated to enter a burning building to rescue those who were in danger, who never thought of their own lives when those of others were menaced, broke down to see a little

blind boy crying for his mother.

"Is your mother dead too?" asked the captain in a low voice, a great contrast to his usual hearty tones.

"No, I don't think she is. I don't know," sobbed the boy.

"Don't you know where she is?" asked the captain, gently.

"No, sir," replied the boy, trying hard to speak distinctly. "She fell down, and she couldn't speak to me nor move, and then they carried her off in a wagon."

"Don't you know where they took her?"

"No, sir, they didn't say anything about it."

"Wasn't there any one to look after you?"

"No, sir. There wasn't any one who knew me."

"What did you do then? Where did you go?"

"I didn't know where to go. Some children came along and found me crying, and they were real good to me. They said they knew a place where I could stay until my mother came back. So they took me home with them, and put me in a little room there was at the top of the house."

"How did you manage to keep warm in this cold weather?"

"The children found some things to put over me. They got some hay from a stable and made me a bed. It wasn't very cold after I got used to it."

"They probably took his mother to a hospital," said the captain, "unless she was—" He didn't like to finish his sentence, for he had not the heart to tell the poor boy that his mother might be dead.

"Come, little chap," he continued, "dry your eyes and put a good face on the matter. We will try to hunt up your mother, and we'll look out for you."

"This is no place for a child," said the captain later to the men. "You can keep him here a day or two, and then you must turn him over to the charities. Perhaps they'll find his mother; at any rate, it is their business to attend to such cases."

The men thought this doctrine rather hard, and grumbled at it somewhat among themselves. When, however, the next day, the captain brought in a large bundle, saying briefly, as he laid it down, "Here is something for the kid," they changed their minds. The bundle contained a warm overcoat, cap, and mittens.

The blind boy began at once to show the effects of the kind treatment he now received. A better color came into his pale face and he grew stronger every day. With this improvement of his body, his mind, too, underwent a change. His face became cheerful and happy, and he was soon playing about the engine-house with Jack.

"He begins to seem something like a child," remarked Reordan one evening, as Jack and the blind boy were playing together at "hide and seek," and the boy's laugh rang out joyously whenever Jack found out his hiding-place. "If he could only see, he'd be all right."

It was astonishing how much the blind boy could do without the aid of eyes, and in how many ways he succeeded in making himself useful. He was never so happy as when he found he

could do something for his kind friends, and they often called upon him for little services that they could have done much more quickly themselves, in order that he might have the satisfaction of thinking he was of some use to them.

William was too long a name for such a small boy, in the opinion of the firemen, so they used Billy instead. Several days passed, and yet Billy was not turned over to the charities. An engine-house seems a strange place for a child's home, but Billy soon thought it the pleasantest place in the world. Whenever the alarm sounded, Billy was as excited even as Jack over it, and after the engine had clattered out of the house, and the last sound of wheels and horses' hoofs and Jack's barking had died away in the distance, Billy waited contentedly alone; and every one, including Jack, was glad to see Billy's face light up with pleasure on their return. It was a touch of home life that was very pleasant to these sturdy men who were denied the privilege of a home.

"You ought not to keep the boy cooped up in this hot room all the time," remarked the captain one day. "Put on his things and send him out on the sidewalk in the sun. No harm can come to him if he keeps in front of the engine-house."

So Billy had on his new coat and cap and mittens, and was led down to the sidewalk, where the sun was shining brightly.

"Watch him, Jack!" was Reordan's order, as the Fire-Dog followed them.

So Billy and Jack walked up and down in front of the engine-house, Billy with his hand resting on Jack's neck, and the

intelligent dog marching him back and forth with the regularity of a sentinel on guard. The fresh air brought the color into Billy's cheeks, and he looked very happy and bright. When they had kept up this exercise for about half an hour, two persons appeared, at whose approach Jack showed decided symptoms of pleasure. He wagged his tail very fast, and whined with joy.

The new-comers were a middle-aged gentleman and a little boy somewhat younger than Billy,—a bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked boy, with a very independent air, and he carried a little basket in his hand. The gentleman was the little boy's grandfather. I wish I could describe him as he really was, but the nearest I can come to it is to say that he was just the kind every boy and girl would choose if they had a whole world full of grandpapas to choose from. Such a pleasant smile when he looked at you! And such a pleasant voice when he spoke to you! Why, you felt happier all the rest of the day after meeting him if he only shook hands with you and said, "How do you do?" His laugh was even pleasanter still, and he laughed very often; and when he was not laughing his eyes were, they had such a happy, cheerful expression.

Billy could not *see* the pleasant face, but he could hear the pleasant voice, and those who have not the use of their eyes have something within them that tells them how people look. So Billy formed a picture in his mind of the little boy's grandpapa, and Billy smiled too when the little boy's grandpapa spoke, as everybody else did.

"Jack, Jack, I've brought something nice for you, old fellow,"

said the little boy, whose name was Sam, and who had been eying Billy very intently.

"What little boy is this?" asked Sam's grandpapa. "Seems to me this is a new face."

"Yes, sir," replied the blind boy. "I am Billy."

"Oh. You are Billy! Well, where did you come from?"

"It's a boy we found one night at the North End, Mr. Ledwell, and he is blind," said Reordan, who stood in the door of the engine-house and now approached, touching his hat respectfully. "He didn't have any one to look after him, and some children took him in tow and hid him in a kind of closet at the top of the tenement-house they lived in. When the house got on fire, they cleared out so sudden that nobody thought of the blind kid. If it hadn't been for Jack here, he'd 'a' been smothered in a short time, the smoke was so thick. It isn't the first life Jack has saved."

"Good old boy," said Mr. Ledwell, patting the faithful dog's head; while Jack wagged his tail gently and looked modestly down, for it always embarrassed him to be praised for what he considered his duty.

Meanwhile Sam was unpacking his basket, and Jack tried to be polite and not to stare greedily at the tempting contents. He could not resist the temptation, however, of looking out of the corner of one eye. What he saw fairly made his mouth water. There were slices of cold meat, none of your thin delicate ones, but nice *thick* slices, just the kind every dog likes, and, most delicious of all, there was a large bone with tender morsels of

meat on it, to say nothing of several mouthfuls of gristle. Jack couldn't help lapping his chops, as he thought of the good time he would have gnawing that bone and cracking it to get at the rich tasting marrow inside.

Sam handed Jack a slice of the meat, and he gave it just one roll with his tongue and then swallowed it whole. Meat tastes better to dogs eaten in that way,—they think it takes the taste out of it to chew it too much. Another and still another slice followed, while Sam looked contentedly on, enjoying the operation as much as the dog did.

"I think you'd better save the rest for his dinner, Reordan," remarked Sam, with his decided air. "He can have this bone, too, then, and I have brought some of the cake he likes so much. You had better keep that for his dessert;" and Sam took out a package of cake neatly wrapped in paper.

The crumbs that remained in the basket were emptied upon the snow in front of the engine-house, and the crumbs from a roll added to them. Several sparrows seated on the roof of the building peered anxiously over, intending to seize the first opportunity that presented itself to eat them.

"Don't let the sparrows eat all of them, Reordan," said Sam, who had very strict ideas of justice; "they must save some for the pigeons. How's the little lame pigeon?"

"He seemed to be all right the last time I saw him," replied Reordan.

"Does Dick the Scrapper fight him away as much as ever?"

asked Sam.

"Well, yes, he does hustle him around considerable when they are feeding and he gets in the way; but that's always the way with animals, you know. The strongest ones get the first chance, and the others have to take back seats."

"I think it's a very mean way," said Sam. "I should think you'd stand there with a stick and keep the Scrapper off while the lame one eats."

"Oh, we'll look after the little lame fellow, never fear. He's as fat as a partridge. He gets tamer every day, too. Yesterday he lit right on my hand and stayed there quite a spell."

"I wish he'd come around now," said Sam.

"He will turn up very likely before you go. They come around pretty often. The sparrows get ahead of them, though, they are so cute."

Meanwhile Sam's grandpapa was talking to the captain about the little blind boy who had been so suddenly thrown upon their hands. Sam knew what they were talking about, and he felt sure that his grandpapa would find some way to make the blind boy happy, for Grandpapa could do anything, he thought. Sam felt very sorry that the little boy could not see, and he looked at him a long time. At last he said,—

"Hallo, Billy!"

"Hallo!" answered Billy in his soft voice; and the acquaintance was begun.

"Here come the pigeons," said Reordan, as a flock of birds

came sweeping around the corner of the street, and alighted in front of the children. They at once began gobbling up the crumbs scattered for them, while the sparrows flew down, and darting in among them, seized upon the largest ones right from under the pigeons' very eyes, flying up to the roof to eat them in safety.

Among the pigeons was a speckled black and white one with very pink feet; but one of his feet he kept drawn up against his soft feathers and hopped about on the other one. He did not have a very fair chance with the other stronger pigeons, for they crowded him out of the way, and even pecked him when he attempted to seize upon a piece of bread. The most quarrelsome of the pigeons was a handsome dark blue one with rainbow feathers on his neck that glistened in the sunlight. This was Dick the Scrapper. He had a very bold air, as if he had a better right to the food than the others had. Sam was very indignant at his treatment of the lame pigeon, and suddenly drove them all off except the little lame one. The little speckled pigeon seemed to understand what this was done for, and remained behind and ate a hearty meal. The others were not much afraid of Sam, for they were very tame, but every time they attempted to alight he would shoo them away. This he kept up until he thought that the lame pigeon had eaten all he wanted, and then he allowed the others to return. He picked up the lame pigeon and it nestled contentedly in his arm. Billy caressed it too, and the two children began to talk together, while Jack stood near by, wagging his tail approvingly.

At last Mr. Ledwell came back to where the children were

playing with the lame pigeon, and they heard him say to the captain,—

"This will do very well for a little while, but of course you can't keep him here. We must find some other place for him."

These words made Billy feel very sad, for he had become much attached to his new home, and thought that if he were sent away, he would be homeless and friendless again. The little pigeon who was lying in his arms heard it too, and his bright eyes saw the look of disappointment that came over the blind boy's face. Jack, too, heard it, and made up his mind that Billy should not leave the engine-house unless he went too.

"I rather think that as I was the means of saving the boy's life, I have a right to say something about the matter," said Jack to himself. "They all think a great deal of me, and if I say he shall stay, I rather think he *will* stay."

CHAPTER THIRD

"GRANDPAPA," said Sam, as the two walked home together, "isn't it too bad about Billy?"

"It certainly is," replied Grandpapa.

"Something must be done about it," said Sam; then he walked silently for a while, thinking very hard. At last he said,—

"Grandpapa, God made me. Did the same man make you?"

"Yes," replied Grandpapa, "I suppose he did."

"Don't you know for certain?" asked Sam, for Grandpapa's eyes were smiling hard.

"Oh, yes," replied Grandpapa, "of course I do."

"Well, I've been thinking it over," said Sam, "and I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to pray to God every night to make Billy see."

"It will be a very good plan," replied Grandpapa.

"You see I always pray for what I want most at Christmas time," said Sam.

"And it comes, doesn't it?" asked Grandpapa.

"Yes," replied Sam, "it always comes. I prayed real hard for a pony last Christmas, and I got one, you know."

"Yes, I know," said Grandpapa, his eyes still smiling as he watched the earnest face of his grandson.

"I asked for a black pony with a star on his forehead, and it came just exactly right. So, you see," continued Sam, "that if I

ask God every night to make Billy see, He will be sure to do it."

"I hope so," said Grandpapa.

"Why, it wouldn't be half so hard as it was to hustle around to find just the kind of pony I asked for."

"So I should think," replied Grandpapa. "Black ponies with white stars on their foreheads are not so easy to find."

"No," said Sam, thoughtfully, "I know it. How long will it be before Christmas comes, Grandpapa?"

"Only a very short time,—about two weeks."

"Well, I shall just tell God that He needn't bother about that dog-cart," said Sam, with his determined nod. "I shall tell Him that I would rather He would make Billy see."

"That is a good idea, Sam," said Grandpapa. "I know you would enjoy having poor Billy see as you do, much more than you would to have your dog-cart."

"Yes," replied Sam with a little sigh, for he had been looking forward for a long time to the pleasure of driving his pony in a dog-cart. "I can ride him just as well as not."

By this time they had reached home, and Sam hurried up the steps, he was so eager to tell Grandmamma about Billy. Sam's papa and mamma were travelling in Europe, with his little sister Anne, and he was staying with his grandparents. He was so fond of them that he was not at all lonely.

"I miss Anne very much, and I should like to see Papa and Mamma," he had remarked to his nurse Mary one day; "but grandpapas and grandmammas let you do a great many more

things than papas and mammas do."

"Oh, you mustn't say that," Mary had replied.

"Mary," Sam had said very earnestly, "how would you like to be spanked with a hair-brush?"

Mary had made no reply to this argument; and Sam, in response to her silence, had said with the positive air of one who has had experience,—

"Well, then!"

On this day Sam found his grandmamma seated in her sunny sewing-room, and he was in such a hurry to tell her all about Billy that he gave her a very confused idea of the matter. The fire and Jack and the little blind boy became so mixed up in his story that it was some time before she understood the case.

Now Sam's grandmamma was just exactly as nice for a grandmamma as his grandpapa was for a grandpapa, and Sam loved one just as well as the other. "The only difference is that Grandmamma was never a little boy like me, same as Grandpapa was," Sam used to say.

"We must see what can be done for the poor child," said Grandmamma when Sam had finished his story.

Then Sam told his plan about asking God to make Billy see, and Grandmamma thought it an excellent plan, only that perhaps it couldn't be brought about by Christmas, because the time was very near.

"But don't you see, Grandmamma," said Sam, "that if God doesn't have to hunt around for the dog-cart, it will be a great

deal easier to make Billy see?"

So, when Sam went to bed that night, he said his simple prayer in this way,—

"Oh, dear God, you needn't bother about that dog-cart, if you will only make poor Billy see as I do; and please take care of Papa and Mamma, and don't let the ship tip over; and take care of Grandpapa and Grandmamma too, and make Sam a good boy."

"You haven't prayed for your little sister," said Grandmamma, as Sam's prayer came to a sudden end.

"Oh, Anne sleeps with Nora, she's all right," replied Sam, confidently.

The next day Sam said to his grandpapa,—

"Can't I go to the park to-day to feed the birds and squirrels?"

"I think you can," replied Grandpapa, "and how should you like to take Billy too?"

"Why, he can't see, you know, so it wouldn't be any fun for him," said Sam.

"But *you* can see," said Grandpapa, "and you can lend him your eyes."

Sam looked so puzzled at this that his grandpapa explained: "You can tell him what you see, and he can imagine how everything looks. He will see the picture with his mind instead of with his eyes. That is imagination."

"It is a very strange thing," said Sam, thoughtfully.

"You see that blind people think so much about what they cannot see, that they make a great many pictures in their minds.

If they were not able to do that, they would be very lonely."

Then Sam hurried down to ask Cook to give him some bread for the birds, and to fill a basket with nuts for the squirrels. He also took some canary and hemp seeds in a little package. By the time this was done, the sleigh had driven up to the door, and Sam and his grandpapa started on their expedition, Sam throwing kisses to his grandmamma at the window so long as the house was in sight. Then they turned the corner and soon reached the engine-house.

Billy's pale face grew quite rosy when he was told of the sleigh-ride he was to have, and in a moment his warm coat and cap were on and he was led to the sleigh by Sam, who took great care of him for fear he should make a misstep. The Fire-Dog followed closely at his heels, and watched him put into the big sleigh and securely tucked in with the warm fur robe.

"Can't Jack go too?" asked Sam, as he saw the wistful expression in the faithful dog's eyes.

"Certainly, if he will," replied Grandpapa.

Jack, however, was not the dog to neglect his duties, and in spite of Sam's and Billy's alluring calls, he gently but firmly wagged his tail, to express his regret at being obliged to refuse their invitation. As they drove off, he looked mournfully after them so long as the sleigh was in sight, then he gave a sigh of disappointment and lay down in front of the engine-house, where he could enjoy the passing, and occasionally pass the time of day with some dog friend, or make the acquaintance of some stranger

passing through the city, for Jack was a social dog. Here, too, he was within hearing of the gong.

Meanwhile the sleigh continued on its way to the park, the faces of the two little boys beaming with pleasure,—Billy's at the unusual treat of a sleigh-ride, and Sam's from watching the happiness of the little blind boy.

Sam was so eager to point out to Billy everything of interest to him, that he was kept busy describing the objects of interest they passed. The grandpapa's face reflected the happiness in the two boys' faces, and his pleasant smile grew very tender as he saw the delight of the blind boy in the scenes his poor blind eyes could not see.

When, as they passed a group of merry, shouting boys building a snow fort which Sam reported faithfully to his little friend, and Billy, quite excited at Sam's description had wistfully asked, "Are they all seeing children, Sam?" Sam, greatly distressed at the question, had replied, "There is one fellow that looks kind of blind,—he's having an awfully good time, though;" then Grandpapa's smile grew more tender still, and he told the two boys about the schools where those who could not see were taught to do whatever those who could see did.

"Can they play the way the seeing children do?" asked Billy, eagerly.

"Yes," replied Grandpapa, "and we will send you to one of them."

Billy was silent, and seemed to be thinking about something.

"Should you not like to go, Billy?" asked Sam's grandpapa. "The children are very happy there."

"I would rather find my mother," replied Billy, with a quiver of the lips.

"We will find her, never fear," replied kind-hearted Mr. Ledwell, who could never bear to see anybody unhappy; and he began a story so interesting that Billy was soon listening intently and had forgotten for the time about the dear mother whom he wanted so much to see. By the time the story was ended, the houses were farther and farther apart, then snow-covered fields were passed, and Sam was kept busy in describing the frozen ponds where boys and girls were skating and playing, and the hillsides down which they were coasting. Then woods with real forest trees appeared, and Sam explained that they were now in the park. Here and there a gray squirrel's bright eyes peeped down upon the sleigh, and Sam reported just how they whisked their bushy tails and ran from bough to bough, occasionally stopping to take a peep.

As they went farther into the park, a colony of sparrows would now and then fly up from a clump of bushes, and hurry away as if the sleigh contained a party of ferocious hunters, instead of two kind little boys bringing them food. They took care to keep the sleigh in sight, for Sam and his basket were old friends, and they knew the feast in store for them. So they followed at a distance, for sparrows like to consider themselves martyrs, and to act as if they were a persecuted set. This is not to be wondered at,

when we remember the way they have been treated. Their nests have been torn down, they have been driven from one place to another, and they have been made to feel that they are not wanted anywhere.

Suddenly there arose on the still, frosty air discordant cries, and Sam exclaimed,—

"There come the blue jays, Billy! Oh, you don't know how handsome they are, with their tufts standing straight up on their heads, and their beautiful blue and white bodies and wings!"

"Are they as big as the pigeons?" asked Billy, for he had held the little black and white lame pigeon in his arms and knew just what size they were.

"Not quite so large as a pigeon," replied Sam, "but fully as large as a robin. They are awfully quarrelsome fellows, though; just hear how hard they are scolding now."

"Will they come and eat the crumbs?" asked Billy.

"Yes, and get the biggest share of them too," replied Sam.

"We had better stop here," said Mr. Ledwell, as they came to an open, sunny spot.

So the sleigh stopped, and Sam and his grandpapa got out and helped Billy out, who looked as happy and eager as Sam did. He did not look about him, though, as Sam did, and see that the sparrows had stationed themselves on neighboring trees, all ready to begin their feast so soon as the crumbs were scattered. Neither did he see the bright flashes of blue as the jays alighted on the trees near by, nor the tame and nimble squirrels who came

closer than the birds, hopping over the snow to Sam's very feet. All these things Sam explained, however, and Billy understood.

Billy, too, threw the crumbs, and held nuts in his hand for the squirrels, laughing with delight as he felt the trusting little creatures eat from his fingers.

All at once arose a blithe song of "Chickadee-dee-dee-dee;" and a flock of little chickadees came flying up, quite out of breath with their hurry.

"Chickadee-dee-dee-dee," they all cried together, as they bustled about to pick up what crumbs they could; and their song said as plainly as words could have done,—

"Are we too late? I do hope you have left some for us."

They were so sweet-tempered about it, not even losing temper when the greedy sparrows darted in and seized crumbs from under their very beaks, that it was impossible not to love them.

"Such dear little black caps as they have!" said Sam. "Here, you great greedy jay, you let that little fellow's crumbs alone!"

A blue jay had snatched a crumb away from one of the little chickadees, but the chickadee only replied blithely, "Chickadee-dee-dee-dee!" which in bird language meant: "No matter! Plenty more to be had! A little thing like that does not matter."

This both the little boys understood the chickadee to say, for those who love animals learn to understand much of their language.

Then arose a hoarse cry of "Caw! caw! caw!" and several coal-black crows flew down at a distance. They did not come

boldly into the midst of the group of feeding birds, because they preferred always to conduct their business with great secrecy. One would occasionally walk on the outskirts of the party with an air of great indifference, pretending not to see what was going on; then suddenly he would dart in their midst and seize upon a particularly large crumb, and, hurrying off with it, stand with his back to the others, eating it in the slyest manner, as if he expected at any moment to have it taken away from him.

There was one bird that even Sam's bright eyes did not see. He had a timid look, as if he could not make friends so easily as the social chickadees. He crept along a large tree that grew near the spot where the birds and squirrels were feeding, and creeping in the same cautious manner on the under side of a large bough that stretched out toward the spot, hung head downward, watching intently what went on beneath him. None of the birds took the slightest notice of him, but his quick eyes glanced at them all, and finally rested on the face of the blind boy, who patiently listened to the explanations of the kind friend who loaned him the use of his eyes.

This shy little bird who watched the two boys so narrowly, was the nuthatch. As soon as the sleigh had driven away, the nuthatch came down from the tree, creeping along the trunk, head downward, and seized upon the fine kernel of a nut a squirrel was eating.

The chickadees were loudly singing the praises of the visitors who had brought them such a delicious treat. Even the blue jays,

who were usually very chary of their praise, had a pleasant word for their friend Sam, who so often brought them food.

"There was a strange boy with him," cawed an old crow. "Who knows anything about him?"

"He was not a seeing child," chirped the nuthatch. "He could not see the blue sky, nor the trees, nor any of us. Who can he be?"

"We know all about him," twittered the sparrows. "It is the blind boy who lives in the engine-house. Fire-Jack saved his life; we see him very often."

Then an incessant twittering arose from the sparrows, who were in such a hurry to tell all they knew that they all talked at once.

CHAPTER FOURTH

AFTER the two boys had driven off to the park to feed the birds, Jack, as we have seen, watched the sleigh so long as it was in sight. Then he lay down in a sunny spot in front of the engine-house door, where he would be warm and at the same time see the passing. Dogs, of course, interested him most, and this was such a thoroughfare that he saw a good many of them.

The dogs that interested him the most were those from out of town who were passing through the city, following a carriage or team. It was very pleasant to meet an old acquaintance in that way, and exchange a few words with him, for Jack was such a business dog that he allowed himself few pleasures, and did not have the opportunity of roaming about the city that dogs enjoy so much. Out-of-town dogs were very interesting because they didn't take on any airs, and often told him things about their country homes that he liked to hear.

The most irritating of all dogs are the dogs that are in carriages. They take on a very superior air that all dogs who are not driving dislike particularly. In fact, as they pass, they often make insulting remarks to the less fortunate dogs who go on foot. Also dogs who are driving are very jealous of others who are enjoying the same privilege, and often talk most impertinently to one another.

Several dogs in carriages passed while Jack lay in the door

of the engine-house, and they either looked straight ahead and turned up their noses, pretending not to see him, or else they made some insolent remark. Jack paid no attention whatever to them, knowing that nothing would irritate them so much as to find that their impertinence had no effect upon him.

A large, amiable farm-dog following a charcoal wagon particularly interested the Fire-Dog. He stopped a few minutes in order to tell the little news he had, which was that the hens were on a strike and had refused to lay any more until they were furnished with warmer quarters.

"That accounts for the high price of eggs," said Jack; "I thought something was wrong. Well, I hope they will get what they want. Give them the compliments of Jack the Fire-Dog, and tell them to *stick*."

"There is one other piece of news," said the farm-dog. "One of my neighbors is missing. He is a little yellow dog with a black pug nose, and answers to the name of Toby. Followed his team into the city with a load of wood one day last week and hasn't been seen since. If you come across him, let us know, will you? The city is awfully confusing to country dogs."

"I will be on the lookout for him," said Jack. "'Yellow dog with a black pug nose, answers to the name of Toby.' Say," continued Jack, as the other was starting to run after his team, "what shall I do with him if I happen to find him, which isn't at all likely?"

"Keep him till I come by next week, or send him home if he knows the way;" and the farm-dog ran after his team, that was

now nearly out of sight.

For a while nothing of especial interest happened to divert the Fire-Dog. He took several naps, keeping one eye open to see what was going on about him. Suddenly he started and opened both eyes. A group of children were coming toward him, one of them leading a dog by a string. Something about the children attracted Jack's attention. They were not very warmly clothed for the season of the year, but they seemed happy and good-natured. They were evidently very fond of their dog, for they stopped often to pat him and speak to him.

"Where have I seen those children?" asked Jack of himself. "I am sure I have seen them before;" and he tried hard to recall their faces.

"I have it!" he exclaimed at last. "It was the night of the fire when we found the blind kid, and they are the children who looked after him."

He looked at the dog the children were leading. "'Yellow dog with a black pug nose, answers to the name of Toby.' Well, who would have thought I should hear from him so soon? Hallo, Toby! is that you?"

"Yes," replied Toby; "but who are you, and how do you happen to know my name?"

Jack quickly arose and stepped up to the little yellow dog. The children good-naturedly waited for them to exchange the time of day, during which time Jack managed to explain to Toby his interview with the large farm-dog. "I did not expect to hear from

you so soon," said Jack, "but now that I have, we must make our plans in a hurry. I suppose you want to go back to your old home?"

"Of course I do. After having a whole town to roam about in, it isn't very pleasant to be tied up in an old shed."

"Why didn't you run away?" asked Jack.

"I wasn't sure of my way. It is terribly confusing to a country dog to find his way about in a city. Besides, these children are very good to me, and I was afraid of falling into worse hands."

"You know how to slip your collar, I suppose?" asked Jack.

"Sometimes I can, but this strap is pretty tight," replied Toby.

"I see that your education has been neglected, so I will give you a few instructions given me by an old bull-dog, Boxer by name, who could slip any collar that was ever invented."

"I should be very glad to hear them," replied little Toby.

"Well, first you back out just as far as your rope will allow you to go. Then you gradually work your head from side to side, with your chin well up in the air, kind of wriggling your head free. If your collar is tight, that doesn't always work; so next you lie flat on your back, keeping your nose as high up as you can get it. You can kind of ease it up with your fore feet, too. You do just as I've told you and you'll find yourself free in time. I stump any one to make a collar that these rules won't work on."

"I'll do my best," said little Toby.

"The bull-dog I told you of, did a thing once that I wouldn't have believed if I hadn't known it to be a fact. He had slipped

so many collars that they had a sort of harness made for him with a strap that went back of his fore legs. Well, one morning they found that he had slipped that. It beats the Dutch how he managed to do it, but he did it all right. It took him all night to do it, and in the morning they found him all used up, and lying as if he were dead. He was quite an old dog then, and not so strong as he used to be, but you know bull-dogs never give up anything they undertake."

"Did he get well?" asked Toby, much interested.

"I'll tell you. As I said before, he lay like a dead dog, and it was warm and sunny out of doors, so they carried him out and laid him in the sun. After a while he seemed to take an interest in things about him,—wagged his tail when they spoke to him and all that. Bull-dogs are awfully affectionate, you know. Then they began to have a little hope for him, when who should come along but another dog he knew? There had been some bad blood between the two, and what do you think? No sooner does my old friend catch sight of the other than up he jumps and runs after him. Of course he was too feeble to do anything in the fighting line, but his intentions were good."

"Wasn't the excitement too much for him?" asked Toby, anxiously.

"Not a bit of it. It did him good,—limbered him up and set him right on his legs. Bull-dogs are tough."

"I should like to know him," said Toby, modestly. "He must be a remarkable dog."

"He certainly is," replied the Fire-Dog. "I should like to introduce you, but the fact is, we are not on speaking terms now. He means well, Boxer does, but he's kind of jealous-minded. You see it gives me quite a position to run with the engine, and Boxer, he feels equal to the business, and it kind of riles him to see me setting off to a fire. I suppose he thinks I feel smart of myself and am taking on airs. It is just as you have been brought up. Now, if Boxer had been brought up in the Fire Department, his natural pluck would have taken him through the worst fire that ever was. The more he got singed, the farther he would venture in."

"Do you ever meet now?" asked Toby.

"Yes, quite often; he lives near by. We don't look at one another, though, as we pass, except perhaps out of the corners of our eyes. Boxer, he always shivers and his eyes kind of bulge, and he walks on tiptoe. You know that bull-dogs are awfully sensitive, and they always shiver when they are excited, but it isn't the shiver of a cowardly dog. You had better look out for a bull-dog when you see him shiver, for he isn't in the state of mind to take much from another dog when he's in that condition. He laps his chops too, then."

The children had been waiting all this time, the boy who held Toby by a string occasionally giving him a gentle pull as a reminder that it was time to go. They patted Jack, while they peered curiously in through the open door at the engine that stood ready for use at a moment's notice. They thought it was time to start for home, as they had quite a distance to go. So Toby took

leave of his new friend, casting longing glances behind him as he was pulled along.

"He appears to be a well-meaning sort of fellow," said Jack to himself, "but he doesn't look to me smart enough to apply the rules I have given him. A dog of character like Boxer would have brought it about by himself. However; it's as well that we are not all made alike."

Jack's attention was before long diverted from the subject of his new acquaintance by the return of his charge Billy, who greeted him so affectionately that warm-hearted Jack forgot everything else and escorted his charge into the engine-house to see that he got safely up the steep stairs.

Meanwhile Mr. Ledwell and Sam drove down town to do a few errands. One of them was to leave an order at a bake-shop, and as the sleigh stopped before the door, they noticed a group of children, one of them holding by a string a little yellow dog with a black pug nose. They were gazing eagerly in at the tempting display of cakes in the large windows, and Sam noticed that the little dog seemed to eye them just as longingly as the children did.

Now Sam's grandpapa was just the kind of man that any child or animal would appeal to if he were in trouble, and as he stepped out of the sleigh and walked by the group of children, he looked at them in his usual pleasant manner.

"Mister," said a voice very timidly, "will you please to give me a cent to buy something to eat?"

The voice came from a little girl, the youngest of the children.

"Why, Maysie, you mustn't ask for money; that's begging," said the boy who was holding the dog.

"What do you want to eat, little girl?" asked Mr. Ledwell's kind voice.

"Cake," replied Maysie, emboldened by the pleasant eyes that seemed to be always smiling.

"Well, look in at that window," said Mr. Ledwell, "and tell me what kind of cake you think you would like to eat."

Maysie's mind was evidently already made up, for she at once pointed to a plate of rich pastry cakes with preserve filling.

"That kind," replied Maysie, promptly.

"Could you eat a whole one, do you think?" asked Mr. Ledwell.

"Yes," replied Maysie, eagerly.

"Could you eat *two*, do you think?" asked Mr. Ledwell.

"Yes," replied Maysie, promptly.

"Do you think you could eat three of them?" asked Mr. Ledwell.

"Yes," replied Maysie.

"Well, do you think you could eat four?"

"I'd try," replied Maysie, confidently.

"Wait here a minute," said Mr. Ledwell, "and I will see what I can do."

The children crowded around the window, and eagerly watched the young woman behind the counter fill a large paper bag with cakes from every plate in the window, the largest share

being taken from the plate of pastry cakes that had been Maysie's choice.

Mr. Ledwell glanced at the faces peering in at the window, following eagerly every motion of the young woman with the paper bag. The little yellow dog was no less interested than the children, and had been held up in the boy's arms, that he might obtain a better view. From this group Mr. Ledwell's eyes fell on his little grandson, who was standing up in the sleigh to see what was going on, and whose bright face was aglow with pleasure at the prospect of the treat in store for the group at the window.

"It would be hard to say whether they or Sam are the happiest," said Mr. Ledwell to the young woman behind the counter, as he took the paper bag and left the store.

"Or the generous man who takes the trouble to give so much pleasure to others," added the young woman to herself, as she glanced at his kind face.

"Here, little girl," said Mr. Ledwell, handing the paper bag to Maysie. "Now what will you do with all these good things?"

"We'll divide them between ourselves," replied Maysie, promptly.

"And the dog," said the boy. "He must have his share, because he's seen them same as we have."

"Yes, Johnny, of course the dog," assented Maysie.

"And Mother," said the older sister.

"Of course, Mother," agreed Maysie. "Come on!" and off started Maysie, firmly grasping her bag of cakes.

"Why, Maysie, you forgot to thank the gentleman," said the elder sister.

"Her face has thanked me already," said Mr. Ledwell.

Maysie, however, thus reminded of her manners, turned and said,—

"Oh, thank you, sir, *so much*."

Instantly Maysie was off, followed by her brother and sister.

"Grandpapa," said Sam, as Mr. Ledwell took his seat in the sleigh, "I think you are the very best grandpapa in town."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.