STORIES FOR THE YOUNG.

MY PETS.

II. TOBY, THE HAWK.

About the queerest pet that I ever had was a young hawk. My brother Rufus, who was a great sportsman, brought him home to me one night in spring. He had shot the mother hawk, and found this young half-fledged one in the nest. I received the poor orphan with joy, for he was too small for me to feel any horror of him, though his family had long borne rather a bad name. I resolved that I would bring him up in the way he should go, so that when he was old he should not destroy chickens. At first, I kept him in a bird-cage, but after awhile he grew too large for his quarters, and had to have a house built for him expressly. I let him learn to roost, but I tried to bring him up on vegetable diet. I found, however, that this would not do. He eat the bread and grain, to be sure, but he did not thrive; he looked very lean, and smaller than hawks of his age should look. At last I was obliged to give up my fine idea of making an innocent dove out of the poor fellow; and one morning treated him to a slice of raw mutton. I remember how he flapped his wings and cawed with delight, and what a hearty meal he made of it. He grew very fat and glossy after this important change in his diet, and I became as proud of him as of any pet I ever had. But my mother, after awhile, found fault with the great quantity of meat which he devoured. She said that he eat more beef-steak than any other member of the family. Once, when I was thinking about this, and feeling a good deal troubled lest some day, when I was gone to school, they at home might take a fancy to cut off the head of my pet to save his board-bill, a bright thought came into my mind. There was running through our farm, at a short distance from our house, a large mill-stream, along the banks of which lived and croaked a vast multitude of frogs. These animals are thought by hawks, as well as Frenchmen, very excellent eating. So, every morning, noon, and night, I took Toby on my shoulder, ran down to the mill-stream, and let him satisfy his appetite on all such frogs as were really so silly as to stay out of the water and be caught. He was very quick and active, — would pounce upon a great, green croaker, and have him halved and quartered, and hid away in a twinkling. I generally looked in another direction while he was at his meals,—it is not polite to keep your eye on people when they are eating, and then I couldn't help pitying the poor frogs. But I knew that hawks must live; and say what they might, my Toby never prowled about hen-coops to devour young chickens. I taught him better morals than that, and kept him so well-fed that he was never tempted to such wickedness. I have since thought that, if we want people to do right, we must treat them as I treated my hawk; for when we think a man steals because his heart is full of sin, it may be only because his stomach is empty of food.

When Toby had finished his meal, he would wipe his beak with his wing, mount on my shoulder, and ride home again; sometimes, when it was a very warm day, and he had dined more heartily than usual, he would fall asleep during the ride, still holding on to his place with his long, sharp claws. Sometimes I would come home with my pinafore torn and bloody on the shoulder, and then my mother would scold me a little and laugh at me a great deal. I would blush and hang my head and cry, but still cling to my strange pet; and when he had got full-grown and had wide, strong wings, and a great, crooked beak that everybody else was afraid of, I was still his warm friend and his humble servant, still carried him to his meals three times a day, shut him into his house every night, and let him out every morning. Such a life as that bird led me!

Toby was perfectly tame, and never attempted to fly beyond the yard. I thought this was because he loved me too well to leave me; but my brothers, to whom he was rather cross, said it was because he was a stupid fowl. Of course they only wanted to tease me. I said that Toby was rough, but honest; that it was true he did not make a display of his talents, like some folks; but that I had faith to believe that, some time before he died, he would prove himself to them all to be a bird of good feelings and great intelligence.

Finally, the time came for Toby to be

respected as he deserved. One autumn night I had him with me in the sitting-room, where I played with him and let him perch on my arm till it was quite late. Some of the neighbours were in, and the whole circle told ghost-stories, and talked about dreams, and warnings, and awful murders, till I was half frightened out of my wits; so that, when I went to put my sleepy hawk into his little house, I really dared not to go into the dark, but stopped in the entry, and left him to roost for one night on the hat-rack, saying nothing to any one. Now it happened that my brother William, who was then about fourteen years of age, was a somnambulist, —that is, a person who walks in sleep. He would often rise in the middle of the night, and ramble off for miles, always returning unwaked. Sometimes he would take the horse from the stable, saddle and bridle him, and have a wild gallop in the moonlight. Sometimes he would drive the cows home from pasture, or let the sheep out of the pen. Sometimes he would wrap himself in a sheet, glide about the house, and appear at our bedside like a ghost. But in the morning he had no recollection of these things. Of course, we were very anxious about him, and tried to keep a constant watch over him, but he would sometimes manage to escape from all our care. Well, that night there was suddenly a violent outcry set up in the entry. It was Toby, who shrieked and flapped his wings till he awoke my father, who dressed and went down-stairs to see what was the matter. He found the door wide open, and the hawk sitting uneasily on his perch, looking frightened and indignant, with all his feathers raised. My father, at once suspecting what had happened, ran up to William's chamber and found his bed empty; he then roused my elder brothers, and, having lit a lantern, they all started off in pursuit of the poor boy. They searched through the yard, garden, and orchard, but all in vain. Suddenly they heard the saw-mill, which stood near, going. They knew that the owner never worked there at night, and supposed that it must be my brother, who had set the machinery in motion. So down they ran as fast as possible, and, sure enough, they found him there, all by nimself. A large log had the night before been laid in its place ready for the morning, and on that log sat my brother, his large black eyes staring wide open, yet seeming to be fixed on nothing, and his face as pale as death. He seemed to have quite lost himself, for the end of the log on which he sat was fast approaching the saw. My father, with great presence of mind, stopped the machinery, while one of my brothers caught William and pulled him from his perilous place. Another moment, and he would have been killed or horribly mangled by the cruel saw. With a terrible scream, that was heard to a great distance, poor William awoke. He cried bitterly when he found where he was and how he came there. He was much distressed by it for some time; but it was a very good thing for all that, *for he never walked in his sleep again.*

As you would suppose, Toby received much honour for so promptly giving the warning on that night. Everybody now acknowledged that he was a hawk of great talents, as well as talons. But, alas! he did not live long to enjoy the respect of his fellow-citizens. One afternoon that very autumn, I was sitting at play with my doll, under the thick shade of a maple-tree, in front of the house. On the fence near by sat Toby, lazily pluming his wing, and enjoying the pleasant, golden sunshine,—now and then glancing round at me with a most knowing and patronizing look. Suddenly, there was the sharp crack of a gun fired near, and Toby fell fluttering to the ground. A stupid sportsman had taken him for a wild hawk, and shot him in the midst of his peaceful and innocent enjoyment. He was wounded in a number of places, and was dying fast when I reached him. Yet he seemed to know me, and looked up into my face so piteously, that I sat down by him, as I had sat down by poor Keturah, and cried aloud. Soon the sportsman, who was a stranger, came leaping over the fence to bag his game. When he found what he had done, he said he was very sorry, and stooped down to examine the wounds made by his shot. Then Toby roused himself, and caught one of his fingers in his beak, biting it almost to the bone. The man cried out with the pain, and tried to shake him off, but Toby still

held on fiercely and stoutly, and held on till he was dead. Then his ruffled wing grew smooth, his head fell back, his beak parted and let go the bleeding finger of his enemy.

I did not want the man hurt, for he had shot my pet under a mistake; but I was not sorry to see Toby die like a hero. We laid him with the pets who had gone before. Some were lovelier in their lives, but none more lamented when dead. I will venture to say that he was the first of his race who ever departed with a clean conscience as regarded poultry. No careful mother hen cackled with delight on the day he died,—no pert young rooster flapped his wings and crowed over his grave. But I must say, I don't think that the frogs mourned for him. I thought that they were holding a jubilee that night; the old ones croaked so loud, and the young ones sung so merrily, that I wished the noisy green creatures all quietly doing brown on some Frenchman's gridiron.

A FLIGHT UPON FANS.

BY MRS. WHITE.

"WHAT a subject to write upon!" exclaims perhaps some fair reader of the *Family Friend*. Granted, gentle lady; but however trifling you may consider a few stray thoughts on so homely a theme, there is nevertheless more importance in it than you may probably imagine. Besides, trifles make up the pith and marrow of all that is useful and interesting in the world's history. It was an accident that made Corneille, the Shakspere of France, and Molière the great master of comedy. It was the same fortunate hazard that originated some of the most wonderful discoveries of Newton, Flamstead, and Franklin. Indeed, it would be tedious to mention the results produced by a close attention to what are frequently misnamed trifles; but we will enter at once upon our theme.

Chapters have been written, and a whole volume might be, upon the history and associations connected with this little instrument. In the orient, Nature herself appears to have taken the initiative, and in the spreading branches and undulating motion of the fan palm-tree, to have whispered its origin to the Indian girl beneath its shade.

Nay, Eve herself, in the bright sunshine of an Eden noon, might have used such leafy screen between it and her beauty; for we know by implication that even in the temperature of Paradise there must have been a counterpoise to the cool of the day.

In a word, its origin appears to us to date from the beginning—to be as old as man's ingenuity and the necessity for shade in a tropical climate, and therefore as proper to the islands of the Pacific as to the south of the celestial Empire; though, in the first, we find it in the primitive shape of a bird's wing or a bunch of feathers, and in the other, adorned with the most curious and elaborate workmanship.

Scripture, by repeated references to the use of the fan as an instrument for winnowing corn, proves that the Hebrews were intimate with it; while the portraitures on the walls of the Egyptian Saloon of the British Museum, descriptive of the domestic life of this ancient people, as well as the inscriptions on some of the sepulchral tablets, bear witness to its common use amongst them. It was from this nation that the Greeks and Romans borrowed the fan; and from Italy, centuries afterwards, Catherine de Medicis introduced it in its present form at the court of France.

Previous to this period it resembled the *flabellum* of the ancients, or the fans at present in use amongst the Chinese ladies, being composed either of feathers mounted on a handle, or of painted silk or tiffany, like handscreens in the present day.

With us the *fan* is said to have made its appearance in the time of Henry VIII., whose daughter, Elizabeth, seldom or ever appeared without one; and the fine gentlemen of her days, like the *macaronis* in the south of Italy, in Selden's time, were remarkably fond of appearing with them; Shakspere, in "Love's Labour Lost," alludes to this prevailing foppery, when he makes Costard exclaim of the courtier Boyet:

"——O a most dainty man!
To see him walk before a lady, and to bear a *fan*."