

## Little Betty's Kitten Tells Her Story<sup>1</sup>

By Frances Hodgson Burnett

In Two Parts—II.

Betty used to show me the flowers in the garden, and tell me which ones were going to bloom, and what color they would be. We were very much interested in all the flowers, but we cared most about the white rose-bush. It was so big, and we were so little, that we could sit under it together; and we were always trying to count the little, hard, green buds, though there were so many that we never counted half of them. Betty could only count up to ten, and all we could do was to keep counting ten over and over.

"These little buds will grow so big, soon," she used to say, "that they will burst, and then there will be roses, and more roses, and we will make a little house under here and have a tea-party."

We were always going to look at that rose-bush, and sometimes when we were playing and jumping Betty would think she saw a bud beginning to come out, and we would both run.

I don't know how many days we were so happy together—playing ball, and jumping in the grass, and watching the white rose-bush to see how the buds were growing. Perhaps it was a long time, but I was only a kitten, and I was too frisky to know about time. But I grew faster than the rosebuds did. Betty said so. But, oh, how happy we were! If it could only have lasted, perhaps I might never have grown sober and sat by the fire thinking so much.

One afternoon we had the most beautiful play we had ever had. We ran after the ball; we swung together; Betty knelt down on the grass and shook her curly hair so that I could catch at it with my paws; we had a tea-party on the box, and when it was over we went to the rose-bush and found a bud beginning to be a rose. It was a splendid afternoon!

After we had found the bud beginning to be a rose we sat down together under the rose-bush. Betty sat on the thick green grass, and I lay comfortably on her soft lap and purred.

"We have jumped so much that I am a little tired, and I feel hot," she said. "Are you tired, kitty? Isn't it nice under the rose-bush? and won't it be a beautiful place for a tea party when all the white roses are out? Perhaps there will be some out to-morrow. We'll come in the morning and see."

Perhaps she was more tired than she knew. I don't think she meant to go to sleep, but presently her head began to droop, and her eyes to close, and in a little while she sank down softly and was quite gone.

I left her lap and crept up close to the breast of her little white frock, and curled up in her arm, and lay and purred, and looked at her while she slept. I did so like to look at her. She was so pretty and pink and plump, and she had such a lot of soft curls. They were crushed under her warm cheek and scattered on the grass. I played with them a little while she lay there, but I did it very quietly, so that I would not disturb her.

She was lying under the white rose-bush, still asleep, and I was curled up against her breast watching her, when her mamma came out with her papa, and they found us.

"Oh, how pretty!" the mamma said. "What a lovely little picture! Betty and her kitten asleep under the white rose-bush, and just one rose watching over them! I wonder if Betty saw it before she dropped off! She has been looking at the buds every day to see if they were beginning to be roses."

"She looks like a rose herself," said her papa, "but it is a pink rose. How rosy she is!"

He picked her up in his arms and carried her into the house. She did not waken, and as I was not allowed to sleep with her, I could not follow; so I stayed behind under the rose-bush myself a little longer before I went to bed. When I looked at the buds, I saw that there were several with streaks of white showing through the green,

and there were three that I was sure would be roses in the morning; and I knew how happy Betty would be, and how she would laugh and dance when she saw them.

I often hear people saying to each other that they should like to understand the strange way I have of suddenly saying "Meeiaou! Meeiaou!" as if I was crying. It seems strange to me that they don't know what it means. I always find myself saying it when I remember that lovely afternoon when we played so happily, and Betty fell asleep under the rose-bush, and I thought how pleased she would be when she came out in the morning.

I can't help it. Everything was so different from what I had thought it would be. Betty never came out in the morning. Oh dear! oh dear! she never came out again!

I got up early enough myself, and it was a beautiful, beautiful morning. There was dew on the grass and on the flowers, and the sun made it sparkle so that it was lovely to look at. I did so want Betty to see it! I ran to the white rose-bush, and, sure enough, there were four or five roses—such white roses, and with such sparkling drops of dew on them!

I ran back to the house, and called to Betty, as I always did. I wanted her to come.

But she did not come! She was not even at breakfast, eating her bread and milk. I looked for her everywhere except in her bedroom. Her bedroom door was closed, and I could not get in.

And though I called and called, nobody seemed to take any notice of me. Somehow something seemed to be the matter. The house was even quieter than usual, but I felt as if every one was busy and in trouble. I kept asking and asking where Betty was, but nobody would answer me. Once I went to her closed bedroom door and called her there, and told her about the white roses, and asked her why she did not come out. But before I had really finished telling her, my feelings were quite hurt by her papa. He came and spoke to me in a way that was not kind.

"Go away, kitty," he said. "Don't make such a noise; you will disturb Betty."

I went away waving my tail. I went out into the garden and sat under the rose-bush. As if I could disturb Betty! As if Betty did not always want me! She wanted me to sleep with her in her little bed, but her mamma would not let me.

But—ah! how could I believe it?—she did not come out the next day, or the next, or even the next. It seemed as if I should go wild. People can ask questions, but a little cat is nothing to anybody, unless to some one like Betty. She always understood my questions and answered them.

In the house they would not answer me. They were always busy and troubled. It did not seem like the same house. Nothing seemed the same. The garden was a different place. In the play-house the Sunday Doll and the Every-day Doll sat and stared at the tea-things we had used that happy afternoon at the party. The Sunday Doll sat bolt upright and looked prouder than ever, as if she felt she was being neglected; but the Every-day Doll lopped over, as if she had grieved her strength away because Betty did not come.

I had made up my mind at the first tea-party that I would never speak to the Sunday Doll, but one day I was so lonely and helpless that I could not help it.

"Oh dear!" I meeioued, "oh dear, do you know anything about Betty? Do you—do you?"

And that heartless thing only sat up and stared at me, and never answered, though the tears were streaming down my nose.

What could a poor little cat do? I looked and looked everywhere, but I could not find her. I went round the house and round the house, and called in every room. But they only drove me out, and said I made too much noise, and never understood a word I said.

And the white rose-bush—it seemed as if it would break my heart. "There will be more roses—and more roses," Betty had said, and every morning it was coming true. I used to go and sit under it, and I had to count ten over and over, there were so many. It was such a great rose-

<sup>1</sup> Copyright by Frances Hodgson Burnett, 1894.

bush that it looked at last like a cloud of snow-white bloom—and Betty had never seen it.

"Ah, Betty, Betty!" I used to cry when I had counted so many tens that I was tired. "Oh, do come and see how beautiful it is, and let us have our tea-party! Oh, White Rose-Bush, where is she?" They drove me out of the house so many times that I had no courage, but one morning the white rose-bush was so splendid that I made one desperate effort. I went to the bedroom door, and rubbed against it and called with all my strength.

"Betty, if you are there—Betty, if you love me at all, oh, speak to me and tell me what I have done! The white rose-bush has tens and tens and tens of flowers upon it. It is like snow. Don't you care about it? Oh, do come out and see! Betty, Betty, I am so lonely for you, and I love you so!"

And the door actually opened, and her mamma stood there looking at me, with great tears rolling down her cheeks. She bent down and took me in her arms and stroked me.

"Perhaps she will know it," she said, in a low, strange voice to some one in the room. She turned and carried me into the bedroom, and I saw that it was Betty's papa she had spoken to.

The next instant I sprang out of her arms on to the bed. Betty was there—my Betty!

It seemed as if I felt myself lose my senses. My Betty! I kissed her and kissed her and kissed her! I rubbed her little hands, her cheeks, her curls; I kissed her and purred and cried.

"Betty," said her mamma, "Betty darling, don't you know your own little kitty?"

Why did not she? Why did she not? Her cheeks were hot and red, her curls were spread out over the pillow, her pansy eyes did not seem to see me, and her little head moved drearily to and fro.

Her mamma took me in her arms again, and, as she carried me out of the room, her tears fell on me.

"She does not know you, kitty," she said; "poor kitty, you will have to go away."

I cannot understand it. I sit by the fire and think and think, but I cannot understand. She went away after that, and I never saw her again.

I have never felt like a kitten since that time.

I went and sat under the white rose-bush all day, and slept there all night.

The next day there were more roses than ever, and I made up my mind that I would try to be patient and stay there and watch them until Betty came to see. But two or three days after, in the fresh part of the morning, when everything was loveliest, her mamma came out, walking slowly straight towards the bush. She stood still a few moments and looked at it, and her tears fell so fast that they were like dew on the white roses as she bent over. She began to gather the prettiest buds and blossoms one by one. Her tears were falling all the time, so that I wondered how she could see what she was doing; but she gathered until her arms and her dress were full—she gathered every one! And when the bush was stripped of all but its green leaves, I gave a little heartbroken cry—because they were Betty's roses, and she had so loved them when they were only hard little buds—and she looked down and saw me, and, oh! her tears fell then—not like dew, but like rain.

"Betty," she said—"kitty, Betty has gone—where—where there are roses—always."

And she went slowly back to the house, with all my Betty's white roses heaped up in her arms. She never told me where my Betty had gone—no one did. And no more roses came out on the bush. I sat under it and watched, because I hoped it would bloom again.

I sat there for hours and hours, and at last, while I was waiting, I saw something strange. People had been going in and out of the house all morning. They kept coming and bringing flowers, and when they went away most of them had tears in their eyes. And in the afternoon there were more than there had been in the morning. I had

got so tired that I forgot and fell asleep. I don't know how long I slept, but I was awakened by hearing many footsteps going slowly down the garden walk towards the gate.

They all seemed to be people who were going away. And first there walked before them two men who were carrying a beautiful white and silver box of some kind on their shoulders. They moved very slowly, and their heads were bent as they walked. But the white and silver box was beautiful. It shone in the sun, and, oh, how my heart beat!—all my Betty's snow-white roses were heaped upon and wreathed around it. And I sat under the stripped rose-bush breaking my heart. She had gone away, my little Betty, and I did not know where; and all I could think was that this was the very last I should ever see of her, because I thought there must be something which had belonged to her in the white and silver box under the roses—and because she was gone they were carrying that away, too.

"Oh, my Betty, my Betty! and I am only a little cat who sits by the fire and thinks, while nobody seems to care or understand how lonely and puzzled I am, and how I long for some kind person to explain. And I could not bear it, but that we loved each other so much that it comforts me to think of it. And I loved her so much that when I say to myself, over and over again, what her mamma said to me, it almost makes me happy again—almost, not quite, because I'm so lonely. But if it is true, even a little cat who loved her would be happy for her sake.

"Betty has gone—where there are always roses. Betty has gone—where there are always roses."



## The Bicycle in the Army

The bicycle in this country has been a medium of pleasure until recently, when its value has been tested in carrying the United States mail to places remote from the railroad stations, while in some cities it has been employed successfully for business purposes. In Europe it is a part of the equipment of the armies in Holland; every proficient rider over twenty-one who enters the army is ranked as a corporal, and paid fifty guildens a year for the use of his machine. He receives instruction from appointed officers on military affairs. In return the candidates pledge themselves to service whenever called upon for a period of five years, and to attend military maneuvers at least three weeks of each year. In Portugal the bicycle is popular with the military authorities. A prize is given in Spain to the best riders. The bicycle corps is used for carrying dispatches, etc. Spain trains her soldiers in bicycle-riding. In Bulgaria to every six divisions one non-commissioned officer and eight men are assigned as the bicycle corps. In Denmark bicycling is taught to a given number of recruits. In France two men in every regiment are assigned to bicycle work. These men wear the infantry uniform, and are armed with revolvers. They are taught to survey roads and bridges, and to read military maps, and become an important part of the service.

Major-General Nelson A. Miles, of the United States Army, says: "In my opinion the bicycle will be of great value in military operations, not only for the use of couriers in carrying dispatches, but also for moving bodies of soldiers, with their arms, swiftly from one point to another. There is no doubt in my mind that during the next great war the bicycle will become a most important machine for military purposes."

The boy who learns to ride well may be training for public service. No machine runs well unless it is well cared for. The New York "Times" says:

The proper care of a bicycle at the seashore is a very simple matter. Many riders imagine that, on account of the heavy, damp atmospheric conditions, a machine is bound to rust, in spite of frequent rubbings. Oil on a soft cloth or waste is very good, but the best thing is vaseline. This used on all parts of a cycle after a run will keep it bright and free from rust. The same treatment applies to the interior or drier sections, where the metal is less liable to climatic influences.



## The Life of Christ

### XV.—Elements of His Popularity<sup>1</sup>

By Lyman Abbott

Jesus Christ was one of the most popular preachers in history. Without advantages which often confer a factitious popularity upon the preacher, without a great cathedral, fine music, a fashionable following; without any of the other, and what we may call accidental, advantages which often legitimately add to the popularity of great preachers; without the use of rhetorical, elocutionary, or dramatic arts, and certainly without any of those vices which sometimes make a public speaker dishonorably popular; without pandering to the people's pride and prejudice—Jesus Christ attracted great throngs wherever he went. Once the people tried to crown him king; more than once he deliberately put this popularity away from him, by declaring to the crowds that gathered to listen to him that to listen was nothing without obedience, and that to obey was impossible without self-sacrifice. The chapter which has been selected for our study to-day both gives evidence of his popularity and gives some illustrations of it.

In Jesus Christ's teaching, religion and philanthropy—that is, reverence for God and practical love of and service for man—were inseparably joined together. This has by no means been always the case in the history of the world. Its temples have not always been fountains of charity and kindness. It is true that the laws of Moses abounded with philanthropic precepts, but it is also true that the Pharisaic Church had forgotten this aspect of the Mosaic law. The universal treatment of disease illustrates the inhumanity of man in Palestine in the first century. Disease was universally regarded as a curse of God, and universally alienated the sufferer from human sympathy. The blind man was supposed to be suffering for his own or his parents' sin; the leper was an outcast, and the pious rabbi declared that he was to be stoned if he drew near to men; the lunatic was left to wander friendless and alone among the tombs. At such a time as this Christ came to preach and practice a philanthropic religion. He told the fishermen how to cast their nets that they might get a great catch of fish; he fed the hungry people, too famished and faint to return to their homes after a day's preaching; he interrupted the synagogue service to heal the paralyzed; he reached forth his hand to touch the unclean leper and make him whole; he stopped the funeral upon the street to restore the only son to his mother, and she a widow.

Nor was this sympathy confined to those who were physically suffering. The Pharisees belonged to a class and spoke to a class. Jesus Christ came from the common people and spoke to the common people. Long before Burns he declared that "A man's a man for a' that." He declared that the rich man who cared not for the suffering poor was worse than the beggar that lay at his door; that the successful man who accumulated wealth for his own self-indulgent pleasure was a fool; that the publican seeking to be delivered from sin was more acceptable than the Pharisee who boasted of his righteousness; that to do righteously in daily life was better than to be punctilious in temple sacrifices. He practiced what he preached, gathered his disciples from the common people, lived among them, shared their life.

The unphilanthropic and class religion of the Pharisees was ascetic. To the one fast of the Mosaic law they had added a number of others. The devout Pharisee fasted on the fourth day of the month, because on that day Nebuchadnezzar had captured Jerusalem; on the fifth day of the month, because on that day the Temple had been burned; on the seventh day of the month, because on that day the Jewish Governor of Jerusalem had been murdered; on the tenth day of the month, because on that day Jerusalem had been besieged by the Chaldeans; on the fifth day of each week, because on that day Moses went up to the

Mount for the Law; and on the second day of each week, because on that day Moses brought the Law down from the Mount. Thus religion sat in sackcloth and ashes. Men were taught that to be religious was to be sad of visage and thin of flesh. Christ swept all this away.

If religion in the first century was largely ascetic, it was still more rigorous and burdensome—a religion of petty rules and regulations. Religion as taught by the Pharisees seemed to be perpetually saying to mankind, "Thou shalt not." A striking illustration of this restrictive character is afforded by the laws respecting cleanness and uncleanness. A great variety of objects were declared unclean; so many that there was always danger that one should pollute himself in the daily contacts of life. Out of this grew an elaborate ritual of washing, prescribed to the last detail. Not less restrictive and burdensome were the regulations respecting devotion. The prayers must be repeated in a certain manner, and with certain gestures and postures, or all was in vain. This whole notion of religion as a restriction Christ resolutely and vigorously condemned. He called his disciples unto freedom, and he exercised the freedom himself to which he summoned them.

Couple with this his disregard of traditional theology, his simplification of the religious life, his comprehension of it all in the one word Love, his inspiration of hope in hearts dulled by despair, his teaching that God is the Father of the whole human race, and that every child may find help and hope from him. His sympathy for men was so broad and deep that neither class nor ceremony, nor the lack of either, nor even personal sinfulness, could debar the soul from that sympathy. In these things we get a suggestion of some of the elements in the character and teaching of this new prophet, whose ministry filled the people with enthusiasm and the Pharisees with amazement and indignation.

The five incidents in the Scripture passage suggested for our study for to-day illustrate the breadth of this sympathy of Christ. It overleaped all barriers of race. When the Jews came to intercede with Jesus for a Roman centurion, whose servant, dear to him, was sick, they pleaded for this pagan, saying, "He is worthy because he loveth our nation, and has built us a synagogue." But Christ, perceiving in the centurion's message the evidence at once of his humility and his faith, declared that, Roman though he was, he was the superior of the Israelites who had so patronizingly commended him. In Paris, when the funeral passes down the street, the bystanders stop and doff their hats until at least the hearse has gone by. In Palestine they fall into the train and swell the procession to the grave. Strange was the meeting between the two bands outside the city of Nain: the one, a band of mourners following the bier to its grave, swelled by "much people" who had joined the procession; the other, the incoming band of Christ and his disciples, full of the joy of the anticipated kingdom which he had come to proclaim. But the forces of that kingdom were not so great but that he could stop in the highway, approach the bier, speak to the dead who lay upon it, and turn the funeral procession into one as joyous as that which it had met. Some attempt had apparently been made to create a rivalry between the disciples of John and of Jesus. The methods of the two prophets were, as I have already pointed out, radically different; and John, shut up in the Castle of Machærus and beginning to despair, sent his disciples to learn whether this Jesus whom he had baptized was really the Messiah or not. The unstinted eulogy which Christ pronounced in the ears of all the people upon John the Baptizer afforded to them a new illustration of the sympathy of this prophet, who could see the heart of a great truth behind unwise methods of expression and imperfect plans of reform. To the generous spirit which perceives the good, no matter how roughly it may be clothed, the heart of the common people always responds. Most striking of all these illustrations is that afforded by the incident of the anointing by the woman "which was a sinner." Notwithstanding eighteen centuries of Christian teaching, there are few of Christ's disciples who have any word of sympathy or hope for a fallen woman. Who has not longed to know what

<sup>1</sup> Bible Study Union Lesson No. 16. International Sunday-School Lesson, Fourth Quarter, No. 9. (December 2.) Luke vii., 1-58-viii., 1-3.