

WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT.



SIDNEY'S PRESS, NEW-HAVEN.

1824.

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THE
RENOWNED HISTORY
OF
RICHARD WHITTINGTON,
AND HIS
C A T.

Behold a Cat whose merit wants a name :
'Twas she that rais'd poor Whittington to fame.
E'en thus shall Providence provide for all,
Who duly honour him, and on him call.

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1824.

Lydia Bangs

Stamford

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THE
HISTORY
OF
RICHARD WHITTINGTON.

DICK WHITTINGTON, was so small a boy, when his parents died, that he never knew them, nor the place where he was born. He wandered about as ragged as a colt, till he met with a waggoner going to London, who gave him leave to walk all the way by the side of his waggon. This much obliged little Whittington, as he was desirous to see London, for he had heard that the streets were paved with gold, and he was willing to get a bushel of it. But the poor boy was disappointed when he saw

them covered with dirt instead of gold, and found himself in a strange place without friends, without food, and without money.

Though the waggoner was so charitable as to let him walk by the side of the waggon for nothing, yet he took care not to know him when he came to town. In a little time the poor boy was almost starved to death for want of food. In this distress he asked charity of several people, and one of them bid him go work in the fields. "That I will," said Whittington, "with all my heart; I will work for you, if you will permit me." The man immediately sent him to make hay; but, when the season was over, he was again in great distress.

In this condition, and fainting for want of food, he laid himself down at the door of one Mr. Fitzwarren, a merchant, where the cook saw him, and being very ill-natured, ordered him to go about his business,



or she would make him. At this time Mr. Fitzwarren came from the exchange, and began also to scold the poor boy, bidding him to go to work.

Whittington answered he should be glad to work ; but he was unable at present, for he had eat nothing for three days and knew

nobody. He then endeavoured to get up, but was so very weak that he fell down again. This excited the merchant's pity, who ordered the servants to take him in, give him some food, and let him help the cook to do any drudgery she had to set him about. People are too apt to reproach those who beg with being idle, but strive not to put them in a way of getting business, or consider whether they are able to do it.

He would have lived happily in this worthy family, had he not been knocked about by the cross cook, who kept him roasting or basting, and when the spit was still, she employed her hands upon poor Whittington, till Miss Alice, his master's daughter, was informed of it, who made the servants use him kindly.

Besides the crossness of the cook, Whittington had another difficulty to get over. He had a flock bed placed for him in the



garret, where there was such a number of rats and mice that they often ran over the poor boy's nose, and disturbed him in his sleep. After some time, however, a gentleman, who came to his master's house, gave Whittington a penny for brushing his shoes. This he determined to lay out to the best

advantage ; and the next day, seeing a woman in the street with a cat under her arm, he ran up to her, desiring to know the price of it. The woman asked sixpence for it, as the cat was a good mouser ; but on Whittington's telling her he had but a penny in the world, and that he wanted a cat sadly, she let him have it, and a fine cat she was.

This cat Whittington concealed in the garret, and here she soon killed or frightened away the rats and mice, so that he could sleep soundly.

Soon after this, the merchant, who had a ship ready to sail, called for all his servants, as his custom was, in order that each of them might venture something to try their luck ; and whatever they sent was to pay neither freight nor custom : for he justly thought that God would bless him the more for letting the poor partake of his good fortune.

All the servants appeared except poor Whittington, who, having neither money nor goods, could not think of sending any thing to try his luck ; but his good friend, Miss Alice, thinking his poverty kept him away, ordered him to be called.

She then offered to give something for him ; but the merchant told his daughter that would not do, for it must be something of his own. Upon which poor Whittington said, he had nothing but a cat, which he had bought for a penny that was given him. "Fetch thy cat, boy," said the merchant, "and send her." Whittington, brought poor puss, and delivered her to the captain with tears in his eyes, for he said he should now be disturbed by the rats and mice as before. All the company laughed at the oddity of the adventure ; and Miss Alice, who pitied the poor boy, gave him something to buy him another cat.



The ship, with the cat on board, was long beating about at sea, and at last, by contrary winds, driven on a part of the coast of Barbary, which was inhabited by Moors, unknown to the English. These people received our countrymen with civility; and therefore the captain, in order to trade with them, showed them patterns of

the goods he had on board, and sent some of them to the king of the country, who was so well pleased, that he sent for the captain and the factor to his palace. Here they were placed, according to the custom of the country, on rich carpets flowered with gold and silver; and the king and queen being seated at the upper end of the room, dinner was brought in on massy plates of gold and silver, and placed on tables of marble with ivory and silver knives. The splendid dinner consisted of many dishes; but no sooner was it put on the table, when an amazing number of rats and mice came from all quarters, and devoured all the meat in an instant. The factor, in surprise, turned round to the nobles, and asked if these vermin were not offensive? "Yes," said they, "very offensive; and the king would give half his treasure to be free of them; for they not only

destroy his dinner, as you see, but they assault him in his chamber, and even in his bed, so that he is obliged to be watched while he is sleeping, for fear of them."

The factor jumped for joy : he remembered poor Whittington's cat, and told the king he had a creature, on board his ship, that would despatch all these vermin immediately. The king was overjoyed at the news. "Bring this creature to me," said he, "and if she will perform what you say, I will load your ship with jewels in exchange for her." The factor took this opportunity to set forth the merits of Mrs. Puss, and said, that it would be inconvenient for him to part with her ; but that, to oblige his majesty, he would fetch her. "Run, run," said the queen, "for I am impatient to see the dear creature." Away flew the factor, while another dinner was providing, and returned with the cat, just



as the rats and mice were devouring that also. He immediately put down puss, who killed a great part of them, and the rest ran away.

The king having seen the wonderful exploits of Mrs. Puss, and being informed that she was with young, and would furnish



the whole country, bargained with the captain and factor for the whole ship's cargo, and then gave them ten times as much for the cat as all the rest amounted to. He invited them to hunt the lion, tiger, and the elephant with him and the nobility, and loaded them with caresses.

The Lion presents one of the most dig-

nified and majestic forms of the animal creation, and may justly be called the king of beasts. His roar is so tremendous, that when reverberated by woods or mountains, bears some resemblance to thunder. His face is broad, and surrounded with a shaggy mane, but the hair on the other parts of his body, is short; his tongue is so rough that he could take the skin off a person's hand by licking it. His colour is generally a tawny yellow. He stands from four to four feet and a half high, and is eight or nine feet long, forming a perfect model of strength, combined with agility.

The Tyger has such a thirst after blood, that even when satiated with food, he is not satisfied with slaughter; his size is generally larger than the panther or the leopard, though more slender in proportion to his height and length. The tyger is ornamented in a most beautiful manner, having a



yellow ground and black bars going across his back, down his sides ; on the belly, and inside of his legs, it becomes paler, and the skin altogether so fine and bright as to render it very valuable, and it is sold at high prices.

After tarrying a few days while their

ship was refitting, and seeing the various curiosities of the country, they took an affectionate leave of their majesties, and other great personages at court, who loaded their ship with ivory and gold dust, and sailed with a fair wind for England, whither we must now attend them.

The morn, emerging from the mountain's height,
Had scarcely ting'd the skies with rosy light,

when Mr. Fitzwarren stole from the bed of his beloved wife, to count over the cash, and settle the business of the day. He had but just entered the counting-house, and seated himself at the desk, when somebody came and tapped at the door. "Who's there?" said Mr. Fitzwarren. "A friend," answered the other. "What friend can come at this unseasonable time?" "A real friend is never unseasonable," answered the other; "I came to bring you good

news of the ship Unicorn." The merchant instantly got up, opened the door, and who should be seen waiting but the captain and factor, with a cabinet of jewels, and a bill of lading; on which the merchant lifted up his eyes, and thanked heaven for sending him such a prosperous voyage. They then told him of the adventures of the cat, and showed him the cabinet of jewels which they had brought for Mr. Whittington. Upon which he cried out with great earnestness,

Go call him, and tell him of his fame,
And call him Mr. Whittington by name.

The merchant, taking him by the hand, said, "Indeed, Mr. Whittington, I am in earnest with you, and sent for you to congratulate you on your great success. Your cat has produced you more money than I am worth in the world, and may you long enjoy it." Being at length shown



the treasure, and convinced by them that all of it belonged to him, he fell on his knees, and thanked the Almighty for his providential care of such a miserable creature. He then gratified the captain, factor, and ship's crew, for the care they had taken of his cargo.

When Mr. Whittington's face was wash-

ed, his hair curled, his hat cocked, and he was dressed in a rich suit of clothes, he turned out a very genteel young man indeed, and in a little time dropped that sheepish behaviour, which was principally occasioned by a depression of spirits, and soon became a sprightly and good companion, insomuch that Miss Alice, who had formerly seen him with an eye of compassion, now beheld him differently.

When the father perceived they had this good liking for each other, he proposed a match between them. Both parties cheerfully consented, and the lord mayor, the court of aldermen, the company of stationers, and a number of eminent merchants attended the ceremony, and were elegantly treated at an entertainment made for that purpose.

History tells us that they lived happily, and had several children ; that he was she-



riff of London in 1340, and lord mayor; that in the latter part of his mayoralty he entertained King Henry the Fifth and his Queen, after the conquest of France.— Upon this occasion, the king, in consideration of Whittington's merit, said, "Never had prince such a subject." This being told Whittington at table, he replied, "Never had subject such a king."

