

said that she thought, from what her mother had told her, that she should be very fond of children, and that if I had an opportunity she would be very glad if I could gain her admittance to the house, if it were only to the kitchen. She was so pretty and intelligent-looking that I willingly agreed to do this, and was a little disappointed that the others preferred to be out-of-door cats; but truth obliges me to confess that I was terribly deceived in that plausible kitten. She followed me meekly into the kitchen that evening, as if she were saying, "I hope I don't intrude," and before a week was over she had somehow contrived to get the range of the whole house. Every one seemed to like her. She would purr at the least touch, and I never knew her to scratch; but there is no use in disguising it: she was an out-and-out thief, and I regretted very much that, knowing as I did what her bringing-up had been, I had not been more cautious, and kept her at a greater distance until I saw how she was going to turn out. I could not help seeing that she had a very bad influence over Phil: whenever he played with her he was sure to get into mischief. To be sure, he was often in mischief when she was nowhere about, but I never knew her to be about without his doing something which he ought not to have done. Only a few weeks after she came she happened to be in the dining-room when Phil was left at the table a few minutes after the rest had finished their dinner. He was sitting in his high chair, and I wondered at their leaving him, even for a minute, with the bread-knife and the sugar-bowl both within his reach; but