

TWO CLEVER DOGS.



HE sagacity of dogs is so generally admitted, that fresh proofs of canine cleverness are scarcely needed; however, the following curious story of two dogs at Cologne is full of interest, and really deserves to be put on record.

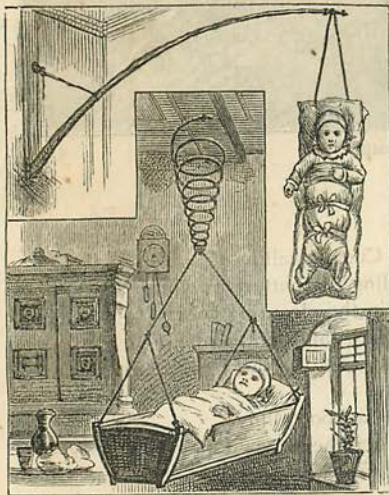
It seems that the owner of some rabbits found that night after night, for six nights in succession, one of his pets was stolen from the house which he had contrived for them out of an old wooden case. At the top of it was a small opening, about the width of two hands, which was closed at night by a board on which some large stones were placed. Notwithstanding these precautions, a rabbit was missing each morning; but since it was one only, and there were no signs of injury to the rest, it was thought that no weasel or animal of like nature could have effected the theft, but that human hands

must have been at work. One night, therefore, the owner nailed down the loose board at one end, covering it also with grass and stones, and then concealed himself near at hand to watch for the thief. He had not long to wait, for he soon heard a noise at the rabbit-house, and was surprised to see two dogs upon it. One was a very large strong dog, well known in the neighbourhood—half St. Bernard, half collie—and the other was a small terrier. The big dog at once scratched away the stones and grass, and dragged away the board, when the terrier darted through the hole into the hutch, and soon jumped out again, carrying a rabbit, which the two companions forthwith proceeded to devour.

The large dog was the terror of all the other dogs in the place, but he had evidently come to an understanding with the terrier, by means of which they helped one another to a supper.

CHILDREN OF ALL NATIONS: THEIR HOMES, THEIR SCHOOLROOMS, THEIR PLAYGROUNDS.

V.—SWEDEN AND NORWAY.



SWEDISH CRADLES

SWEDEN and Norway are such near neighbours that the manners and customs of their inhabitants are very similar. They are separated by the Dovre Field or the Norrska Fiellen Mountains, and called Scandinavia. It must, how-

ever be borne in mind that the young Norwegians are more accustomed to the sea than the Swedes, and swim about like fish in their Fiords, or bays.

It will be interesting to English children to learn what they would be called in Sweden. It would be *barn*, which is not unlike the Scottish *bairn*. A

boy is *pojke*, pronounced *pojk*. A little boy is *gosse*. A girl, *flicka*; a maiden, *mo*. Thus we can imagine Swedish parents speaking to their children. Their christian names are numerous, as they have one for every day in the year, and many of them are very high-sounding. The peasants like grand names for their little ones, such as Adolph, Adricin, Gotfried, Gustavus, for boys; and Josephina, Thora, Ingeborg, for girls; and if they have no name prepared, they seek one in the almanack for the particular day of baby's birth. It is baptised the next Sunday, and taken to church by the godmother, who provides the christening-garments, which are often trimmed with coloured bows; whilst the infant has beads round its neck, and wears a cap with very little border. The clergyman holds it well over the font, and pours water over the back of the head three times, then wipes with a towel. As the baby is swathed in six-inch-wide bandages, so that it cannot move its legs, and sometimes not even its arms, it is obliged to lie very passive during this ceremonial.

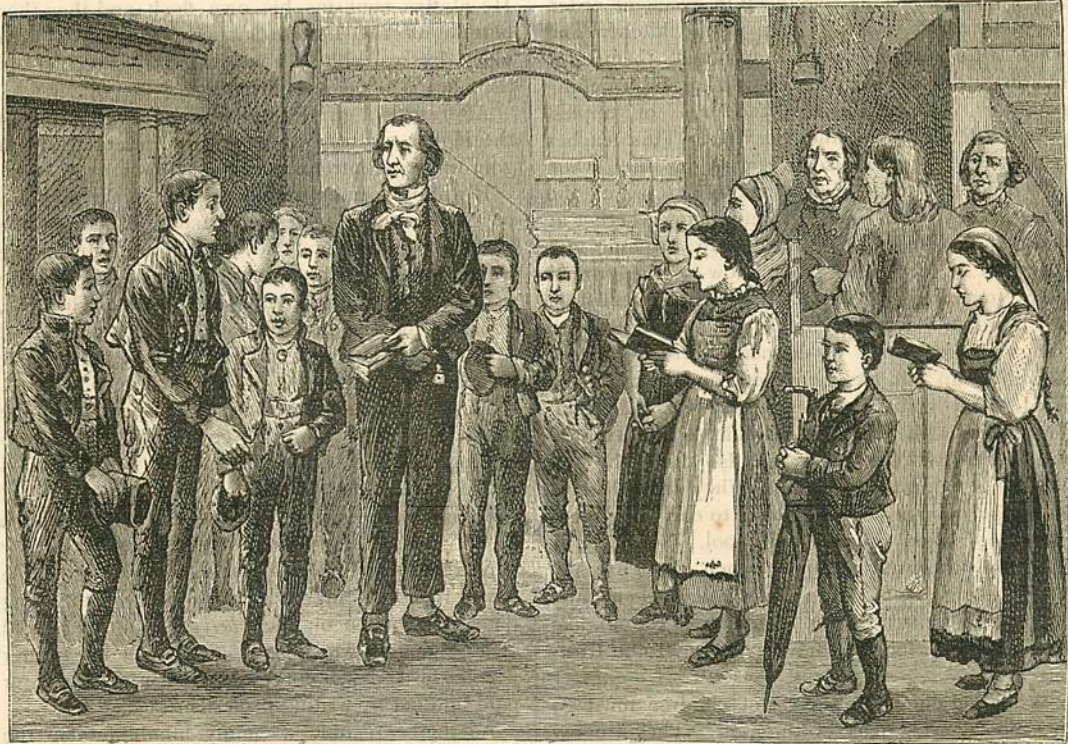
The peasants have their reasons for this swathing, the first of which is that they think it makes the limbs grow straight; the second that it turns baby into a compact bundle to carry. When swathed

thus, infants have been said to resemble the tail of a lobster, or even its whole body. In the north they are often hung from a long, springy pole stuck in the wall, to be out of the way; and, being by nature quiet, they are supposed not to mind it. Their cradles, which are very primitive, are also frequently suspended by a spiral spring from the roof, which must be more comfortable than the pole.

Both in Swedish and Norwegian Lapland people

this is all enveloped in pink gauze to keep the flies off.

As soon as a peasant boy can walk, he is put into trousers, buttoned outside his jacket; and these are so baggy behind that it is often amusing to see him. This bagginess is frequently due to the fact that the trousers originally belonged to his father, but were cut off at the legs, and simply drawn round the boy's waist, without reducing their size. Add to this, that the feet are shod



A NORWEGIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL. (See p. 280.)

take these "swaddlings" to church. But instead of carrying them into church they make a hole in the snow outside in the churchyard, and bury them in it, leaving a small aperture for breathing purposes. The babies are kept splendidly warm, while their friends within the sacred building have their beards frozen to their fur coats by the freezing of their own breaths.

The better-off classes do not manage their infants in this way. They have a wicker-work carriage with a hood, which serves as a perambulator by day and a bassinette by night. It is so arranged that the child either lies on a pillow edged with lace or frilling, or between dainty sheets turned over a pretty coverlet. In the summer

either with little jack-boots or wooden shoes, and we have a strange picture. Their stockings either have leather heels or no heels at all, so that the mother is spared the trouble of mending them. Neither has she much labour with their heads, the hair of which is cropped as close as a convict's. The girls, also, wear wooden shoes; but they have gingham kerchiefs or caps on their heads, frocks down to their heels, and quaint pinafores.

In spite of their head-gear, they are much celebrated for the beauty of their hair, which they wear plaited in a long tail down their backs. They sometimes cut it off and sell it, and then let it grow again.

The young gentlemen and ladies dress much as the English do, and are extremely neat and clean.

In the country the children have few toys. A little girl of seven had never seen a doll until one was given to her by another little girl who was more fortunate, and she went into ecstasies over it. Her astonishment at a doll's house may be imagined. While the poor children make their little feasts out of doors in the summer, by arranging broken crockery surrounded by leaves, and putting their cakes upon it, or squeezing red currants and cranberries through muslin to make wine, those in better circumstances have always a doll's house. This they keep in excellent order. There is a real cooking-range in the kitchen, and when little visitors come, they amuse themselves by preparing coffee, boiling potatoes, making pancakes, or concocting puddings of apples, grated bread, sugar, and the like. This teaches them to be little housewives; as in time, when grown up, they will be expected to practise all the lessons they have learned when young, whether at home or at school. The winters are very long and severe in Sweden, with often snow on the ground from November till April; so little Swedes must be much indoors, except when they sledge on wooden things called *kälke*, pronounced *chelka*. These they drag up hill, sit upon them, and then have a good slide over the frozen snow to the bottom. This game is like what the Canadians call "tobogganing." But the *kälke* is also used by the children as a draught-machine. They draw all sorts of things upon it, and employ it to carry for them their books and dinners to school. You may be sure they are well wrapped when they use the *kälke*, being muffled up in warm jackets and hoods, and knitted gloves with only a thumb, like babies' gloves, for they have no fancy to be frost-bitten.

When old enough, all peasant children must go to school during part of the year. They are excused while the harvest and potato-digging are in progress, because they help their parents at those times.

In connection with the day-schools, there is one day set apart to teach the girls to sew, knit, spin, and weave, and the boys to make baskets, tubs, wooden spoons, &c., all which they can follow up in the long winter evenings, and which will be of use to them in after life. Also in summer the boys have small gardens, where they are taught to sow seeds, and have the different grain and grasses explained to them. They are very industrious and willing to learn.

Sunday-schools are not attached to the country churches in Sweden, as a rule; but here and there good ladies assemble the children at their houses, or elsewhere, on the Sabbath, to learn the scriptures

and sing hymns. Such is their zeal that they are known to trudge five or six miles for an hour's teaching, and their behaviour is such as would be seen in few of our Sunday-schools. They do not care much for music, perhaps because their church singing is in the minor key and dirge-like; but they seem to like some of our English hymns which have been translated and introduced into the churches.

They are confirmed at fifteen, and before the ceremony takes place, they go for a long time, once or twice a week, to be prepared by their clergyman. He always confirms his own flock, and they then partake of the Lord's Supper. The girls wear black dresses, white aprons, and white kerchiefs on their heads at their confirmation.

Afterwards a girl may wear long dresses, and in the higher classes she is usually presented with a gold ring, and introduced into society.

It will be seen by the illustration on the previous page that the Norwegian pastor catechises the children in church. They stand round him, or he walks in and out amongst them, having a good eye upon such as are inattentive or careless. They are, however, too anxious to learn to be disregarding of instruction. Their parents remain to listen to their answers, so they have a twofold reason to be good.

After confirmation working boys become eligible for service. The young Swedes begin life by obtaining a character from their clergyman, which is called a *prest betyg*, as well as one from their school master or mistress, known as a *betyg*. By these *betygs* a child can be traced from birth to death, as they carry them from place to place. The young people must, therefore, take care not to have anything damaging written on their *betygs*. A story is told of a schoolboy who played a trick on his master which caused discomfort to the latter, and the master paid him out by writing it on his *betyg*.

As there are only as many inhabitants in the whole of Sweden as there are in London, the poor can be better cared for. Orphan children are sent by the poor-law guardians to be boarded in different families, and they are always kindly treated. One day a lady, driving over a lonely road, saw a poor woman crawling to open a gate for her. Inquiries were made, little visits paid and comforts sent, until the weary woman went to be with Jesus, whom she loved. Her two boys were placed by the parish with two farmers, while her little girl of three was taken or "boarded" by a young married woman, who had a baby of her own. It was the pride and pleasure of this kind foster-mother to take the little girl every three months to the good lady who had rescued her, and proudly to exhibit her, dressed like a little old woman with her dead mother's black silk kerchief on her head.



CHRISTMAS CUSTOM

THE KÄLKE

The children of the upper and middle classes are highly educated, and have much the same course of study we have. They learn and speak English as well as other languages. They are very polite, and bow and curtsy when they enter a room, and stand with their feet in the first position. There is a pretty custom observed by all: after a meal, each guest thanks the host and hostess, and even little children are taught to go up to their parents and thank them, at the same time kissing their hands. They usually stand at their meals.

All ranks in both countries are industrious, and if the peasant maidens spin and weave at distaff and loom, the young ladies make the finest crochet and lace trimmings to edge the sheets and pillow-cases, sometimes woven on their father's property, for much is still done by hand which in England is done by machinery.

Name-days, birthdays, and Christmas Eve are the great festivals for the young people. On the two former the table is tastefully wreathed with evergreens, and the bouquets and presents elegantly arranged upon them. Sometimes the receiver finds them prepared for her when she awakes in the morning. The birthday-cakes are eaten with coffee in the afternoon. They are a sort of sweet bread flavoured with saffron, and adorned with initials. But there are also light sponge-cakes covered with spun sugar-candy. Even in the depth of winter friends carry a few flowers, grown in pots, when they go to offer their congratulations.

But Christmas Eve is the grand festival of the year, both with rich and poor. In the cottages the house is cleaned, the Sunday clothes are put on, white curtains are hung, and the tables are covered with white cloths. Every one has been working for weeks before at the presents, which are sometimes thrown into the rooms, so that the donors may be guessed at, not known. Sad and poor indeed must be the person who gets no Christmas gift. Thus, all through Christendom, "Goodwill to men" is shown when we celebrate the birth of our Saviour.

At four o'clock on Christmas morning there is service in the country churches, which, for the only time in the year, are then lighted with candles. It generally happens that there is frozen snow enough for sledging, and whole families crowd their sledges and drive many miles to church, while the bells "jangle across the snow." But there are no decorations, probably because of the extreme cold and scarcity of evergreens—a cold that must be felt to be imagined, for few country churches are warmed. For Christmas decorations, however, they have the lofty pines covered with frozen snow, and the birches glittering with rime.

In the midst of them are the frozen lakes, over which glide the sledges, and upon which look down the moon and stars as if the Ice King were holding his court.

On Christmas Day the Swedes have no roast beef and plum-pudding, as we have. The poor feast on salt fish, with horse-radish sauce, salt pork, rice, milk, and cakes; the rich on various dainties. They make holiday from Christmas till Twelfth Day, or, if not entire holiday, they do as little work as they can. All Christian countries keep this holy season, and, whatever their different manners, they celebrate it with reverence and joy.

There is a very pretty custom among the farmers and others. On Christmas morning the farm-wife carries bread from the granary for distribution among the poor; while the farmer places a sheaf of corn on a pole for the birds. The pole is sunk in the snow-covered ground, and left for the feathered pensioners; and you may be sure they enjoy their Christmas cheer as much as the young people.

The children have many games which are much like ours, and these they play indoors at Christmas-tide. They sing strange nursery rhymes while they play, and our little folk may just fancy them in their very cold northern homes, swaying to and fro, while they pour forth ditties, of one of which the following is a translation:—

A LULLABY.

A Magpie sat on the frosty shed,
Shrieking in spiteful glee:
"If baby's not good to-day," it said,
"She shall taste of the birchen-tree."*

"Oh, naughty Magpie," baby replied,
"Praying not so of me,
For I have been good and have not cried,
So need not the birchen-tree."

Baby shall have a waggon of gold,
And in it she oft shall ride;
A little whip in her hand shall hold,
And crack it on every side.

Of cows and calves she has quite a store,
And of fowls and ducks and pigs;
Of serving men and maids she's a score,
With cats and dogs, all merry as grigs.

Mother's own little crow
Out for a ride would go,
But found no one to drive her:
This way, that way, the carriage would pitch,
Backwards, forwards, and down in the ditch. †

ANNE BEALE.

* This must mean the "rod in pickle," kept for naughty children.
† This is sung by nurses to their charges, with appropriate action, and when "down in the ditch" comes, baby is tumbled over and tickled.