

## THE MICE IN COUNCIL

SOME little Mice, who lived in the walls of a house, met together one night, to talk of the wicked Cat and to consider what could be done to get rid of her. The head Mice were Brown-back, Gray-ear, and White-whisker.

“There is no comfort in the house,” said Brown-back. “If I but step into the pantry to pick up a few crumbs, down comes the Cat, and I have hardly time to run to my nest again.”

“What can we do?” asked Gray-ear. “Shall we all run at her at once and bite her, and frighten her away?”

“No,” said White-whisker; “she is so bold we could not frighten her. I have thought of something better than that. Let us hang a bell round her neck. Then, if she moves, the bell will ring, and we shall hear it, and have time to run away.”

“O yes! yes!” cried all the Mice. “That is a capital idea. We will bell the Cat! Hurrah! hurrah! No more fear of the Cat!” and they danced in glee.

When their glee had subsided a little, Brown-back asked, “But who will hang the bell round her neck?”

No one answered. "Will you?" he asked of White-whisker.

"I don't think I can," replied White-whisker; "I am lame, you know. It needs some one who can move quickly."

"Will you, Gray-ear?" said Brown-back.

"Excuse me," answered Gray-ear; "I have not been well since that time when I was almost caught in the trap."

"Who will bell the Cat, then?" said Brown-back. "If it is to be done, some one must do it."

Not a sound was heard, and one by one the little Mice stole away to their holes, no better off than they were before.

When there is trouble there is need of some one to act, as well as some one to advise.