

190 The Crumbs on the Table

A countryman one day said to his little puppies, "Come into the parlour and enjoy yourselves, and pick up the bread-crumbs on the table; your mistress has gone out to pay some visits." Then the little dogs said, "No, no, we will not go. If the mistress gets to know it, she will beat us." The countryman said, "She will know nothing about it. Do come; after all, she never gives you anything good." Then the little dogs again said, "Nay, nay, we must let it alone; we must not go." But the countryman let them have no peace until at last they went, and got on the table, and ate up the bread-crumbs with all their might. But at that very moment the mistress came, and seized the stick in great haste, and beat them and treated them very hardly. And when they were outside the house, the little dogs said to the countryman, "Dost, dost, dost, dost, dost thou see?" Then the countryman laughed and said, "Didn't, didn't, didn't, you expect it?" So they just had to run away.