

DEAN'S  
Illustrated Farthing Books.

**STRAIGHT LINES.**



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## STRAIGHT LINES.



MISS LESLIE informed her pupils that she was about to form a class for the

study of drawing. All who wished to join it, were to hand in their names the next day.

Among those who joined it, were Hattie May and Agnes Leighton. Both ranked high in their classes, and both shared the good opinion of their teacher; but Miss Leslie, upon looking over the class, mentally divided them into two portions, of which Hattie and Agnes were the type scholars.

The class met in the school-room every afternoon at four o'clock, after the other pupils were dismissed. The girls thought it very pleasant to be in the quiet room with their teacher, on those bright summer afternoons. Through the open windows the fragrance of flowers came softly on the cool breezes, and now and then a little bird twittered and caroled in the great elm-tree before the door. Miss Leslie gave every pupil four lead pencils of different numbers, a small drawing-book, a piece of India rubber, and a card upon which was the first lesson.

What do you suppose the first lesson

was? It was simply how to draw straight lines.

“Is this all, Miss Leslie?” said Hattie May, in a disappointed tone. “This is easy, I’m sure.”

“Not so easy as you imagine, Hattie,” said Miss Leslie. “It may take several lessons for you to learn this. Do not draw rashly, and be careful about using your India rubber.”

After giving each pupil a few simple directions, Miss Leslie went to her desk and began to write a letter. She was not so much occupied, however, but that she saw how her class was engaged.

Hattie May made several unsuccessful attempts to imitate the line in the copy. She erased them with the rubber, and tried again. Somehow the same curve *would* get into the line. Now it was to the right, now to the left, but every time a curve. It must be the pencil.

“Miss Leslie,” said Hattie, “may I come to you?”

“Yes, Hattie. What is the matter?”

“I think my pencil is not sharp enough. I cannot get these lines to look like yours.”

“The fault is not in the pencil, my dear. Your hand is not steady enough. Try again.”



Hattie went back and tried again. Just then a beautiful golden-winged butterfly alighted on the window-sill.

“Oh!” thought Hattie, “I want to draw birds, and butterflies, and flowers, and by and by, perhaps, make a portrait

of dear little baby Charlie, with all his bright curls, lying upon each other like spots of sunshine. I wish Miss Leslie would give us pretty things to draw, instead of these tiresome lines and triangles, which I suppose will be the order of the day. Emma, how do you like it?" she whispered to her neighbour on the right.

"I think those lines are horrid," said Emma, pushing her book towards Hattie.

On the left of Hattie sat Agnes Leighton. She was busily working while Hattie was looking out of the window. She had made a number of attempts, and at last a successful one. One, two, three lines were as straight as the one upon the card. Now she commenced making them of different lengths, each one a little longer than the last. Hattie, looking over her classmate's shoulder, could not restrain an exclamation of surprise.

Miss Leslie came to examine the performance.

"Very well done, Agnes!" said she. "You may advance a step to-morrow;

but Hattie must take the same card for her next lesson."

"Why, Miss Leslie," said Hattie, "I did not think drawing was like this. Won't you give us something interesting—a farm-house with a vine running up against the windows, and chickens before the door, or a mountain, or rocks, or——?"

"Not so fast, Hattie," said Miss Leslie. "One step at a time. I might, it is true, give you all these; but though you might make a rude imitation of them, it would not be drawing. Fineness and rapidity of touch, grace of outline and accuracy, all come by practice. Be sure of every inch of ground as you proceed. Dreaming is not drawing. You might look all day at a pretty landscape; but if you had not first learned to make a straight line, you would try in vain to draw it."

"Straight lines are very important, are they not, Miss Leslie?" said Agnes Leighton, looking up with a smile.

"In more ways than one," said her teacher. "There is a straight line of truth, another of perseverance, and ano-

ther of kindness, in which young feet must learn to walk; and you know that the Bible says, "Straight is the way that leadeth unto life," so don't despise straight lines, Hattie."

The drawing-class met every day that spring. At the end of that time, Hattie had drawn her favourite farm-house, with the vine and lattice. But Agnes, who worked steadily and spent no time in dreaming, had taken a little view of the schoolhouse, with the great elm-tree and the hill side, and her drawing obtained the prize.

