

FAIRY TALES

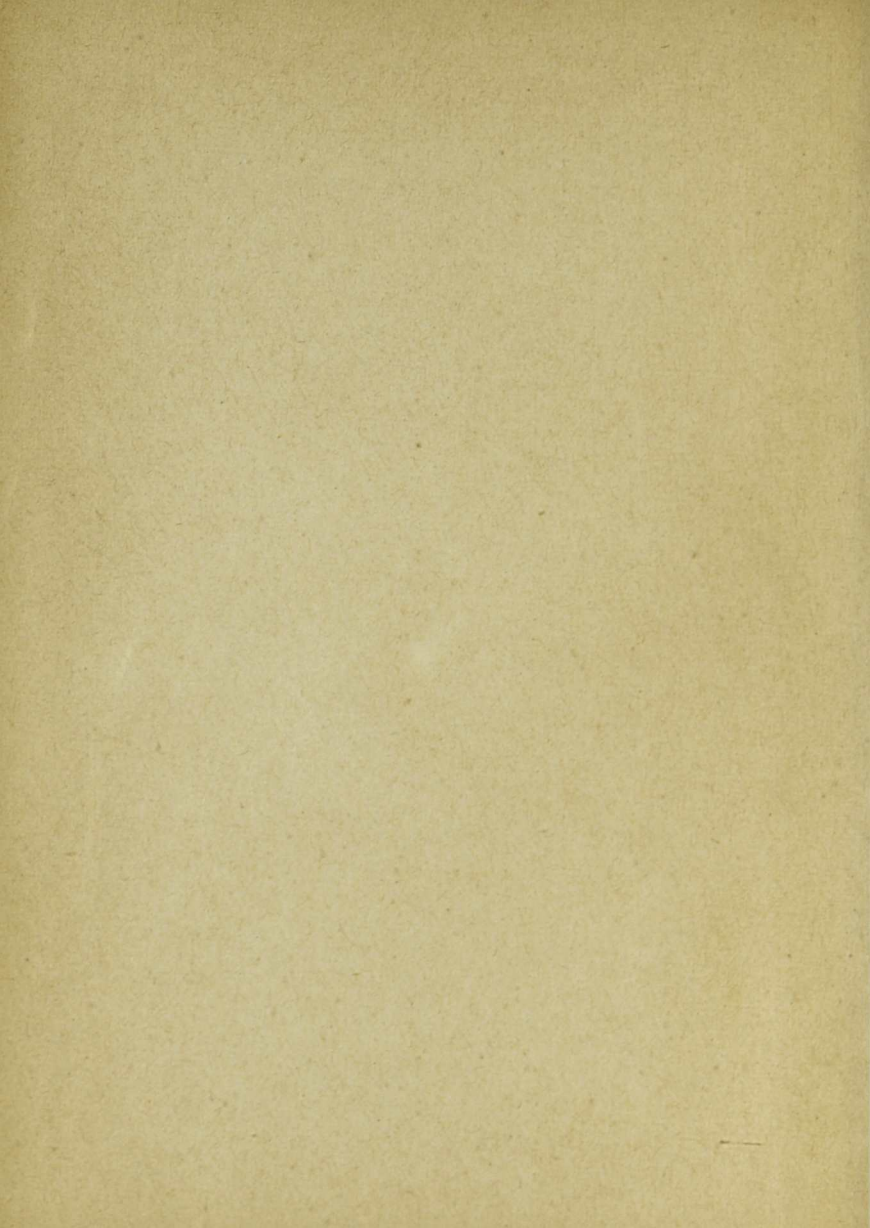
from

Hans Andersen










FAIRY TALES



FROM HANS ANDERSEN.





LITTLE BOOKS
FOR LITTLE PEOPLE.

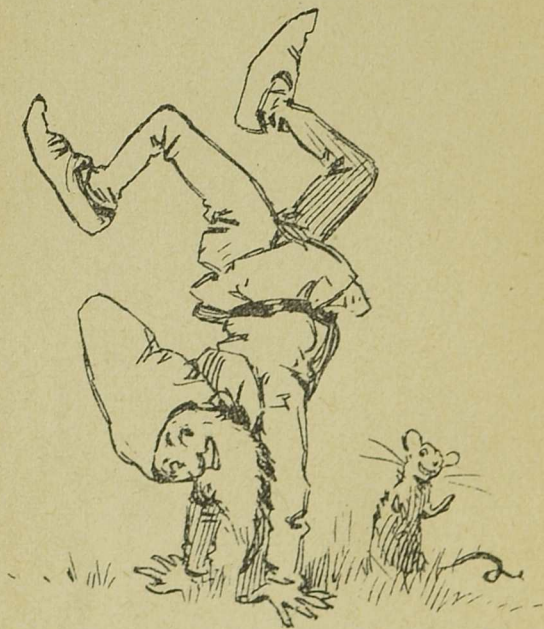
Fairy Tales

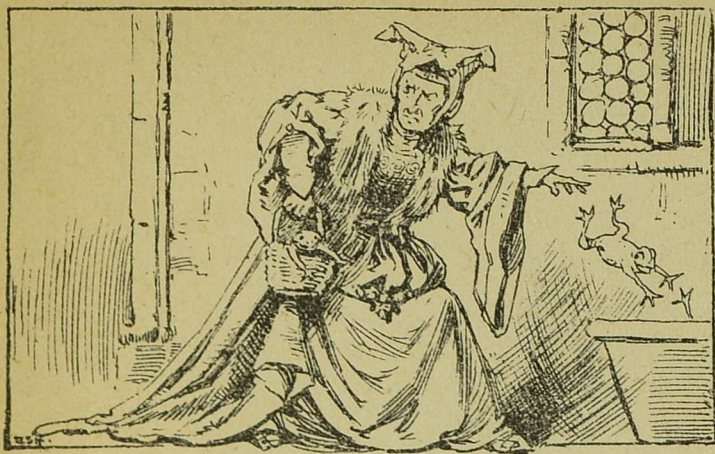
from
HANS
ANDERSEN.

Illustrated by
E. Stuart Hardy.

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THE WILD SWANS.

*T*HERE was once a king who had eleven sons, and one little daughter called Elsa. He loved his children dearly, but alas! he gave them a step-mother, and she did not love

them, but
d e t e r-
mined, in
her wick-
ed heart,
to be rid
of them.
So, being
a witch,
she chan-
ged the
e l e v e n
brothers



into eleven swans; and they flew
out of the castle window, away
into the wilds.



Elsa was very hungry.

Next she tried to harm Elsa, and so she took three ugly toads and kissed them and placed them in the little maiden's bath, saying:

"When Elsa comes to the bath, seat yourselves upon her head, her face, her heart, that she may become stupid, ugly, and evil-tempered."

But Elsa was too good and innocent for the venomous toads to harm her, and as soon as she stepped into the water the toads changed into flowers and floated upon the surface.

Then the wicked queen took the poor girl and stained her face with walnut juice and tangled her pretty hair and dressed her in rags, and when the king saw her he would not believe that she was



his own little daughter, but sent her away from the castle as though she were a beggar girl.

Poor little Elsa wept and thought of her eleven brothers who were all far away. Full of sorrow, she stole away from the palace and wandered the whole day long over the fields and moors till she came to the great forest. She did not know whither she was going, but she felt very unhappy, and longed so much for her brothers, who, like herself, had been driven out

into the world, that she felt she must try to find them. When she became too weary to go any farther she lay down on a mossy bank beside a rippling brook and slept until the morning.

Then she rose, bathed in the clear water until all the ugly stain had been washed away and she looked as fair and sweet as a king's daughter should.

She was very hungry, and when an old woman came by carrying a basket of berries,

she was glad to accept a handful of fruit for her breakfast.

She thanked the old woman and went on her way until at length she came to the sea-shore, and there, lying amongst the seaweed, she spied eleven snow-white swans' feathers. She stooped and picked them up, and at that moment she heard a rustling of wings, and, looking up, saw eleven beautiful swans flying towards her. Each swan had a golden crown upon its head,



*The old woman held a bunch of
stinging nettles.*

and as they alighted close to her, flapping their great wings, the sun sank, and immediately every one of them was changed into a tall, handsome prince, and she recognised her eleven brothers. Oh! what a happy meeting that was to be sure. The brothers could not make enough of their dear little sister. They told her that, though they were forced to fly about as swans all day long, as soon as the sun sank they became human beings once more. They

told her that they were only permitted to visit their native land once a year, when they were allowed to spend eleven days and nights there.

They had now only two days left out of the eleven, and so they set to work to weave a little hammock in which they could carry Elsa away when they flew back to the beautiful country in which they were forced to live.

It was finished just in time, and Elsa lay down in it, and the swans took hold of it

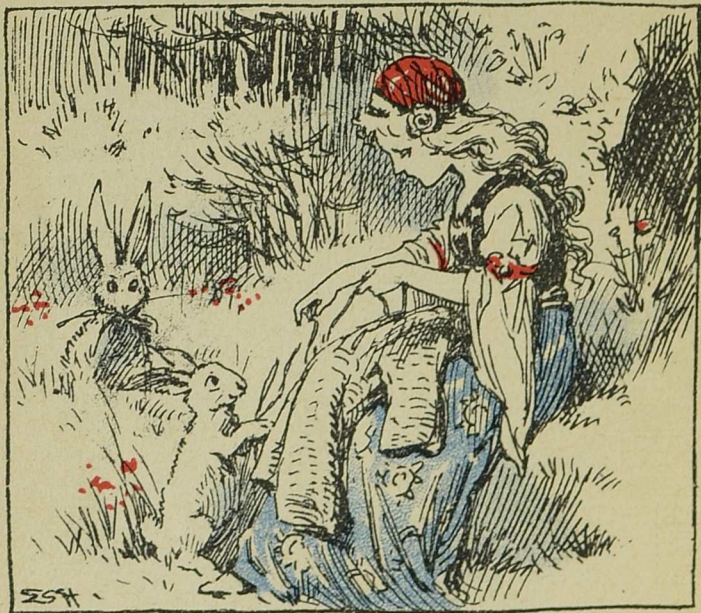
with their beaks and flew up into the sky with their dear little sister. As Elsa lay in



the hammock, her mind was busy with the thought of how she could help her dear brothers and save them from the

spell that had been cast over them. Whilst she was still thinking of this she fell asleep, and in her dreams she saw the old woman who had fed her with berries when she was starving with hunger. The old woman held a bunch of stinging nettles in her hand, and she told Elsa that if she would save her brothers she must pluck nettles, such as these, from the graveyard, where they grew in great numbers, and weave them into eleven shirts. When they were finished

she must cast a shirt over each of the swans, and the



enchantment would at once be broken, and the eleven princes regain their natural

forms for
the rest
of their
lives.

The old
woman
warned
Elsa that
she had
a difficult
task in
hand. The
nettles



would burn and blister her
tender fingers, and the work
would take a whole year to

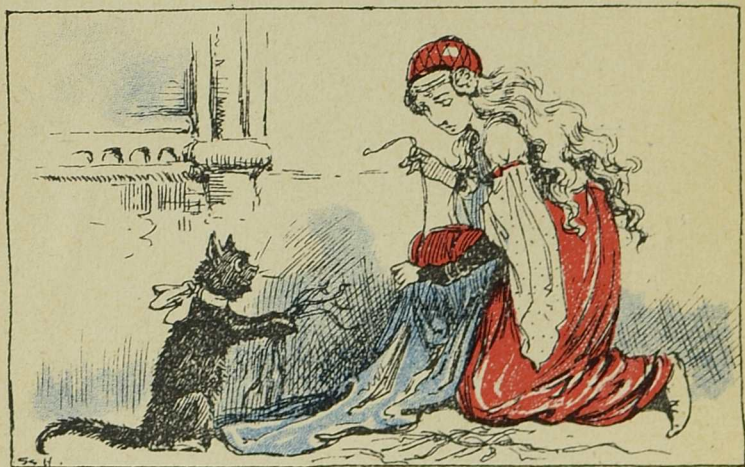
perform, during which time she must not utter a single word.

When Elsa awoke she found the swans had reached the beautiful country for which they were bound, and she determined to set about her task at once.

The brothers led her to a cave in which she was to dwell, and very soon she had filled it with nettles, plucked from a graveyard near, and had begun to weave with might and main. One, two, three shirts were finished and

not one word did she speak the whole of that time. Then one day she heard the sound of the hunters' horns and the young king came riding by. He pulled up his horse by the entrance to Elsa's cave, and when he saw the lovely maiden spinning, as if for dear life, he at once fell in love with her and determined to carry her back to his castle and make her his bride. As she would speak no word he just lifted her upon his horse to carry her away, whether

she would or no, but Elsa made such piteous signs of entreaty that she should not



be parted from her work that the king bade his servants carry it to the castle also.

Now when the King's



He lifted her . . . to carry her away.

Prime Minister heard that his master was going to marry a dumb beggar maiden he was very angry and tried to dissuade the king from doing so; but all in vain.

Elsa and the king were wed, and would have lived very happily, no doubt, had it not been that the poor Queen was so terribly anxious to finish the weaving of the nettle shirts which were to release her brothers from their enchantment. Every night when the King was sleeping she



The king begged her forgiveness.

rose and worked away with a will, but very often she had to steal down to the churchyard to pluck fresh nettles.

One night the Prime Minister saw her, and straightway went and told the King he had married a witch, and that she stole nightly to the churchyard, there to hold revels with other witches. At first the King would not believe his Prime Minister; but he kept a secret watch upon Elsa, and when he had followed her as far as the churchyard gates he felt cer-

tain that he had been deceived and that his wife really was a witch, as the minister said, else why should she visit the churchyard at midnight? So he returned to his castle and ordered the Queen to be shut up in a dungeon and kept there until she was led forth to be burned as a witch.

Alas! poor Elsa, her one hope was that they would allow her to live until she had accomplished her task.

Her nettles had been flung into the dungeon with her,

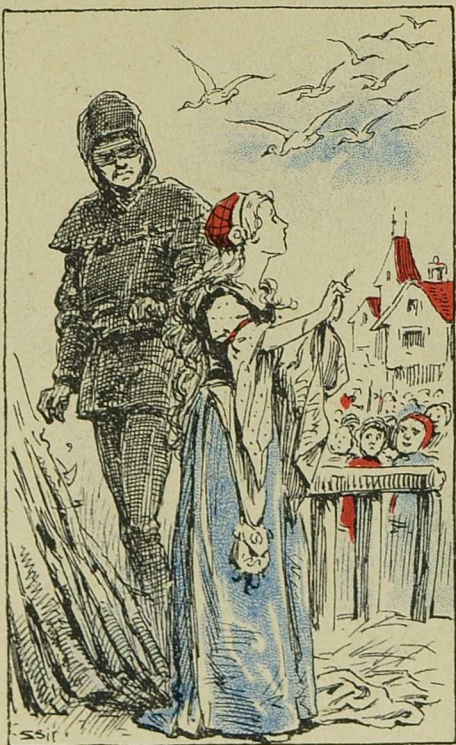


and when the day of her execution arrived she had but part of the eleventh shirt to finish.

She was taken to the market-place,

where a great pile of wood stood ready to be kindled

around her; but, before the executioner could lay a hand upon her, eleven lovely swans came swooping down, beating back the jeering crowd with their strong wings.



“She is innocent,” said the King, much moved, “surely the birds would not protect her if she were guilty!” All the while Elsa was busy slipping the nettle shirts over the swans’ heads, and at length they were all covered.

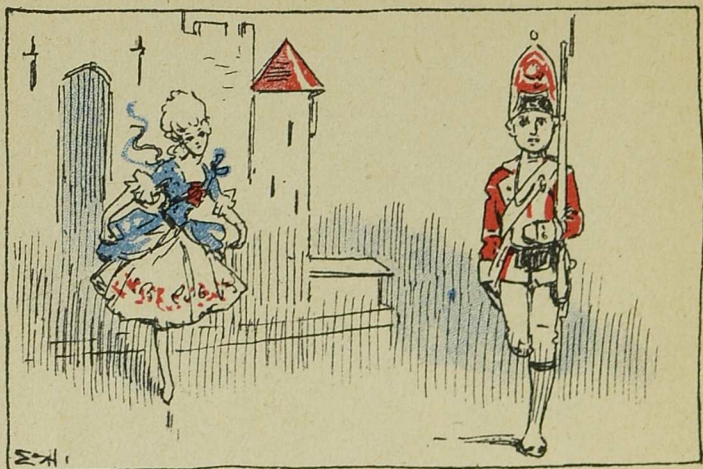
Then the snowy plumage fell away and eleven handsome youths stood around the young Queen; but the youngest had one swan’s wing instead of an arm, for Elsa had not had time to finish the eleventh shirt.

And now that the spell

was broken Elsa might once more speak, so, turning to the King, she told him the whole story.

Then he fell on his knees before her and begged her forgiveness, and because she loved him so dearly she answered never a word, but put her arms about his neck and kissed him.

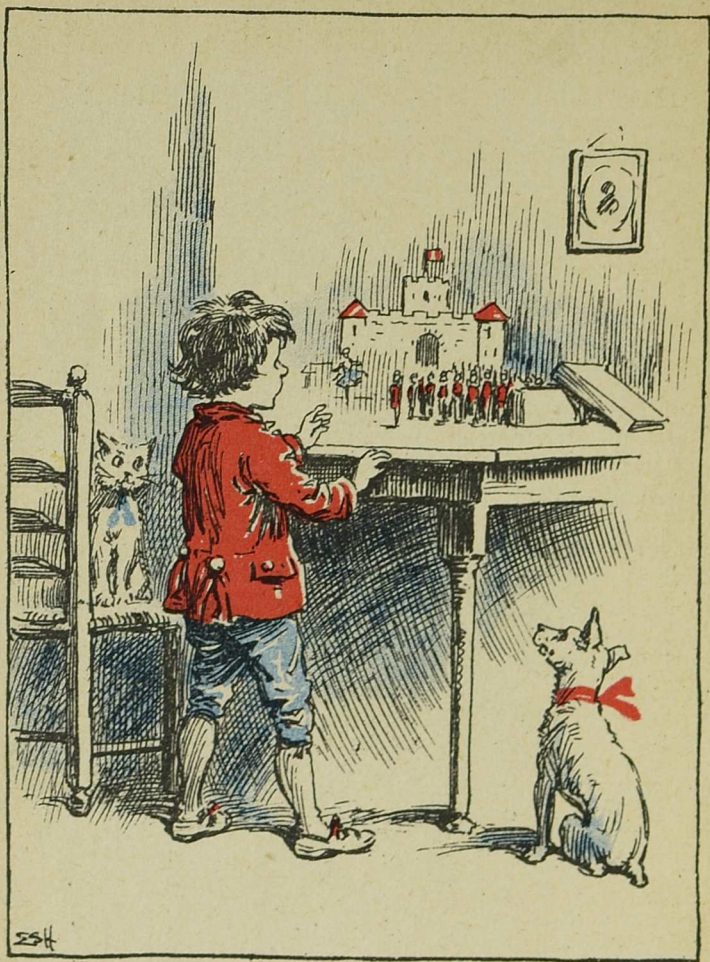
Then the King and Queen and the eleven brothers returned to the castle with great rejoicing, and none of them were ever sad or sorry any more.



THE BRAVE TIN SOLDIER.

THERE were once five-and-twenty tin soldiers who were all brothers, for they were all born of the same old

tin spoon. They carried their muskets on their shoulders and looked straight in front of them. Their uniform was red and blue, and very pretty indeed. The very first thing they heard in this world, when the lid was taken off the box, was the words "Tin Soldiers!" for that is what a little boy cried, clapping his hands, as he saw them. They were given to him because it was his birthday. All the soldiers were like each other except one, who was a little different:



"Tin soldiers!"

he had only one leg, for he was the last to be cast, and there was not enough tin, but he stood just as steadily on his one leg as the others on their two. And it was just this one who became famous.

On the table, where they were all set up, a number of other toys were standing, but what first met the eye was a beautiful castle made of cardboard. Through the small windows you could see straight into the rooms; little trees were standing outside, around a

little piece of looking-glass that represented a lake. Swans of wax were swimming there, and were reflected in it. This was very pretty; but prettiest of all was a little maid standing at the open door of the castle; she was also cut out of cardboard, but she had a skirt of the finest gauze, and a little narrow blue ribbon over the shoulders like a sash. The little maiden stretched out both her arms, for she was a dancer, and she lifted one of her legs so high that

the Tin Soldier could not see it at all, and thought that she had only one leg, like himself.

“That would be the wife for me,” he thought, “but she is too aristocratic, and lives in a castle. I have only a box, and that belongs to the whole twenty-five of us. That is no place for her; but I would like to make her acquaintance all the same.” So he laid himself down at full length behind a snuff-box where he could easily watch

the charming little maid, who kept steadily on one leg without losing her balance.

Towards evening all the other tin soldiers were put into the box, and the people in the house went to bed. Then the toys began to play, paid visits, went to war, and gave balls. The Tin Soldiers rattled in their box, for they wanted to join in the fun, but they could not get the lid off. The Nutcrackers were turning somersaults; the slate pencil was at work on the



*The servant and the little boy went to find
the tin soldier.*

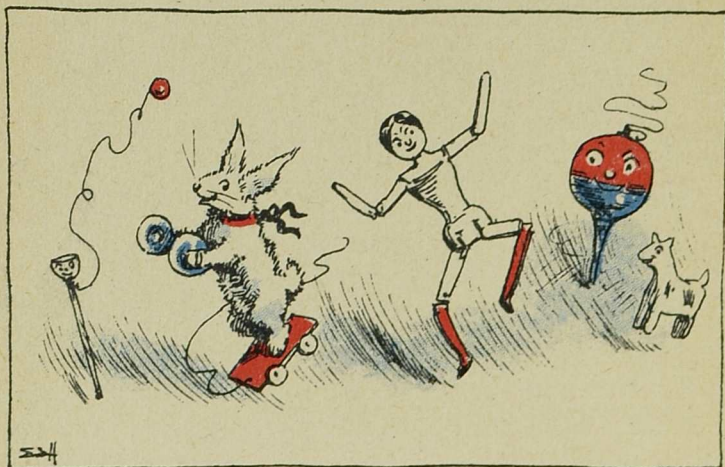
slate; and there was such a noise that the canary bird woke up and began to join in the chatter, but he spoke in verse. The only two who did not move from their places were the Tin Soldier and the little dancer. She was standing straight up on the tip of her toe, with both arms stretched out, and the Tin Soldier stood just as firmly on his one leg, and did not take his eyes off her even for a moment.

The clock struck twelve, when bang! off went the lid

of the snuff-box. There was no snuff in it, but only a tiny black goblin. "Tin Soldier," said the goblin, "please keep your eyes to yourself," but the Tin Soldier pretended not to hear. "Well, wait till to-morrow," said the goblin.

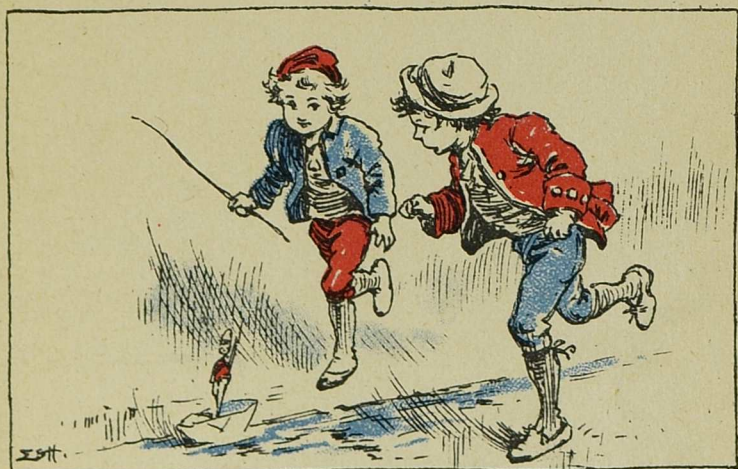
When the children came down in the morning, the Tin Soldier was put in the window, and whether it was the goblin or the draught that did it, all of a sudden the window flew up and the soldier fell head over heels from the third

storey. He came down at a terrible rate, and then he stuck upon his helmet, with his



only leg straight up in the air, and his bayonet between the paving stones. The servant and the little boy at

once went down to find him,
but they could not see him, al-
though they nearly trod on him.



If only the little Tin Sol-
diers had cried, "Here I am,"
they might perhaps have found
him, but he did not think it

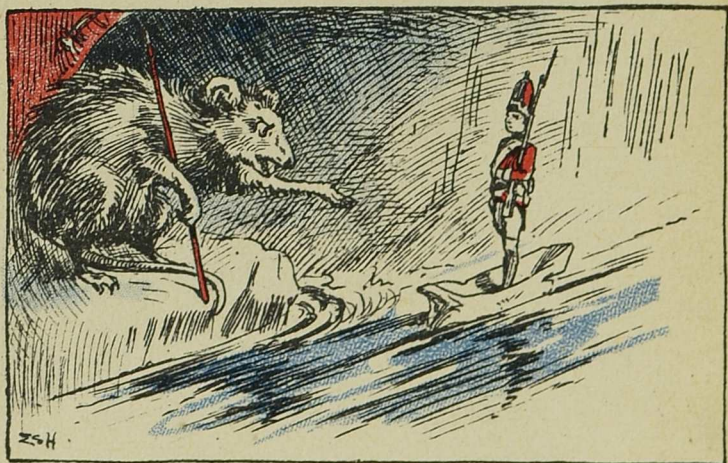
proper to call out loudly when he was in uniform.

Then it began to rain; the drops fell thicker and thicker, until it became a real down-pour. When it was over two street boys came along. "Just look," said one, "here's a Tin Soldier; let us send him for a sail." So they made a little boat out of a newspaper, put the Tin Soldier in the middle, and there he was, sailing down the gutter. Both the boys ran alongside and clapped their hands. Goodness me! what

large waves there were in that gutter, and how strong the current was!—but then it had been a real downpour.

The paper boat was tossed up and down, and now and then it turned round and round, until the Tin Soldier was quite dizzy, but he was brave and didn't move a muscle; he just looked straight in front of him and shouldered his musket. All at once the boat drifted into a long drain-pipe, where it was just as dark as if he had been in his

box. Suddenly they came upon a big water-rat. "Have you a passport?" said the



rat. "Let me have it." The Tin Soldier said not a word, and held his musket tighter than ever. Away went



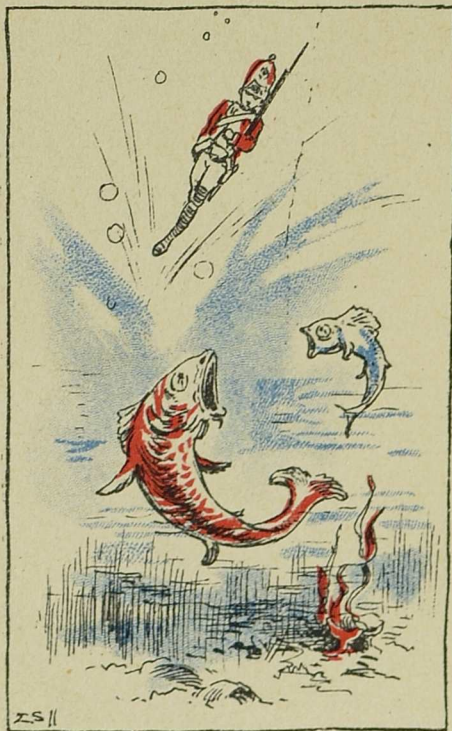
She took the soldier by the waist.

the boat, and the rat after it. Ugh! how he gnashed his teeth and called out to the straws and chips: "Stop him, stop him! he hasn't paid the toll, and hasn't shown his passport!" But the current grew stronger and stronger, and the Tin Soldier could now see daylight shining in at the end of the pipe. He also heard a roaring sound, which really might have frightened the boldest, for just where the gutter ended, the water poured out into a large

canal, and this was just as dangerous for him as it would be for us to be carried over a great waterfall.

He was now so near it that he could not stop, so the boat swept out into the canal. The poor Tin Soldier stiffened himself as well as he could, and no one could say that he even moved an eyelid. The boat whirled round three or four times, filled with water to the very edge, and began to sink. The Tin Soldier thought of the charming

little dancer whom he would never see again, then the paper burst, and he was at once gob-



bled up by a big fish. Oh! how dark it was in there, even worse than in the drain-pipe, and there was so little

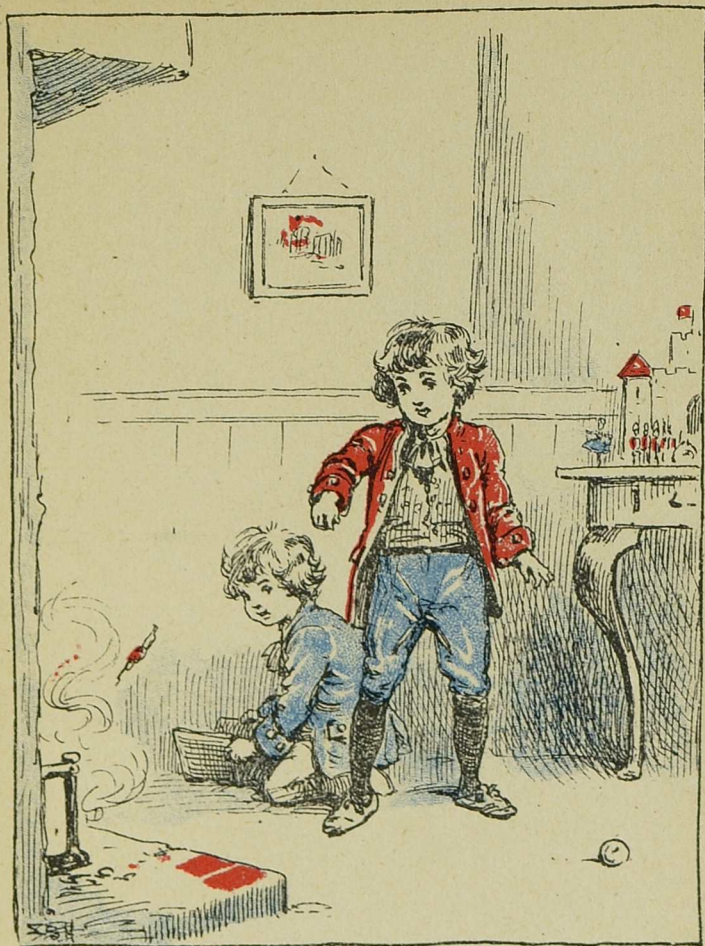
room, but the Tin Soldier was brave, and lay at full length with his musket on his shoulder. The fish darted about in the most alarming way; then it lay quite still; but suddenly there was a flash like lightning; the daylight again appeared, and some one cried, "Tin Soldier!" The fish had been caught, taken to the market, sold, and brought to the kitchen, where the cook cut it up with a big knife. She took the Soldier by the waist with her two fingers and

marched him into the sitting-room, where they all wanted to see such a remarkable man who had been travelling about in the inside of a fish. The Tin Soldier wasn't at all proud. They stood him up on the table, and there!—what curious things do happen in the world!—the Tin Soldier was in the very same room in which he had been before! He saw the same children, and the same toys were standing on the table, the pretty castle and the lovely little dancer, and she

was still standing on one leg whilst the other was high up in the air. She also was brave; this touched the Tin Soldier, and he was almost ready to weep tin tears, but of course that would not have been at all proper. He looked at her, and she looked at him; but they said nothing. Then one of the little boys took the Tin Soldier and threw him into the fireplace; he did not give any reason for doing this; it must have been the fault of the goblin in the snuff-box.

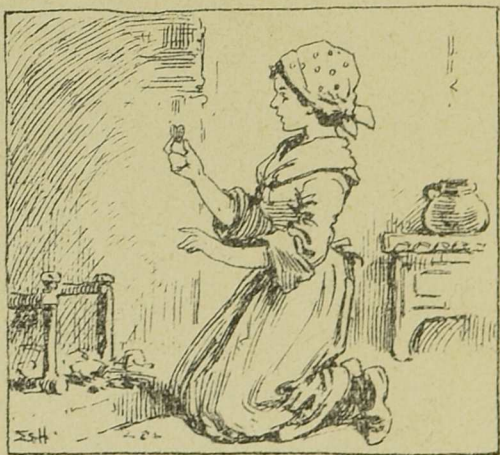
The Tin Soldier was quite lit up, and felt a great heat, but whether from the fire or from love he did not know.

He looked at the little maiden and she looked at him; he felt that he was melting, but he stood there bravely and shouldered his musket. Suddenly the door flew open, the draught took hold of the dancer, and she flew like a sylph straight into the fireplace to the Tin Soldier, blazed up into a flame, and was gone. The Tin Soldier melted into



One of the boys threw him into the fireplace.

a lump, and when the servant-
maid took out the ashes next
day, she found him trans-
formed into a little tin heart.
Of the dancer nothing was left
but the little bit of tinsel, which
was burnt as black as cinder.



THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES.

*M*ANY years ago there lived an Emperor who was so exceedingly fond of fine new clothes that he spent all his money on rich dresses.

One day two rogues came along, saying they were weavers, and that they knew how to weave the finest stuff one could imagine. Not only, said they, were the colours and designs exceedingly beautiful,

but the clothes that were made of their material had the wonderful quality of being invisible to everybody who was either



unfit for his position or was very stupid.

"They must be splendid clothes," thought the Emperor;



*Two rogues came along saying they
were weavers.*

“by wearing them I could easily discover what persons in my kingdom are unfit for their posts. I must have that stuff woven for me at once!” So he gave the two rogues a large sum of money in order that they might begin their work without delay.

The rogues put up two looms, and pretended to be working, but they had nothing at all in the frames.

“I will send my honest old minister to the weavers,” thought the Emperor; “he can judge

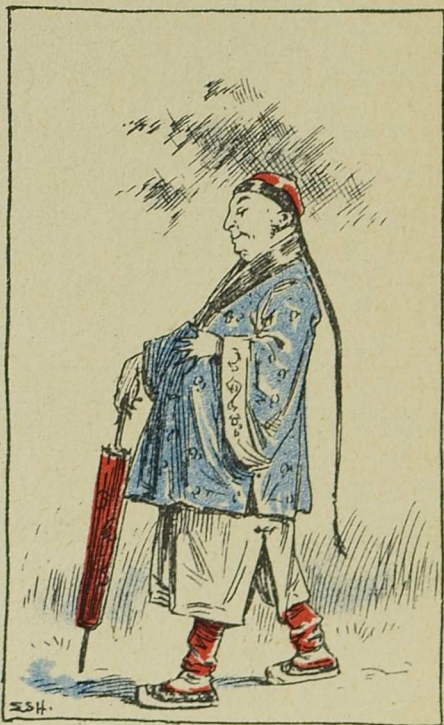
best how the stuff looks, for he is intelligent, and no one is better fit for his office than he."

So the clever old minister went out into the hall, where the two rogues were sitting at work on their empty looms.

"Goodness me!" he thought, and opened his eyes wide; "I cannot see anything. Am I really stupid? I never thought so, and nobody must know it. Am I really unfit for my office? No; I must certainly not tell anybody that I cannot see the stuff."

“Well, what do you think of it?” asked the one who was weaving.

“Oh, it is beautiful! most magnificent!” replied the old minister, and looked through his spectacles. “What a





"I like it very much indeed."

pattern! and what colours! Yes, I must tell the Emperor that I like it very much indeed."

"Ah! we are very glad of that," said both weavers, and then they described the colours, and explained the strange patterns.

The old minister listened attentively, so as to be able to repeat it all when he returned to the Emperor, and this he did.

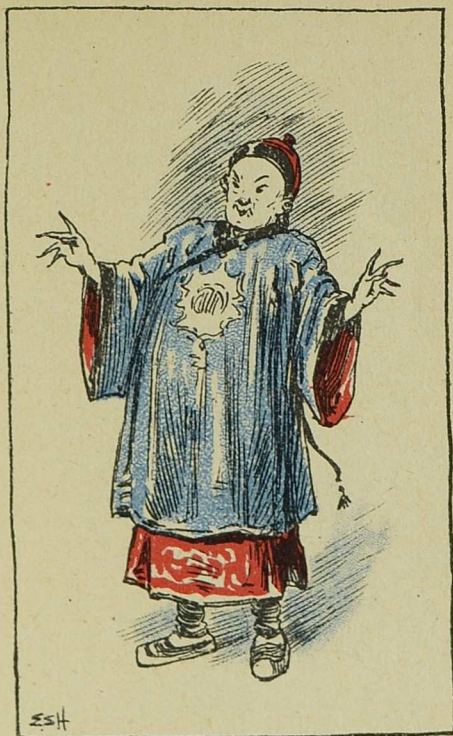
The rogues now asked for more money, and for more silk and gold thread, which

they re-
quired for
weaving.

They put
every-
thing in-
to their
pockets,
and not
a thread
went on
to the
frames,

but nevertheless they continued
to work at the empty looms.

Soon afterwards the Em-



peror sent another clever statesman to see how the weaving was getting on, and whether the stuff was nearly ready. The same thing happened to him as to the minister; he looked and looked, but as there was nothing on the empty frames, he could not see anything.

“Now, is not that a beautiful piece of stuff?” said both rogues, and described the beauty of the pattern, which did not exist at all.

“I am not stupid,” thought

the statesman, "so it must be that I am unfit for the high position I hold; that is very strange, but I must not let anybody notice it." So he praised the piece of stuff which he could not see, and said how pleased he was with the beautiful colours and the pretty pattern. "Oh! it is really magnificent!" he said to the Emperor.

All the people in the town were talking about the beautiful and wonderful stuff, and longing to discover through it how bad or how stupid

his neighbours were. The Emperor himself wished to see it while it was still on



the loom. With a whole suite of chosen courtiers, among whom were the two old statesman who had been



The Emperor himself wished to see it.

there before, the Emperor went to the two cunning rogues, who were now weaving as fast as they could, but without thread or shuttle.

“Well! is it not magnificent?” cried the two clever statesmen. “Does your majesty recognise how beautiful is the pattern, how charming the colours?” and they pointed to the empty looms, for they thought that the others could see the stuff.

“What?” thought the Emperor; “I cannot see any-

thing; this is terrible! Am I stupid; or am I not fit to be Emperor? This would be the most dreadful thing that could happen to me! Yes, it is very beautiful," he said at last; "we give our highest approbation;" and he nodded as if he were quite satisfied, and gazed at the empty looms.

He would not say that he saw nothing, and the whole of his suite looked and looked, but, like the others, they were unable to see anything. So they said, just like the Emperor,

"Yes, it is very pretty," and they advised him to have his clothes made from this magnificent stuff, and to



wear them for the first time at the great procession that was about to take place. "It is

magnificent! beautiful! excellent!" they said, and they were all so pleased with it



that the Emperor gave the two rogues a decoration to be worn in the buttonhole, and the title "Imperial Weavers."

The rogues worked throughout the whole of the night preceding the day of the procession, and had over sixteen candles alight, so that people should see how busy they were in preparing the Emperor's new clothes.

They pretended to take the stuff off the looms, cut it in the air with great scissors, and sewed with needles without thread, and at last they said:

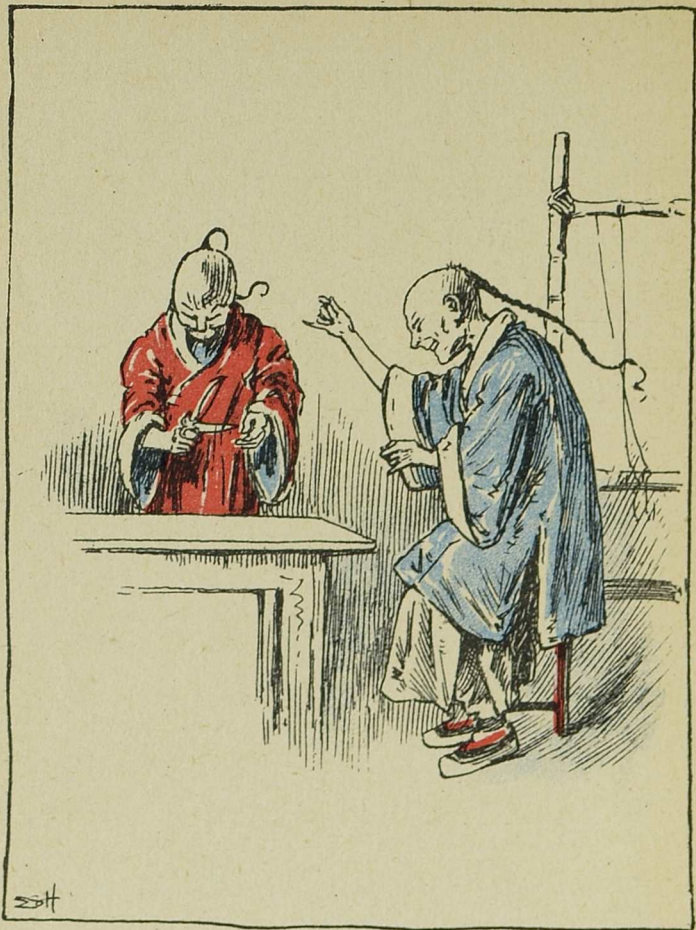
“See, now the clothes are ready!”

The Emperor, followed by

his most distinguished courtiers, came in person, and the rogues lifted their arms up in the air, just as if they held something, and said: "See, here are the trousers, here is the coat, here is the cloak," and so forth. "It is all as light as a cobweb; one might imagine one had nothing on, but that is just the beauty of it!"

"Yes," said all the courtiers; but they could not see anything, because there was nothing.

"Will your Imperial Highness condescend to undress?"



*The rogues worked throughout the whole
of the night.*

said the rogues; "we will then
attire your majesty in the new



clothes, here, in front of the
mirror."

“Oh! how well they look! how beautifully they fit!” said every one; “what a pattern! what colours! It is indeed a magnificent dress.”

“They are standing outside with the canopy which is to be carried over your Majesty in the procession,” announced the Master of the Ceremonies.

“Well, I am ready,” said the Emperor. “Does it not fit me well!” and he turned again to the mirror, for he wanted it to appear that he was admiring his new costume.

The chamberlains who were to carry the train fumbled with their hands on the floor just as if they were holding the train up; they raised their hands in the air, but dared not let anybody notice that they saw nothing; and so the Emperor went in procession beneath the magnificent canopy, and all the people in the street and at the windows said: "Oh! how beautiful the Emperor's new clothes are; what a splendid train, and how well everything fits!"

No one would admit that he could see nothing, for that



would have shown that he was either unfit for his post or

very stupid. None of the Emperor's dresses had been so much admired.

“But he has nothing on at all!” said a little child.

“Just hear the voice of the innocent,” said his father, and one whispered to the other what the child had said. “‘He has nothing on,’ says a little child; ‘he has nothing on!’”

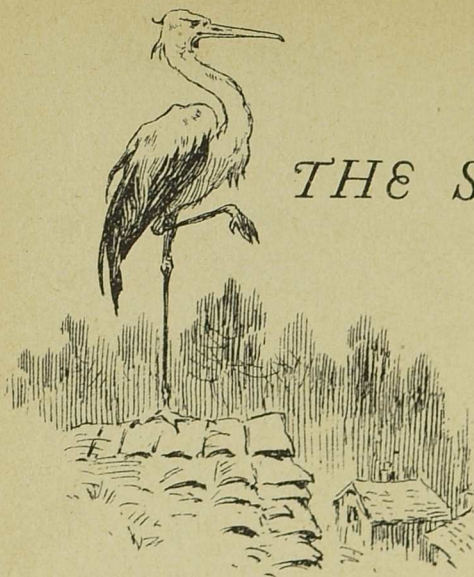
“But he has nothing on,” cried the whole of the people at last; and the Emperor shivered, for it seemed to him that they were right.



All the people said, "Oh! how beautiful!"

But he thought to himself, "I must go through with the procession," and he walked with even greater dignity than before: and the chamberlains followed, carrying the train which did not exist at all.





THE STORKS.

ON the last house in a little village stood a storks' nest. Mother Stork sat in it with her four young ones, who stretched out their heads with the sharp black bills, for these had not yet turned red. A little way off

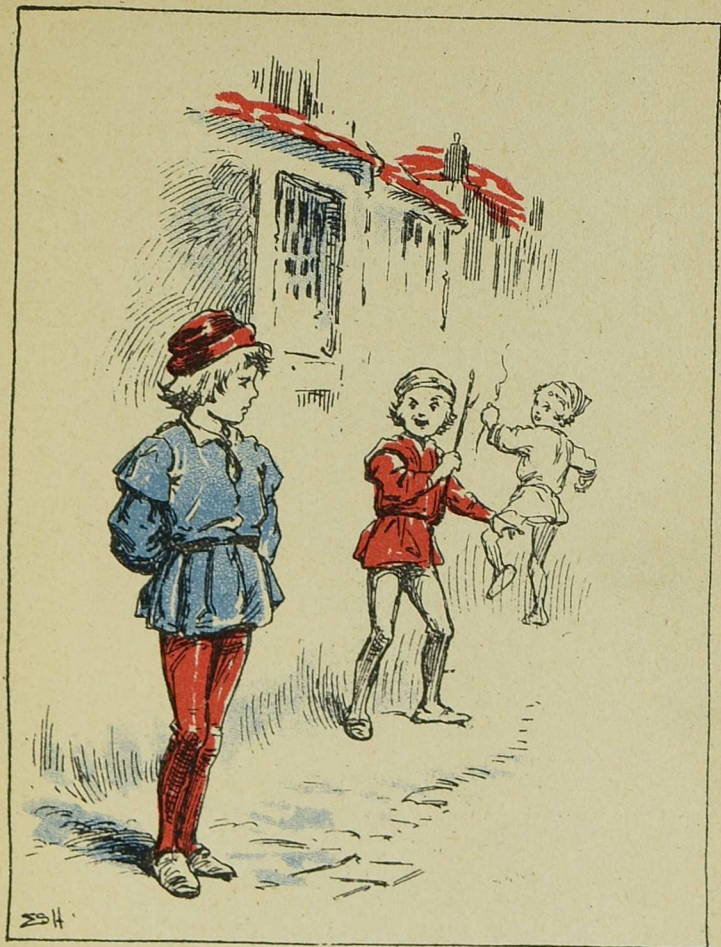
stood Father Stork, erect and stately on the ridge of the roof. He had drawn up one of his legs under him while he stood sentry. One might have fancied that he was carved out of wood, so still did he stand.

“It must appear very aristocratic,” he thought, “for my wife to have a sentry standing by her nest. They can’t know that it is her husband. They must think I have been ordered to stand here; how grand it looks!” So he continued to stand on one leg.

In the street below a number of children were playing, and when they caught sight of the storks, one of the boldest of the boys, and afterwards all of them, sang an old rhyme about storks. But they only sang it just as they could remember it:

“Stork, stork, fly away!
Why stand on one leg all day?
Your wife is in her cosy nest,
Where her four small children rest.

“They’ll hang one bird,
And fry another,
And shoot the third,
And cook his brother.”



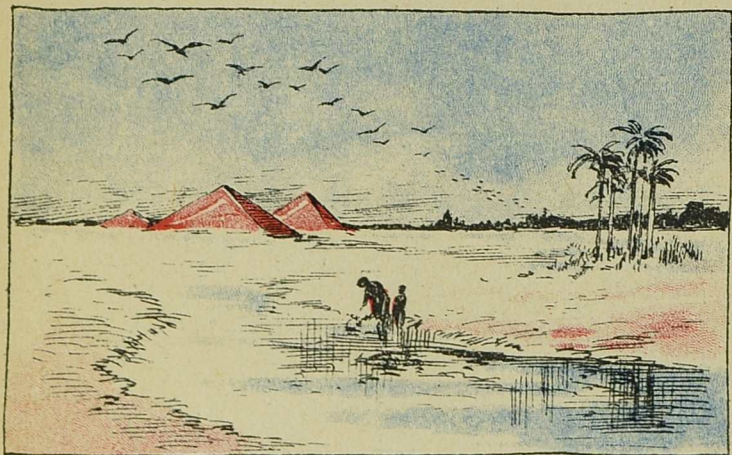
One boy would have nothing to do with it.

“Just listen to what those boys are saying!” said the little stork children. “They say we are to be hanged and fried.”

“Never mind about that!” said Mother Stork. “If you don’t listen you won’t hear anything.”

But the boys went on singing, and pointing at the Storks; only one boy, whose name was Peter, said that it was a shame to tease the birds, and he would have nothing to do with it.

Mother Stork comforted her little ones. "Never mind," said she; "see how quietly



your father stands, although he is only on one leg."

"We are so frightened!" said the young Storks, and

they drew their heads far into the nest.

The next day, when the children came out again to play, and saw the Storks, they sang their song:

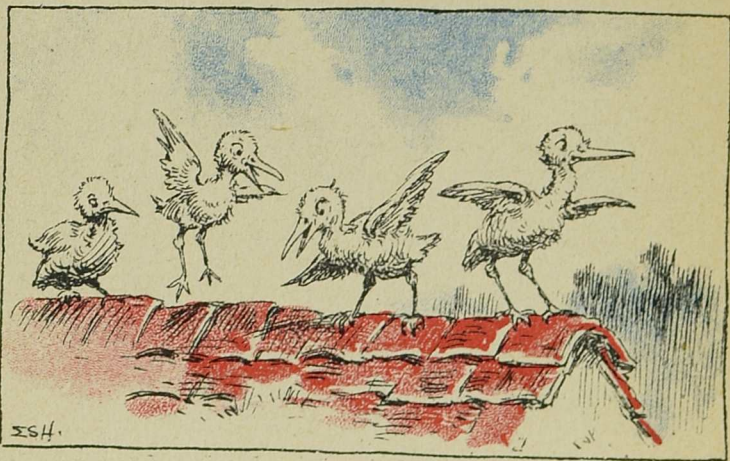
“They’ll hang one bird,
And fry another.”

“Are we really to be hanged and eaten?” asked the young Storks.

“No, indeed!” said the mother. “You must learn to fly. I will teach you; then we will go out into the meadows and pay a visit to the frogs.

By the time the autumn manœuvres begin you must be able to fly well; that is a very important matter, for every stork who is unable to fly properly is killed by the general with his beak. After the great manœuvres we shall fly to the warm countries, far away from here, over mountains and forests. We shall fly to Egypt, where there are three-cornered houses of stone which slope up to a point far above the clouds; they call them Pyramids, and

they are older than any stork
can imagine. There is a river
which overflows its banks, and



all the land is turned to mud.
One walks about in mud, and
eats frogs.

“Oh!” cried the young ones.



A little boy most enjoyed the singing.

“Yes, it is a delightful place. We do nothing there all day long but eat; and while we are so comfortable over there, in this country not a green leaf is on the trees; it is so cold that the clouds freeze to pieces, and fall down in little white fragments!”

It was the snow that she meant, but this was the best explanation she could give.

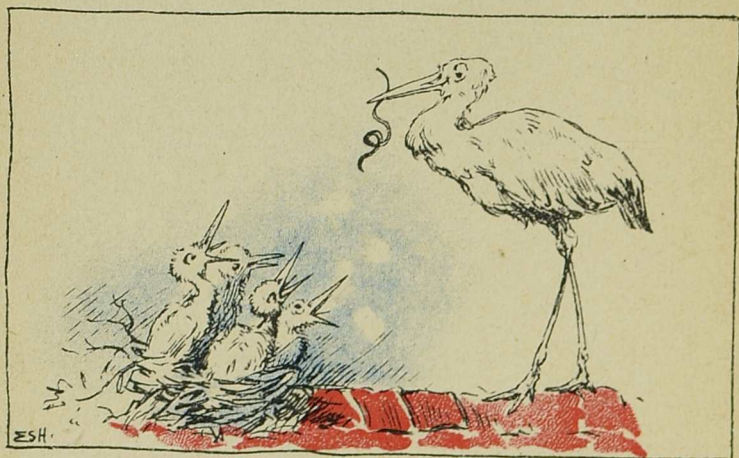
“And do the naughty boys also freeze to pieces?” asked the young storks.

“No, they do not freeze to pieces, but they are not very far from it, and have to sit cowering in their dark rooms; whereas you are able to fly about in those foreign lands, where there are flowers and warm sunshine.

After some time the youngsters grew so big that they could stand upright in the nest and look far around.

“Now listen! It is time that you learned to fly,” said Mother Stork one day; and so all the four little Storks

had to get out on the ridge of the roof. Oh, how they tottered! how they balanced them-



selves with their wings!—and yet they were near falling.

“Now, just look at me!” said the Mother. “You must

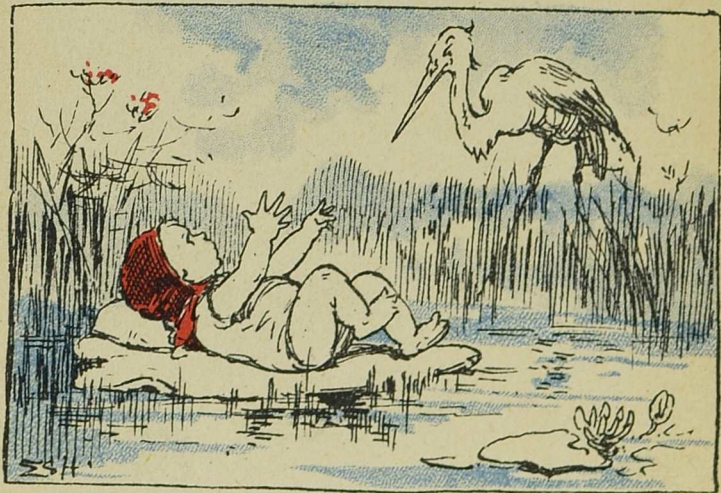
hold your heads like this!
you must place your feet like
this! One, two! one, two!
That is what will help you on
in the world."

Then she flew a little way,
and the young ones made a
little clumsy leap. Bump!—
there they lay, for their bodies
were too heavy.

"I don't want to fly!" said
one of the little Storks, and
he crept back into the nest;
"I don't care to go to the
warm countries."

"Then do you want to be

frozen to death when the winter comes? Are the boys to come and hang you?"



"Oh! no," cried the little Stork, and he hopped out on to the roof again like the rest. On the third day they

could actually fly a little; so they thought they could rest on their wings in the air. But when they tried this—bump!—down they tumbled, and they had to flap their wings again. Now the boys came down the street, and sang their song:

“Stork, stork, fly away!”

“Shall we fly down and peck out their eyes?” asked the young storks.

“No; leave them alone,” replied the mother, “let them scream as much as they like.

You will fly up to the clouds, and go to the land of the Pyramids, when they will be left to shiver, and will not even have a green leaf or a sweet apple."

"Yes, we will revenge ourselves!" they whispered to one another, and so they again began practising.

Of all the boys down in the street, the one who most enjoyed singing the teasing song was he who had started it, and he was quite a little boy. The young Storks were

very angry; and as they grew bigger they were less inclined to bear it. At last their mother had to promise them that they should be revenged, but not until the day of their leaving the country.

“We must first see how you behave yourselves at the grand manœuvres. If you get through them badly, so that the general stabs you to the heart with his beak, the boys will be right—at least in one way. Now let us see.”

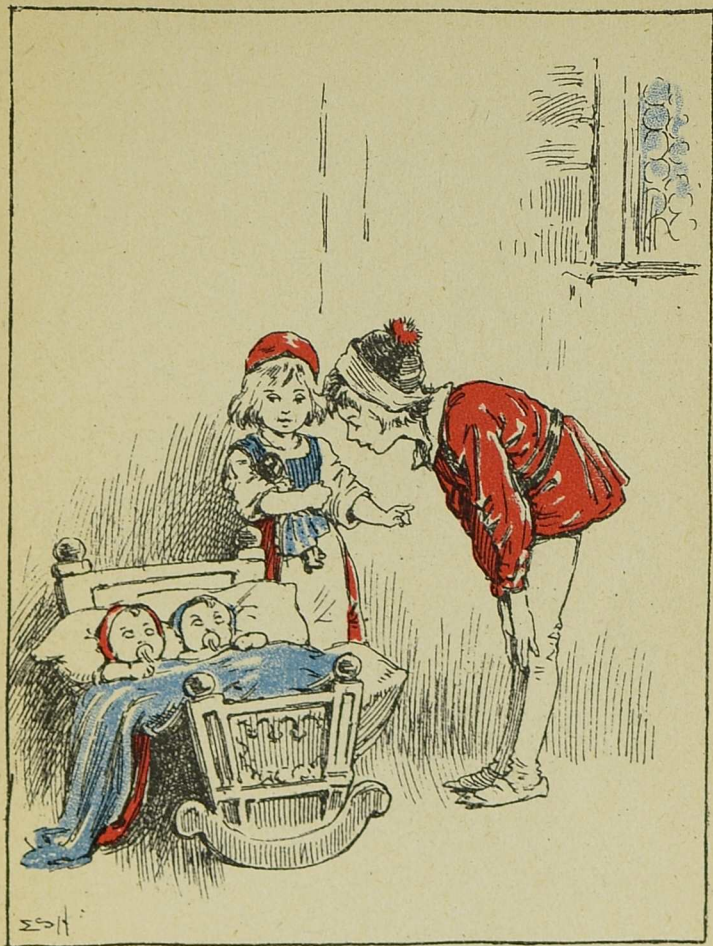
“Yes, you shall see,” cried

the young
Storks; and
then they
took great
pains. They
practised
every day,
and flew so
swiftly and
gracefully
that it was



a pleasure to see them.

Now the Autumn came
on; all the Storks began to
flock together, to fly away to
countries where it was warm,



*To that good boy we will bring a brother
and a sister.*

while we have the winter here. Then came the manœuvres. They had to go over forests and villages, only to see how well they could fly, for it was a long journey that they had before them. The young Storks did so well that they got the highest marks.

“Now we will have our revenge!” they said.

“Yes, certainly!” said Mother Stork. “I have thought of the best plan. I know the pond in which all the tiny little human children lie till the

Stork comes and brings them to their parents. The pretty little babies lie there sleeping, dreaming more sweetly than they will ever dream afterwards. All parents are glad to have such a baby, and all children want a little brother or sister. Now we will fly to the pond, and fetch one for each of the children who have not sung the naughty song and made fun of the Storks.

“But he who started singing—that naughty, ugly boy!”

screamed the young Storks;
“what shall we do to him?”

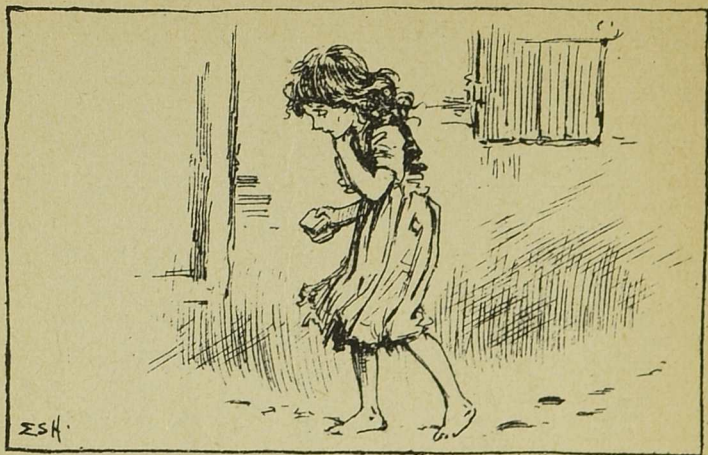
“There is a little dead



baby in the pond, that has
dreamed itself to death; we
will bring that for him. Then

he will cry, because' we have brought him a little dead brother. But to that good boy—you have not forgotten him—the one who said: 'It is wrong to tease the birds!' to him we will bring a brother *and* a sister. And as his name is Peter, all of you shall be called Peter too."

And it happened as she said; all the Storks were called Peter, and that is their name to this day.



THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL.

IT was New Year's Eve and terribly cold, for the snow was falling. In the cold and darkness a poor little street

girl, with bare head and naked feet, was walking along the street holding in one hand a box of matches. Nobody had bought anything of her all day, nobody had given her a single penny.

By-and-by all the windows were lit up, and in the street there was a delicious smell of roast goose; for it was New Year's Eve—yes, she remembered that. In a corner, formed by two houses, she sat down, huddling herself together. She drew her little

legs up under her; but she grew colder still, and she dared not go home, for she had sold no matches. Her father would beat her, and, besides, it was cold at home: they had nothing over them but the roof, through which the wind came whistling, although the largest holes were filled up with straw and rags. Her little hands were nearly dead with cold.

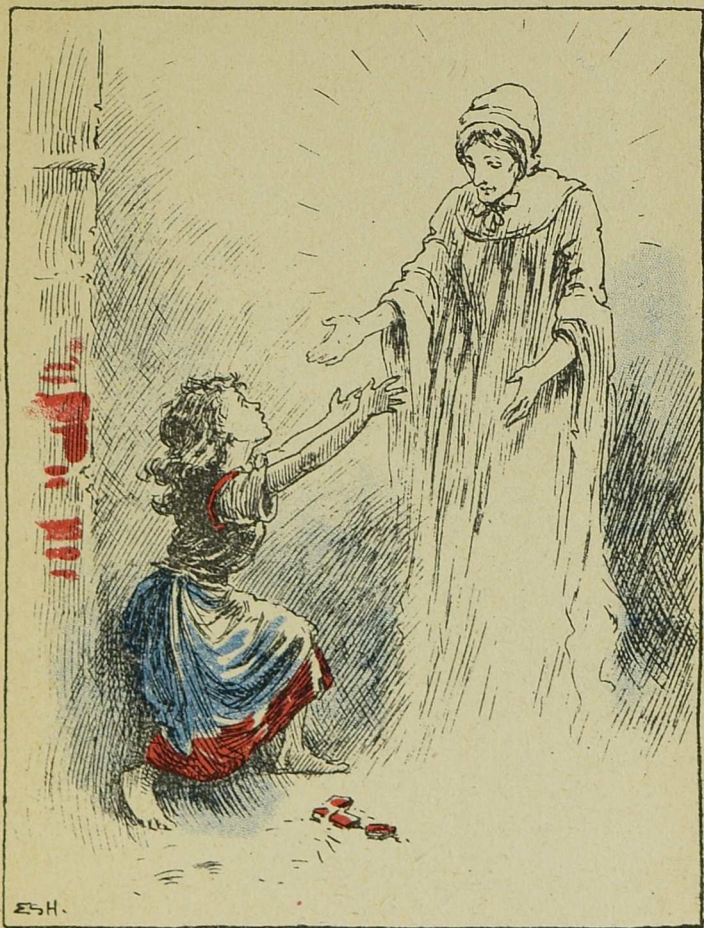
Ah! a match might do her some good, she would strike one, just to warm her fingers.



She saw a most beautiful Christmas tree.

Fizz! how it sputtered and burned; there was a warm flame, just like a tiny candle, as she held her hands over it. It seemed to the little girl that she sat in front of a large, open stove. How beautifully the fire burned, and how warm it was! Ah! what was that?—the little one stretched out her tiny feet to warm them also, when suddenly the flame went out, the stove vanished, and she sat with the stump of a burnt match in her hand.

She struck a new one: it



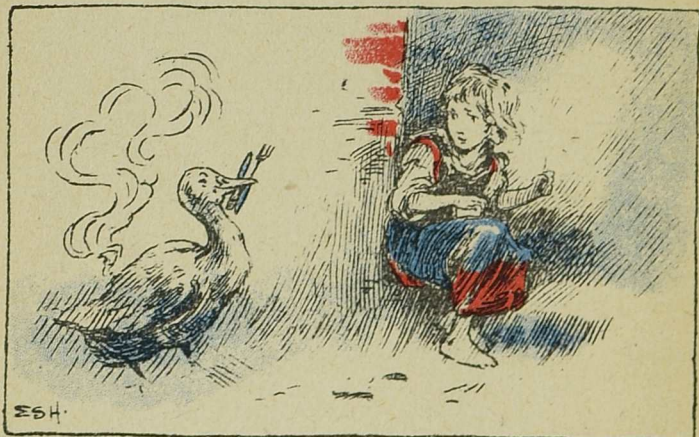
In the brightness stood her old grandmother.

burned up, and as the light fell upon the wall, it became as transparent as a veil. She could see into a room where a table was spread with a white table-cloth, and upon it stood a fine dinner-service. What a savoury smell came from the roast goose which jumped down from the dish, and waddled along the floor with a knife and fork in its beak, straight towards the little girl. Then the match went out, and there was nothing more to be seen.

She lit another match, and saw a most beautiful Christmas-tree, larger and more richly bedecked than that which she had seen through the glass door at the rich merchant's last Christmas. Thousands of candles were shining from its green branches, and many-coloured pictures, just like those shown in the shop windows, looked down upon her. The little girl stretched out both her hands, but the match went out.

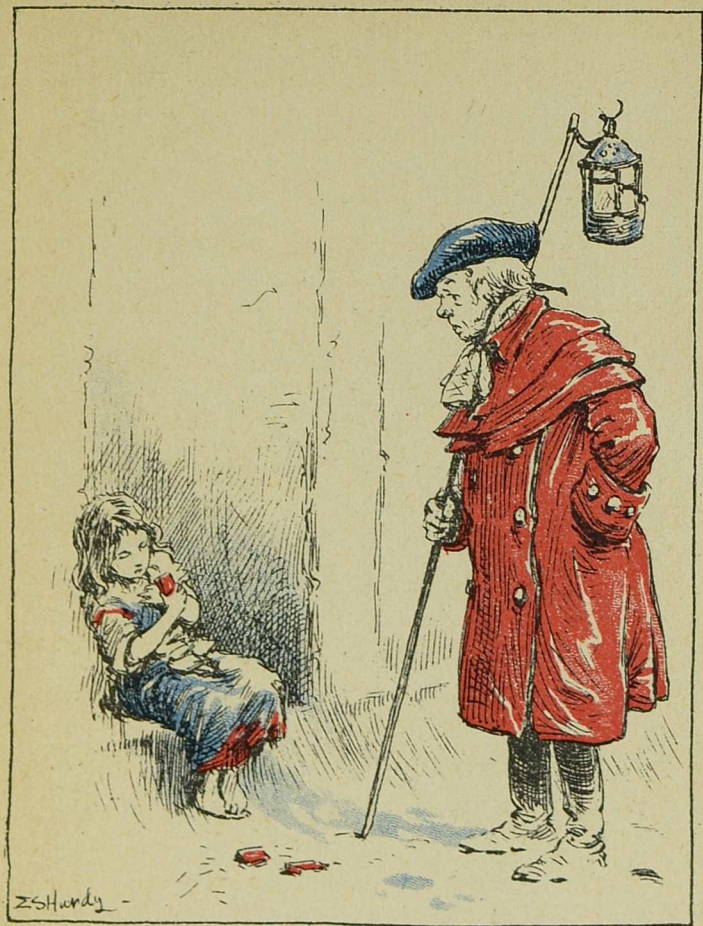
She struck another match

against the wall. It lit up everything around, and in the brightness quite clearly and distinctly stood her old grand-



mother, the only being who had even been kind to her, and who had died long since.

“Grandmother,” cried the



In the corner sat the little girl.

little one, "take me with you! I know you will go when the match is burned out, and vanish like the warm stove, the delicious roast goose, and the big, beautiful Christmas-tree," and she hastily struck the whole bundle of matches, wishing to hold her Grandmother fast. The matches shone with a radiance brighter than daylight; Grandmother had never before seemed so grand and beautiful. She lifted the little girl in her arms, and they floated upward

in joy and happiness, where there was no cold, no hunger, no sorrow. They were with God. But in the corner by the house sat the little girl in the cold morning light, with red cheeks and smiling lips—dead, frozen to death on the last evening of the Old Year!

New Year's morning dawned over the little dead child. There she sat, in the stiffness of death, still holding the matches, of which one bundle was nearly burned.

“She wanted to warm her-

self," they said. But no one knew what beautiful things she had seen—with what glory she had gone with her Grandmother into the happiness of the New Year.



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