

LANGHAM
SERIES
FOR
CHILDREN



HANS ANDERSEN'S FAIRY TALES

(FT)

ANDERSEN

[1906]

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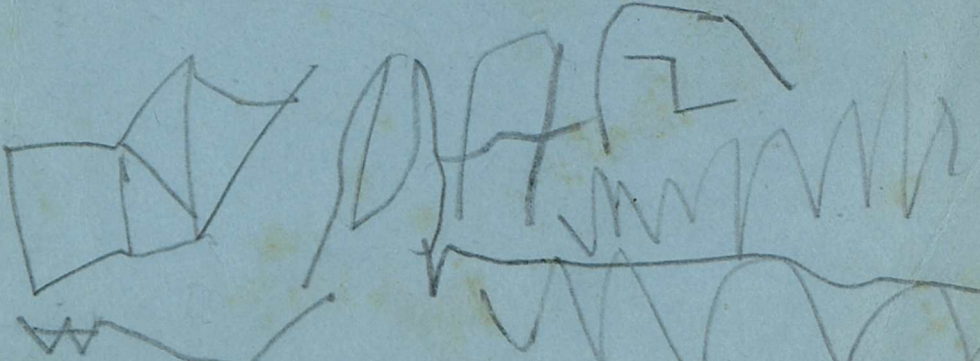
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GILBERT JAMES



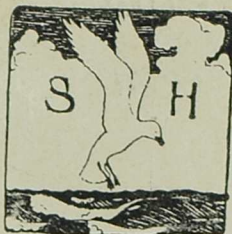
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A Selection from
Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales.

With Drawings by Gilbert James.



SIEGLE, HILL & Co.,
2, LANGHAM PLACE, LONDON, W.

HANS ANDERSEN FAIRY TALES.



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THE MOUSE'S WEDDING.

“ I ’LL tell you what ! ”
said the Dustman,
“ do not be afraid,
and you shall see a little
mouse ! ” and he held out his hand, with the pretty
little animal in it. “ She is come to invite you to
a wedding ; there are two little mice here, who
intend this very night to enter into matrimony.
They live under the floor of the dining-room ;
theirs must be such a pretty house ! ”



“But how can I get through the little hole?” asked Hjalmar. “Let me take care of that,” said the Dustman. “I will make you very little!” and he touched Hjalmar with his magic wand, and he became smaller and smaller, till at last he was no larger than his own fingers: “Now you can borrow the tin-soldier’s clothes; I think they will just fit you; and it looks so grand to wear uniform when you are in company.”

“Ah, yes!” said Hjalmar, and in another moment he was dressed like the prettiest little tin-soldier.

“Will you have the goodness to sit down in your mother’s thimble?” said the little Mouse. “In that case, I shall feel honoured by drawing you.”

“What! will you really take so much trouble?” said Hjalmar; and away they went to the Mouse’s wedding.

They first came to a long passage, under the floor, which was high enough for the thimble to be drawn along through it, and was illuminated with lighted tinder throughout.

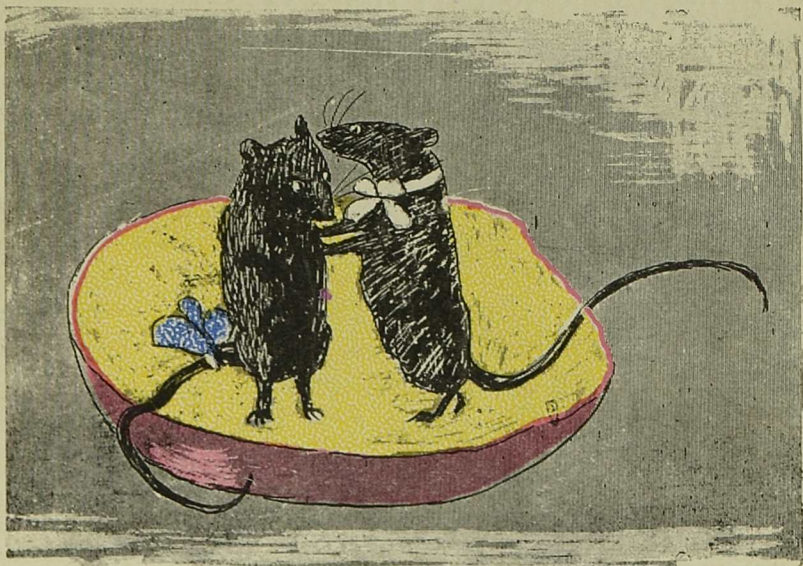
“Is there not a pleasant smell here?” said the





Mouse who was drawing the thimble. “The whole passage is covered with rind of bacon ; there is nothing more delightful !”

They now entered the bridal apartment ; the lady Mice stood on the right-hand side, whispering together, seemingly very merry ; on the left side stood the gentlemen Mice, who were all stroking their whiskers with their paws. In the middle of the room the bride and bridegroom were seen, standing in the scooped-out rind of a cheese, and



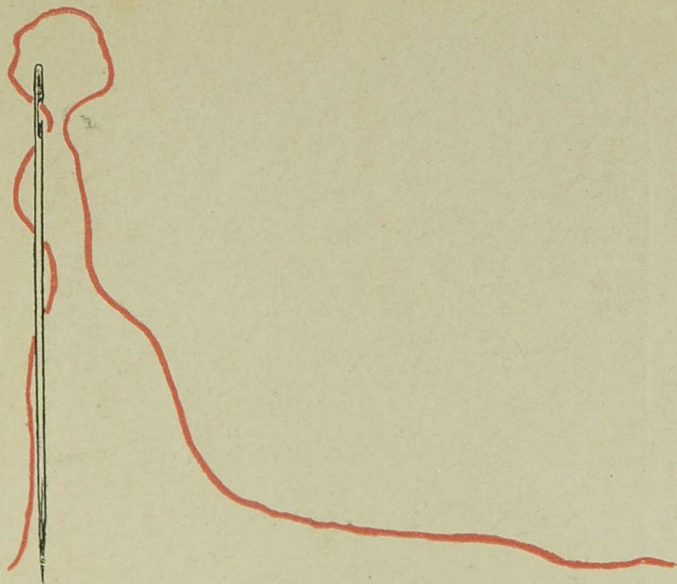
kissing each other incessantly, before the eyes of all present. They were already betrothed, and were to be married immediately. Strangers were arriving every moment; the Mice almost trod each other to death; and the bridal pair had placed themselves just in the centre of the doorway, so that one could neither get out nor in. The whole room was, like the passage, covered

with the rind of bacon ; this was all the entertainment given ; for dessert, however, a pea was exhibited, in which a little Mouse belonging to the family had bitten the initials of the married couple. Was not this an exquisite idea ?

All the Mice agreed that the wedding had been extremely genteel, and the conversation delightful.

So now Hjalmar returned home ; he had certainly been in most distinguished company ; but still, he felt as though he had rather lowered himself by becoming so small, and wearing the uniform of one of his own tin-soldiers.





THE DARNING-NEEDLE.

THERE was once a Darning-needle so fine that she fancied herself a Sewing-needle.

“Now take care, and hold me fast!” said the Darning-needle to the Fingers that took her up. “Don’t lose me, pray! If I were to fall down on the floor, you would never be able to find me again, I am so fine!”



“That’s more than you can tell!” said the Fingers, as they took hold of her.

“See, I come with a train!” said the Darning-needle, drawing a long thread, without a single knot in it, after her.

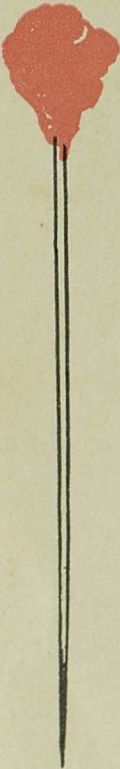
The Fingers guided the Needle to the cook-maid’s slippers; the upper leather was torn, and had to be sewn together.

“This is vulgar work!” said the Darning-needle; “I shall never get through; I break, I am breaking!” And break she did. “Did I not say so?” continued she; “I am too fine!”

“Now she is good for nothing,” thought the Fingers; however, they must still keep their hold; the cook-maid dropped sealing-wax upon the Darning-needle and then stuck her into her neckerchief.

“See, now I am a Breast-pin!” said the Darning-needle; “I knew well I should come to honour; when one is something, one always becomes something.” And at this she laughed, only inwardly, of course, for nobody has ever seen or heard a Darning-needle laugh; there sat she now at her ease, as proud as if she were

driving in her carriage, and looking about her on all sides.



“May I take the liberty of asking if you are of gold?” inquired she of the pin that was her neighbour. “You have a pleasing exterior, and a very peculiar head; it is but small, though. You must take care that it grows, for it is not every one that can have sealing-wax dropped upon her!” And the Darning-needle drew herself up so proudly that she fell off from the neckerchief into the sink, where the cook was engaged just then in washing-up.

“Now for our travels!” said the Darning-needle; “but I hope I shall not go very far.” However, she did travel far, very far.

“I am too fine for this world,” said she, as at last she sat still in the gutter. “However, I know who I am, and there is always some little pleasure in that.” And so the Darning-

needle held herself erect, and did not lose her good humour.

All sorts of things sailed past her; splinters of wood, straw, scraps of old newspapers. "See how they sail along!" said the Darning-needle. "They do not know what is sticking under them! It is I. I stick, I sit here. There goes a splinter, he thinks of nothing in the world but himself, splinter as he is. There floats a straw—to see how it turns round and round! Nay, think not so much of thyself, thou mightest easily float against one of the stones. There swims a newspaper—everything in it is forgotten, yet how it spreads itself out!—I sit patiently and quietly! I know what I am, and that I shall always be the same!"

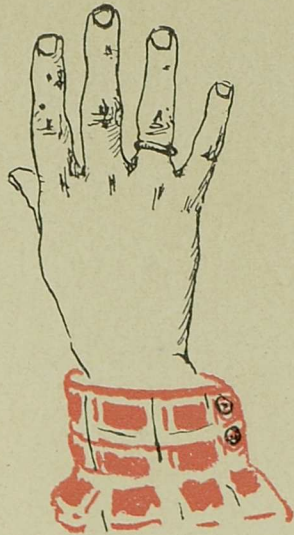
One day there chanced to be close by her something that glittered so charmingly that the Darning-needle felt persuaded it must needs be a diamond; it was, in reality, only a splinter of glass, but delighted with its appearance, the Darning-needle addressed it, introducing herself as a Breast-pin. "Surely, you are a diamond?" "Why, yes, something of the sort!" was the

reply ; so now each believed the other to be some very rare and costly trinket ; and they both began to complain of the extraordinary haughtiness of the world.

“ Yes, I have dwelt in a box belonging to a young lady,” said the Darning-needle : “ and this young lady was a cook-maid ; she had five fingers on each hand, and anything so arrogant, so conceited, as these five fingers I have never known, and, after all, what were they good for ? For nothing but to hold me, to take me out of the box and lay me in the box ! ”

“ And were they at all bright—did they shine ? ” asked the Glass-splinter.

“ Shine ! ” repeated the Darning-needle, “ not they, but conceited enough they were, notwithstanding ! They were five brothers : ‘ Finger ’ was the family name ; they held themselves so erect, side by side, although they were not all of the same height. The first, Thumbkin he was called, was short and thick ; he generally stood out of the rank rather before the others ; he had only one bend in his back, so that he could only bow once, but he used to say that if he were cut



off from a man, that man would no longer be fit for military service. Foreman, the second, would put himself forward everywhere, meddled with sweet and with sour, pointed at sun or moon, and he it was who pressed upon the pen whenever the fingers wrote. Middleman was so tall that he could look over the others' heads; Ringman wore a gold belt round his body; and

as for Littleman, he did nothing at all, and was proud of that, I suppose. Proud they were, and proud they would be, therefore I took myself off into the gutter!"

"And now we sit together and shine!" quoth the Glass-splinter. Just then, some more water was poured into the gutter, it over-flowed its boundaries, and carried the Glass-splinter along with it.

"So now he has advanced farther," observed the Darning-needle. "I stay here—I am too fine—but such it is my pride to be—it is respect-



able." So still she sat there erect, enjoying her own thoughts.

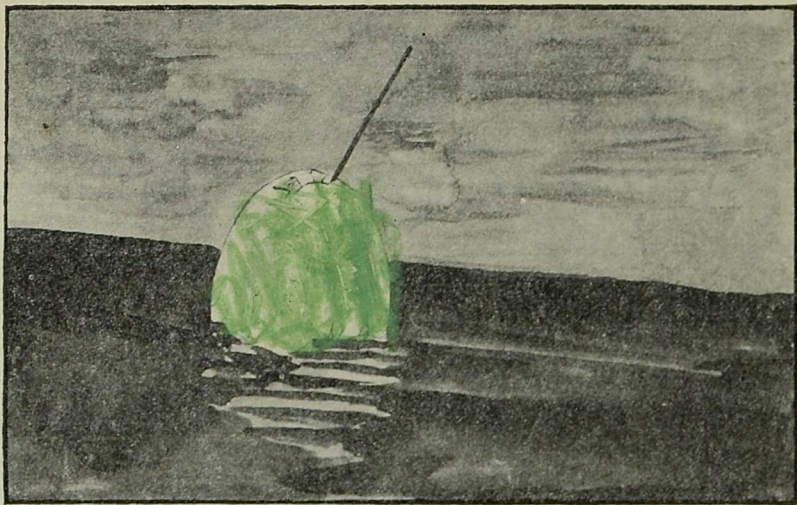
"I could almost believe I was born of a sunbeam, I am so fine ; and yet the sunbeams do not seem to seek me out under the water. Alas, I am so fine that even my mother cannot find me ! Had I still my old eye which broke, I believe I could weep—I would not, though—it is not refined to weep."

One day some boys were raking about in the gutter, hunting for old nails, pennies, and such like. This was very dirty, certainly, but such was their pleasure.

"Halloo !"
cried one, pricking himself with the Darning-needle ; "there's a fellow for you !"

"Do not call me a fellow—I am a young lady," said the Darning-needle ; but no

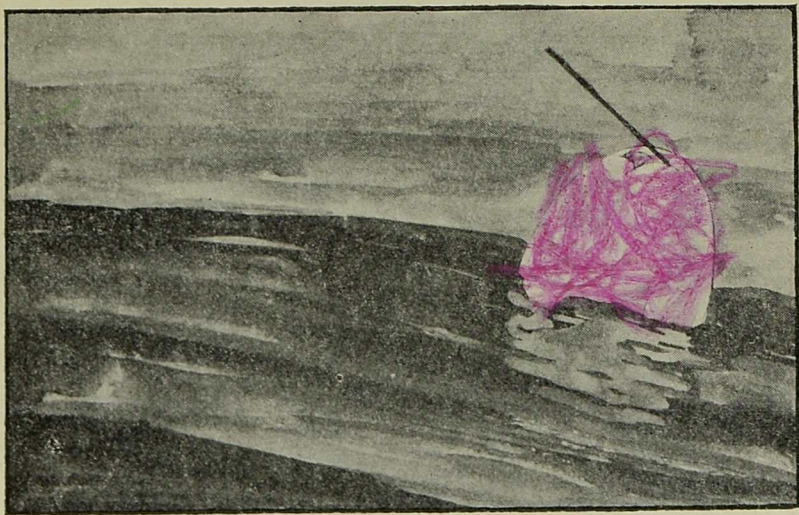




one heard it. The sealing-wax had worn off, and she had become quite black; black, however, makes a person look thin, so she fancied herself finer than ever.

“There sails an egg-shell,” said the boys; and they stuck the Darning-needle into the shell.

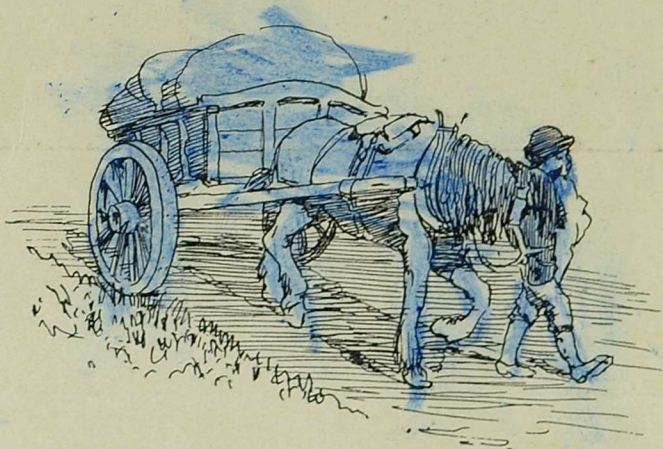
“White walls and a lady in black!” said the Darning-needle, “that is very striking! Now



every one can see me ! But I hope I shall not be sea-sick, for then I shall break." Her fear was needless ; she was not sea-sick, neither did she break.

"Nothing is so good to prevent sea-sickness as being of steel, and then, too, never to forget that one is a little more than man. Now my trial is over ; the finer one is, the more one can endure."

“Crash!” went the egg-shell; a wagon rolled over it. “Ugh, what a pressure!” sighed the Darning-needle; “now I shall be sea-sick after all! I shall break! I shall break!” But she broke not, although the wheel had passed over her; long did she lie there—and there let her lie!





THE REAL PRINCESS.

THERE was once a Prince who wished to marry a Princess ; but then she must be a real Princess. He travelled all over the world in hopes of finding such a lady ; but there was always something wrong. Princesses he

found in plenty ; but whether they were real Princesses it was impossible for him to decide, for now one thing, now another, seemed to him not quite right about the ladies. At last he returned to his palace quite cast down, because he wished so much to have a real Princess for his wife.

One evening a fearful tempest arose, it thundered and lightened, and the rain poured down from the sky in torrents ; besides, it was as dark as pitch. All at once there was heard a violent knocking at the door, and the old King, the Prince's father, went out himself to open it.

It was a Princess who was standing outside the door. What with the rain and the wind, she was in a sad condition : the water trickled down from her hair, and her clothes clung to her body. She said she was a real Princess.

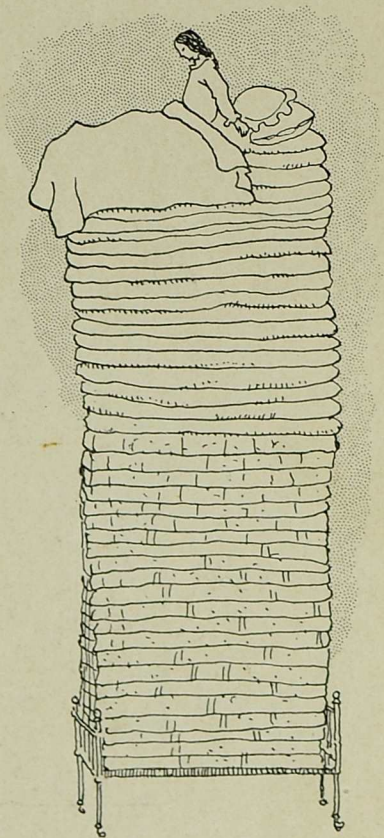
“ Ah ! we shall soon see that ! ” thought the old Queen ; however, she said not a word of what she was going to do, but went quietly into the bedroom, took all the bed-clothes off the bed, and put one little pea on the bedstead. She then laid twenty mattresses one upon another over the

pea, and put twenty feather-beds over the mattresses.

Upon this bed the Princess was to pass the night.

The next morning, she was asked how she had slept. "Oh, very badly indeed!" she replied. "I have scarcely closed my eyes the whole night through. I do not know what was in my bed, but I had something hard under me, and am all over black and blue. It has hurt me so much!"

Now it was plain that the lady must be a real Princess,



since she had been able to feel the one little pea through the twenty mattresses and twenty feather-beds. None but a real Princess could have such a delicate sense of feeling.

The Prince accordingly made her his wife, being now convinced that he had found a real Princess. The pea, however, was put into a cabinet of curiosities, where it is still to be seen, provided it be not lost.

Was not this a lady of real delicacy?





THE DAISY.

LISTEN to my story !
In the country, close by the road-side, there stands a summer-house—you must certainly have seen it. In front is a little garden full of flowers, enclosed by white palings ; and on a bank outside the palings there grew, amidst the freshest green grass, a little Daisy. The sun shone as brightly and warmly upon the Daisy as upon the splendid large flowers within the garden, and therefore it grew hourly, so that one morning it stood fully open, with its delicate white gleaming leaves, which, like rays, surrounded the little yellow sun in their centre.

It never occurred to the little flower that no one saw her, hidden as she was among the grass ; she was quite contented : she turned towards the warm sun, looked at it, and listened to the Lark who was singing in the air.

The Daisy was as happy as if it were the day of some high festival, and yet it was only Monday. The children were at school ; and whilst they sat upon their forms, and learned their lessons, the little flower upon her green stalk learned from the warm sun, and everything around her, how good God is. Meanwhile the little Lark expressed clearly and beautifully all she felt in silence ! And the flower looked up with a sort of reverence to the happy bird who could fly and sing ; it did not distress her that she could not do the same. “ I can see and listen,” thought she ; “ the sun shines on me, and the wind kisses me. Oh ! how richly am I blessed.”

There stood within the palings several grand, stiff-looking flowers ; the less fragrance they had the more airs they gave themselves. The Peonies puffed themselves out, in order to make themselves larger than the Roses. The Tulips had the

gayest colours of all; they were perfectly aware of it, and held themselves as straight as a candle, that they might be the better seen. They took no notice at all of the little flower outside the palings; but she looked all the more upon them, thinking, "How rich and beautiful they are! Yes, that noble bird will surely fly down and visit them. How happy am I, who live so near them, and can see their beauty!"



Just at that moment, “ Quirrevit ! ” the Lark did fly down, but he came not to the Peonies or the Tulips: no, he flew down to the poor little Daisy in the grass, who was almost frightened from pure joy, and knew not what to think, she was so surprised.

The little bird hopped about, and sang, “ Oh, how soft is this grass ! and what a sweet little flower blooms here, with its golden heart and silver garment ! ” for the yellow centre of the Daisy looked just like gold, and the little petals around gleamed silver white.

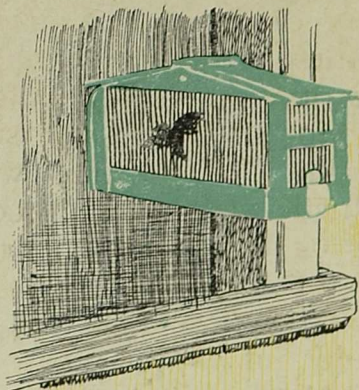
How happy the little Daisy was ! no one can imagine how happy. The bird kissed her with his beak, sang to her, and then flew up again into the blue sky. It was a full quarter of an hour ere the flower recovered herself. Half ashamed, and yet completely happy, she looked at the flowers in the garden ; they must certainly be aware of the honour and happiness that had been conferred upon her, they must know how delighted she was. But the Tulips held themselves twice as stiff as before, and their faces grew quite red with anger. As to the thick-headed



Peonies, it was, indeed, well that they could not speak, or the little Daisy would have heard something not very pleasant. The poor little flower could see well that they were in an ill-humour, and she was much grieved at it. Soon after, a girl came into the garden with a knife sharp and bright; she went up to the Tulips and cut off one after another. "Ugh! that is horrible," sighed the Daisy; "it is now all over with them." The girl then went away with the Tulips. How glad was the Daisy that she grew in the grass outside

the palings, and was a despised little flower! She felt really thankful; and when the sun set, she folded her leaves, went to sleep, and dreamed all night of the sun and the beautiful bird.

The next morning, when our little flower, fresh and cheerful, again spread out all her white leaves in the bright sunshine and clear blue air, she heard the voice of the bird; but he sung so mournfully. Alas! the poor Lark had good reason for sorrow; he had been caught, and put into a



cage close by the open window. He sang of the joys of a free and unrestrained flight; he

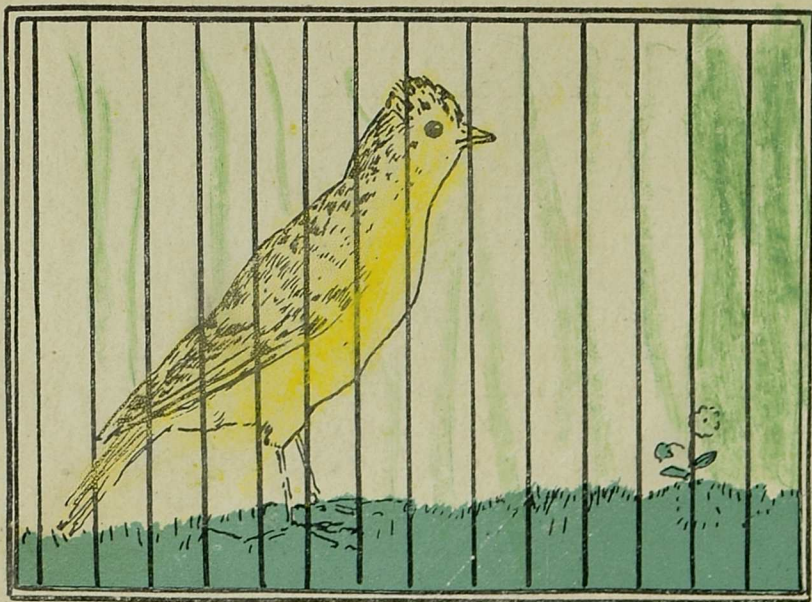
sang of the young green corn in the fields, and of the pleasure of being borne up by his wings in the open air. The poor bird was certainly very unhappy—he sat a prisoner in his narrow cage!

The little Daisy would so willingly have helped him, but how could she? Ah, that she knew not: she quite forgot how beautiful was all around her, how warmly the sun shone, how pretty and white were her leaves. Alas! she could only think of the imprisoned bird—whom it was not in her power to help.

All at once two little boys came out of the garden; one of them had a knife in his hand, as large and as sharp as that with which the girl had cut the Tulips. They went up straight to the little Daisy, who could not imagine what they wanted.

“Here we can cut a nice piece of turf for the Lark,” said one of the boys; and he began to cut deep all round the Daisy, leaving her in the centre.

“Tear out the flower,” said the other boy; and the little Daisy trembled all over for fear; for she knew that if she were torn out she would



die, and she wished so much to live, as she was to be put into the cage with the imprisoned Lark.

“No, leave it alone!” said the first, “it looks so pretty;” and so she was let alone, and was put into the Lark’s cage.

But the poor bird loudly lamented the loss of his freedom, and beat his wings against the iron bars of his cage; and the little flower could not

speaking—could not say a single word of comfort to him, much as she wished to do so. Thus passed the whole morning.

“There is no water here!” sang the captive Lark; “they have all gone out and forgotten me; not a drop of water to drink! my throat is dry and burning! there is fire and ice within me, and the air is so heavy! Alas! I must die; I must leave the warm sunshine, the fresh green trees, and all the beautiful things which God has created!” And then he pierced his beak into the cool grass, in order to refresh himself a little—and his eye fell upon the Daisy, and the bird bowed to her, and said, “Thou, too, wilt wither here, thou poor little flower! They have given me thee, and the piece of green around thee, instead of the whole world which I possessed before! Every little blade of grass is to be to me a green tree, thy every white petal a fragrant flower! Alas! thou only remindest me of what I have lost.”

“Oh! that I could comfort him!” thought the Daisy; but she could not move a single petal; yet the fragrance which came from her delicate blossom was stronger than is usual with

this flower ; the bird noticed it, and although, panting with thirst, he tore the green blades in very anguish, he did not touch the flower.

It was evening, and yet no one came to bring the poor bird a drop of water ; he stretched out his slender wings, and shook them convulsively ; his song was a mournful wail ; his little head bent towards the flower, and the bird's heart broke from thirst and desire. The flower could not now, as on the preceding evening, fold together her leaves and sleep : sad and sick, she drooped to the ground.

The boys did not come till the next morning ; and when they saw the bird was dead, they wept bitterly. They dug a pretty grave, which they adorned with flower-petals ; the bird's corpse was put into a pretty red box ; royally was the poor bird buried ! Whilst he yet lived and sang they forgot him—left him suffering in his cage—and now he was highly honoured and bitterly bewailed.

But the piece of turf with the Daisy in it was thrown out into the street : no one thought of her who had felt most for the little bird, and who had so much wished to comfort him !



TOMMELISE.

ONCE upon a time there lived a young wife who longed exceedingly to possess a little child of her own, so she went to an old witch-woman and said to her, "I wish so very much to have a child—a little tiny child—won't you give me one, old mother?"

"Oh, with all my heart!" replied the witch. "Here is a barley-corn for you; it is not exactly of the same sort as those that grow on the

farmer's fields, or that are given to the fowls in the poultry-yard, but do you sow it in a flower-pot, and then you shall see what you shall see !”

“ Thank you, thank you !” cried the woman, and she gave the witch a silver sixpence, and then, having returned home, sowed the barley-corn, as she had been directed, whereupon a large and beautiful flower immediately shot forth from the flower-pot. It looked like a tulip, but the petals were tightly folded up—it was still in bud.

“ What a lovely flower !” exclaimed the peasant-woman, and she kissed the pretty red and yellow leaves, and as she kissed them the flower gave a loud report and opened. It was indeed a tulip, but on the small green pointal in the centre of the flower there sat a little tiny girl, so pretty and delicate, but her whole body scarcely bigger than the young peasant's thumb. So she called her Tommelise.

A pretty varnished walnut shell was given her as a cradle, blue violet leaves served as her mattresses, and a rose-leaf was her coverlet. Here she slept at night ; but in the day-time she

played on the table. The peasant wife had filled a plate with water, and laid flowers in it, their blossoms bordering the edge of the plate while the stalks lay in the water; on the surface floated a large tulip-leaf, and on it Tommelise might sit and sail from one side of the plate to the other, two white horse-hairs having been given her for oars. That looked quite charming! And Tommelise could sing too, and





she sang in such low, sweet tones as never were heard before.

One night, while she was lying in her pretty bed, a great ugly Toad came hopping in through the broken window-pane. The toad was such a great creature, old and withered-looking, and

wet too ; she hopped at once down upon the table where Tommelise lay sleeping under the red rose-petal.

“That is just the wife for my son,” said the Toad ; and she seized hold of the walnut shell, with Tommelise in it, and hopped away with her through the broken pane down into the garden.

Here flowed a broad stream, its banks were muddy and swampy, and it was amongst this mud that the old Toad and her son dwelt.

Ugh, how hideous and deformed he was ! just like his mother. “Coax, coax, brekke-kekex !” was all he could find to say on seeing the pretty little maiden in the walnut-shell.

“Don’t make such a riot or you’ll wake her,” said old Mother Toad. “She may easily run away from us, for she is as light as a swan-down feather. I’ll tell you what we’ll do ; we’ll take her out into the brook, and set her down on one of the large water-lily leaves, it will be like an island to her, who is so light and small. Then she cannot run away from us, and we can go and get ready the state rooms down under the mud, where you and she are to dwell together.”

Out in the brook there grew many water-lilies, with their broad green leaves, each of which seemed to be floating over the water. The leaf which was the farthest from the shore was also the largest ; to it swam old Mother Toad, and on it she set the walnut-shell, with Tommelise.

The poor little tiny creature awoke quite early next morning, and, when she saw where she was, she began to weep most bitterly, for there was nothing but water on all sides of the large green leaf, and she could in no way reach the land.

Old Mother Toad was down in the mud, decorating her apartment with bulrushes and yellow buttercups, so as to make it quite gay and tidy to receive her new daughter-in-law. At last she and her frightful son swam together to the leaf where she had left Tommelise ; they wanted to fetch her pretty cradle, and place it for her in the bridal chamber, before she herself was conducted into it. Old Mother Toad bowed low in the water, and said to her, "Here is my son ; he is to be thy husband ; and you will dwell together so comfortably down in the mud !"



“Coax, coax, brekke-ke-kex!” was all that her son could say.

Then they took the neat little bed and swam away with it, whilst Tommelise sat alone on the green leaf, weeping, for she did not like the thought of living with the withered old Toad, and having her ugly son for a husband. The little fishes that were swimming to and fro in the water beneath had heard what Mother Toad had said, so they now put up their heads—they wanted to see the little maid. And when they saw her, they were charmed with her delicate beauty, and it vexed them very much that the hideous old Toad should carry her off. No, that should never be! They surrounded the green stalk in the water, whereon rested the water-lily leaf, and gnawed it asunder with their teeth, and then the leaf floated away down the brook, with Tommelise on it—away, far away, where the old Toad could not follow.

Tommelise sailed past so many places, and the wild birds among the bushes saw her and sang, "Oh, what a sweet little maiden!" On and on, farther and farther, floated the leaf: Tommelise was on her travels.



A pretty little white butterfly kept fluttering round and round her, and at last settled down on the leaf, for he loved Tommelise very much, and she was so pleased. There was nothing to trouble her, now that she had no fear of the old Toad pursuing her, and wherever she sailed everything was so beautiful, for the sun shone down on the water, making it bright as liquid

gold. And now she took off her sash, and tied one end of it round the butterfly, fastening the other end firmly into the leaf. On floated the leaf, faster and faster, and Tommelise with it.

Presently a great Cock-chafer came buzzing past; he caught sight of her, and immediately fastening his claw round her slender waist, flew up into a tree with her. But the green leaf still floated down the brook, and the butterfly with it; he was bound to the leaf, and could not get loose.

Oh, how terrified was poor Tommelise when the Cock-chafer carried her up into the tree! and how sorry she felt, too, for the darling white butterfly which she had left tied fast to the leaf! she feared that, if he could not get away, he would perish of hunger. But the Cock-chafer cared nothing for that. He settled with her upon the largest leaf in the tree, gave her some honey from the flowers to eat, and hummed her praises, telling her she was very pretty, although she was not at all like a Hen-chafer. And by-and-by all the Chafers who lived in that tree came to pay her a visit; they looked at Tommelise, and one Miss Hen-chafer drew in her feelers, saying, "She has



only two legs ; how miserable that looks !” “ She has no feelers !” cried another. “ And see how thin and lean her waist is ; why, she is just like a human being !” observed a third. “ How very, very ugly she is !” at last cried all the Lady-chafers in chorus. The Chafer who had carried off Tommelise still could not persuade himself that she was otherwise than pretty, but, as all the rest kept repeating and insisting that she was ugly, he at last began to think they must be in the right, and determined to have nothing more to do with her ; she might go wherever she would, for aught he cared, he said. So the whole swarm flew down from the tree with her, and set her on a daisy : then she wept because she was

so ugly that the Lady-chafers would not keep company with her ; and yet Tommelise was the prettiest little creature that could be imagined, soft, and delicate, and transparent as the loveliest rose-leaf.

All the summer long poor Tommelise lived alone in the wide wood. She wove herself a bed of grass-straw, and hung it under a large burdock-leaf, which sheltered her from the rain ; she dined off the honey from the flowers, and drank from the dew that every morning spangled the leaves and herblets around her. Thus passed the summer and autumn ; but then came winter—the cold, long winter. All the birds who had sung so sweetly to her flew away, trees and flowers withered, the large burdock-leaf, under which Tommelise had lived, rolled itself up, and became a dry, yellow stalk, and Tommelise was fearfully cold, for her clothes were wearing out, and she herself was so slight and frail ; poor little thing ! she was nearly frozen to death. It began to snow, and every light flake that fell upon her made her feel as we should if a whole shovelful of snow were thrown upon us ; for we

are giants in comparison with a little creature only an inch long. She wrapped herself up in a withered leaf, but it gave her no warmth—she shuddered with cold.

Close outside the wood, on the skirt of which Tommelise had been living, lay a large corn-field; but the corn had been carried away long ago, leaving only the dry, naked stubble standing up from the hard frozen earth. It was like another wood to Tommelise, and oh, how she shivered with cold as she made her way through! At last she came past the Field-Mouse's door; for the Field-Mouse had made herself a little hole under the stubble, and there she dwelt snugly and comfortably, having a room full of corn, and a neat kitchen and store-chamber besides. And poor Tommelise must now play the beggar-girl; she stood at the door and begged for a little piece of a barley-corn, for she had had nothing to eat during two whole days.

“Thou poor little thing!” said the Field-Mouse, who was indeed a thoroughly good-natured old creature, “come into my warm room and dine with me.”



And as she soon took a great liking to Tommelise, she proposed to her to stay. "You may dwell with me all the winter if you will, but keep my room clean and neat, and tell me stories, for I love stories dearly." And Tommelise did all that the kind old Field-Mouse required of her, and was made very comfortable in her new abode.

"We shall have a visitor presently," observed the Field-Mouse; "my next-door neighbour comes to see me once every week. He is better off than I am, has large rooms in his house, and wears a coat of such beautiful black velvet. It would be a capital thing for you if you could secure him for your husband; but unfortunately he is blind, he cannot see you. You must tell him the prettiest stories you know."

But Tommelise did not care at all about pleasing their neighbour, Mr. Mole, nor did she wish to marry him. He came and paid a visit in his black-velvet suit; he was so rich and so learned! and the Field-Mouse declared his domestic offices were twenty times larger than her's; but the sun and the pretty flowers he could not endure; he was always abusing them, though he had never seen either. Tommelise was called upon to sing for his amusement, and by the time



she had sung "Lady-bird, lady-bird, fly away home!" and "The Friar of Orders Gray," the Mole had quite fallen in love with her through the charm of her sweet voice; however, he said nothing, he was such a prudent, cautious animal.

He had just been digging a long passage through the earth from their house to his, and he now gave permission to the Field-Mouse and Tommelise to walk in it as often as they liked; however, he bade them not be afraid of the dead bird that lay in the passage; it was a whole bird, with beak and feathers entire, and therefore he supposed it must have died quite lately, at the beginning of the winter, and had been buried just in the place where he had dug his passage.

The Mole took a piece of tinder, which shines like fire in the dark, in his mouth, and went on first to light his friends through the long, dark passage, and when they came to the place where the dead bird lay, he thrust his broad nose up against the ceiling and pushed up the earth, so as to make a great hole for the light to come through. In the midst of the floor lay a Swallow, his wings clinging firmly to his sides, his head



and legs drawn under the feathers; the poor bird had evidently died of cold. Tommelise felt so very sorry, for she loved all the little birds who had sung and chirped so merrily to her the whole summer long; but the Mole kicked it with his short legs, saying, "Here's a fine end to all its whistling! a miserable thing

it must be to be born a bird! None of my children will be birds, that's a comfort! Such creatures have nothing but their 'quivit,' and must be starved to death in the winter."

"Yes, indeed, a sensible animal like you may well say so," returned the Field-Mouse; "what has the bird got by all his chirping and chirruping? when winter comes it must starve and freeze; and it is such a great creature too!"

Tommelise said nothing, but when the two others had turned their backs upon the bird, she bent over it, smoothed down the feathers that covered its head, and kissed the closed eyes.

“Perhaps it was this one that sang so delightfully to me in the summer time,” thought she; “how much pleasure it has given me, the dear, dear bird!”



The Mole now stopped up the hole through which the daylight had pierced, and then followed the ladies home. But Tommelise could not sleep that night, so she got out of her bed and wove a carpet out of hay, and then went out and spread it round the dead bird; she also fetched some soft cotton from the Field-Mouse's room, which she laid over the bird, that it might be warm amid the cold earth.

“Farewell, thou dear bird!” said she, “farewell! and thanks for thy beautiful song in the summer time, when all the trees were green and the sun shone so warmly upon us!” And she pressed her head against the bird's breast, but was terrified to feel something beating within it. It was the bird's heart—the bird was not

dead ; it had lain in a swoon, and now that it was warmer, its life returned.



Every autumn all the Swallows fly away to warm countries ; but if one of them lingers behind it freezes and falls down as though dead, and the cold snow covers it.

Tommelise trembled with fright, for the bird was very large compared with her, who was only an inch in length. However, she took courage, laid the cotton more closely round the poor Swallow, and fetching a leaf which had served herself as a coverlet, spread it over the bird's head.

The next night she stole out again, and found that the bird's life had quite returned, though it was so feeble that only for one short moment could it open its eyes to look at Tommelise, who stood by with a piece of tinder in her hand—she had no other lantern. “Thanks to thee, thou sweet little child !” said the sick Swallow. “I feel delightfully warm now ; soon I shall recover my strength, and be able to fly again, out in the warm sunshine.”



“Oh no,” she replied, “it is too cold without; it snows and freezes! thou must stay in thy warm bed; I will take care of thee.”

She brought the Swallow water in a flower-petal, and he drank, and then told her how he had torn one of his wings in a thorn-bush, and therefore could not fly fast enough to keep up with the other Swallows, who were all migrating to the warm countries. He had at last fallen to the earth, and more than that he could not remember; he did not at all know how he had got underground.

However, underground he remained all the winter long, and Tommelise was kind to him, and loved him dearly, but she never said a word about him either to the Mole or the Field-Mouse, for she knew they could not endure the poor Swallow.

As soon as the spring came, and the sun's warmth had penetrated the earth, the Swallow said farewell to Tommelise, and she opened for him the covering of earth which the Mole had thrown back before. The sun shone in upon



them so deliciously, and the Swallow asked whether she would not go with him; she might sit upon his back, and then they would fly together far out into the greenwood. But Tommelise knew it would vex the old Field-Mouse, if she were to leave her.

“No, I cannot; I must not go,” said Tommelise.

“Fare thee well, then, thou good and pretty maiden!” said the Swallow, and away he flew into the sunshine. Tommelise looked after him, and the tears came into her eyes, for she loved the poor Swallow so much.

“Quivit, quivit,” sang the bird, as he flew into the greenwood.

And Tommelise was now sad indeed. She was not allowed to go out into the warm sunshine; the wheat that had been sown in the field above the Field-Mouse’s house grew up so high that it seemed a perfect forest to the poor little damsel, who was only an inch in stature.

“This summer you must work at getting your wedding-clothes ready,” said the Field-Mouse; for their neighbour, the blind, dull Mole, in the black-velvet suit, had now made his proposals in form to Tommelise. “You shall have worsted and linen in plenty; you shall be well provided with all manner of clothes and furniture, before you become the Mole’s wife.”



So Tommelise was obliged to work hard at the distaff, and the Field-Mouse hired four spiders to spin and weave night and day. Every evening came the Mole, and always began to talk about the summer soon coming to an end, and that then—when the sun would no longer shine so warmly, scorching the earth till it was as dry as a stone—yes, then, his nuptials with Tommelise should take place. But this sort of conversation did not please her at all; she was thoroughly wearied of his dulness and his prating. Every morning, when the sun rose, and every

evening when it set, she used to steal out at the door ; and when the wind blew the tops of the corn aside, so that she could see the blue sky through the opening, she thought how bright and beautiful it was out here, and wished most fervently to see the dear Swallow once more ; but he never came, he must have been flying far away in the beautiful greenwood.

Autumn came, and Tommelise's wedding-clothes were ready.

“ Four weeks more, and you shall be married ! ” said the Field-Mouse. But Tommelise wept, and said she would not marry the dull Mole.

“ Fiddlestick ! ” exclaimed the Field-Mouse ; “ don't be obstinate, child, or I shall bite thee with my white teeth ! Is he not handsome, pray ? Why, the Queen has not got such a black-velvet dress as he wears ! And isn't he rich—rich both in kitchens and cellars ? Be thankful to get such a husband ! ”

So Tommelise must be married. The day fixed had arrived, the Mole had already come to fetch his bride, and she must dwell with him,





deep under the earth, never again to come out into the warm sunshine, which she loved so much, and which he could not endure. The poor child was in despair at the thought that she must now bid a last farewell to the beautiful sun, of which she had at least been allowed to catch a glimpse every now and then while she lived with the Field-Mouse.

“Farewell, thou glorious sun!” she cried, throwing her arms up into the air, and she walked on a little way beyond the Field-Mouse’s door; the corn was already reaped, and only the dry stubble surrounded her. “Farewell, farewell!” repeated she, as she clasped her tiny arms round a little red flower that grew there. “Greet the dear Swallow from me, if thou shouldest see him.”

“Quivit! quivit!”—there was a fluttering of wings just over her head: she looked up, and behold! the little Swallow was flying past. And how pleased he was when he perceived



Tommelise ! She told how that she had been obliged to accept the disagreeable Mole as a husband, and that she would have to dwell deep underground, where the sun never pierced. And she could not help weeping as she spoke.

“ The cold winter will soon be here,” said the Swallow ; “ I shall fly far away to the warm countries. Wilt thou go with me ? Thou canst sit on my back, and tie thyself firmly to me with thy sash, and thus we shall fly away from the stupid Mole and his dark room, far away over the mountains, to those countries where the sun shines so brightly, where it is always summer, and flowers blossom all the year round. Come and fly with me, thou sweet little Tommelise, who didst save my life when I lay frozen in the dark cellars of the earth ! ”

“ Yes, I will go with thee ! ” said Tommelise. And she seated herself on the bird’s back, her feet resting on the outspread wings, and tied her girale firmly round one of the strongest feathers,

and then the Swallow soared high into the air, and flew away over forest and over lake—over mountains whose crests are covered with snow all the year round. How Tommelise shivered as she breathed the keen frosty air! However, she soon crept down under the bird's warm feathers, her head still peering forth, eager to behold all the glory and beauty beneath her.

At last they reached the warm countries. There the sun shone far more brightly than in her native clime. The heavens seemed twice as high, and twice as blue; and ranged along the sloping hills grew, in rich luxuriance, the loveliest green and purple grapes. Citrons and melons were seen in the groves, the fragrance of myrtles and balsams filled the air; and by the wayside gambolled groups of pretty merry children chasing large bright-winged butterflies.

But the Swallow did not rest here; still he flew on; and still the scene seemed to grow more and more beautiful. Near a calm blue lake, overhung by lofty trees, stood a half-ruined palace of white marble, built in times long past; vine-wreaths trailed up the long slender pillars,



and on the capitals, among the green leaves and waving tendrils, many a swallow had built his nest, and one of these nests belonged to the Swallow on whose back Tommelise was riding.

“This is my house,” said the Swallow; “but if thou wouldst rather choose for thyself one of the splendid flowers growing beneath us, I will take thee there, and thou shalt make thy home in the loveliest of them all.”

“That will be charming!” exclaimed she, clapping her tiny hands.

On the green turf beneath, there lay the fragments of a white marble column which had fallen to the ground, and around these fragments twined some beautiful large white flowers. The Swallow flew down with Tommelise, and set her on one of the broad petals. But what was her surprise when she saw sitting in the very heart of the flower a little mannikin, fair and transparent as though he were made of glass, wearing the prettiest gold crown on his head, and the brightest, most delicate wings on his shoulders, yet scarcely one whit larger than Tommelise herself. He was the Spirit of the flower. In every blossom there dwelt one such fairy youth or maiden, but this one was the king of all these flower-spirits.



“Oh, how handsome he is, this King!” whispered Tommelise to the Swallow. The fairy prince was quite startled at the sudden descent of the Swallow, who was a sort of giant compared with him; but when he saw Tommelise he was delighted, for she was the very loveliest maiden he had ever seen. So he took his gold crown off his own head and set it upon her’s, asked her name, and whether she would be his bride and reign as queen over all the Flower-spirits. This, you see, was quite a different bridegroom from the son of the ugly old Toad, or the blind Mole with his black velvet coat. So Tommelise replied “Yes” to the beautiful prince; and then the lady and gentlemen fairies came out, each from a separate flower, to pay their homage to Tommelise; so gracefully and courteously they paid their homage! and every one of them brought her a present. But the best of all the presents was a pair of transparent wings; they were fastened on Tommelise’s shoulders, and enabled her to fly from flower to flower. That was the greatest of pleasures! and the little Swallow sat in his nest above and sang to her his sweetest

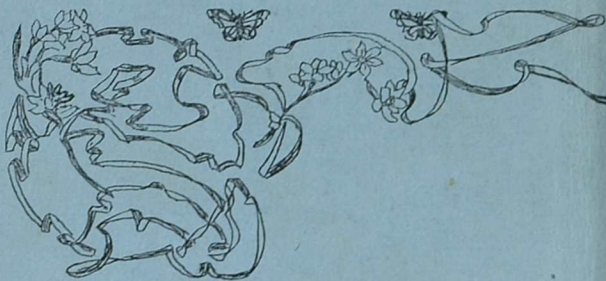
song ; in his heart, however, he was very sad, for he loved Tommelise, and would have wished never to part from her.

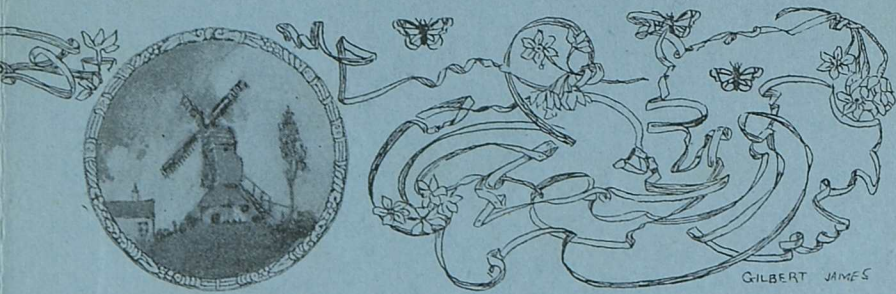
“Thou shalt no longer be called Tommelise,” said the King of the Flowers to her, “for it is not a pretty name, and thou art so lovely ! We will call thee Maia.”

“Farewell ! farewell !” sang the Swallow, and away he flew from the warm countries far away back to Denmark. There he had a little nest just over the window of the man who writes stories for children. “Quivit ! quivit ! quivit !” he sang to him, and from him we have learned this history.



For the Mary SE George Contn.





GILBERT JAMES

