

TALES FROM HANS ANDERSEN



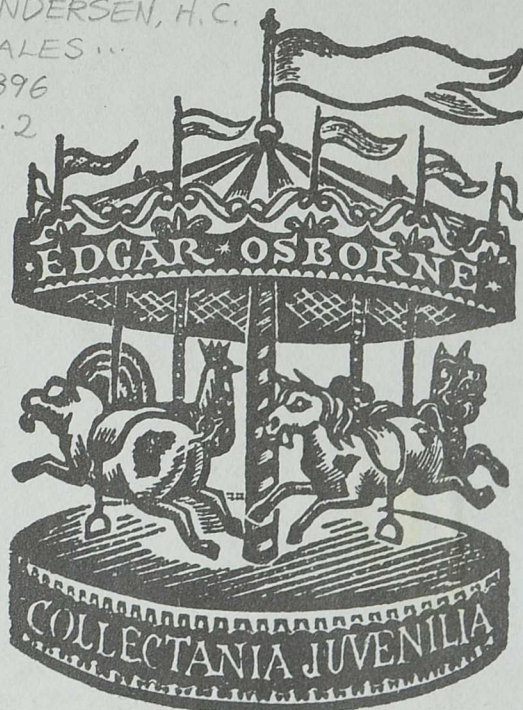
FT.

ANDERSEN, H.C.

TALES...

1896

C.2



37131 048 609 192

II.582

TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY

*Presented to the
Osborne Collection by*

Peter and June Elendt

11

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or date, appearing as a series of connected strokes.

Helen Ward

Rahway
N. J.

TALES FROM
HANS ANDERSEN

TALES FROM
HANS ANDERSEN

WITH NUMEROUS
ILLUSTRATIONS BY
HELEN STRATTON



Westminster

ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND CO.

2 WHITEHALL GARDENS, S.W.

1896

Edinburgh : T. and A. CONSTABLE, Printers to Her Majesty

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE WILD SWANS	I
THE UGLY DUCKLING	38
THE LITTLE MERMAID	60
THE STORKS	III
THE SNOW QUEEN	125

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

THE WILD SWANS

	PAGE
INITIAL LETTER F	I
A PICTURE-BOOK WORTH HALF A KINGDOM	I
MADE HER GET INTO THE BATH	5
THE BROOK	10
SHE STROKED HIS WHITE WINGS	15
THE SWANS FLEW AWAY WITH ELISE	19
HOLDING HER ON HIS HORSE	25
THE CHURCHYARD	29
THE RUSTLING OF SWAN'S WINGS AT THE GRATING	33
THE PEOPLE WERE EAGER TO SEE THE WITCH BURNT	35
SHE AWOKE FROM HER TRANCE	37

THE UGLY DUCKLING

INITIAL LETTER I	38
THE GIRL WHO FED THE POULTRY KICKED HIM	44
'WHAT IS THE MATTER?' ASKED THE OLD WOMAN	49
SAT ALONE IN A CORNER	51
HE TURNED ROUND AND ROUND IN THE WATER LIKE A MILL- WHEEL	54
THE CHILDREN WOULD HAVE PLAYED WITH HIM	56
TAILPIECE (SWAN)	59

viii LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

THE LITTLE MERMAID

	PAGE
INITIAL LETTER F	60
THE FISHES ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO BE CARESSED	62
A BEAUTIFUL WHITE MARBLE STATUE OF A BOY	64
THE CHILDREN FLED BACK TO THE LAND IN TERROR	69
SHE KEPT HIM ABOVE WATER	76
THE MERMAID AND HER GRANDMOTHER	83
HERE SAT THE WITCH	88
WHEN THE SUN ROSE, SHE AWOKE	93
SHE WAS BATHING HER FEET	96
HE KISSED HER ROSY LIPS	99
SHE WAS OBLIGED TO JOIN THE DANCE	103
HER SISTERS ROSE OUT THE WATER, STRETCHING OUT THEIR HANDS TOWARDS HER	105

THE STORKS

INITIAL LETTER O	III
'STORK ! STORK ! LONG-LEGGED STORK ! INTO THY NEST I PRITHEE WALK'	112
STORK AND FROGS	115
THE STORKS	118
A LITTLE URCHIN NOT MORE THAN SIX YEARS OLD	121
THE STORKS HAVE THEIR REVENGE	123
IN THE POOL LIES A LITTLE DEAD CHILD	124
TAILPIECE (STORK AND FROGS IN OVAL FRAME)	124

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ix

THE SNOW QUEEN

	PAGE
INITIAL LETTER L	125
INITIAL LETTER I	128
KAY PEEPED THROUGH THE LITTLE ROUND HOLE . . .	131
SHE SPREAD HER CLOAK AROUND HIM	137
INITIAL LETTER B	139
THE OLD DAME COMBED HER HAIR	144
GERDA KNEW EVERY FLOWER IN THE GARDEN	146
INITIAL LETTER G	154
SHE KISSED THE RAVEN VIOLENTLY	155
'STOOD BEFORE THE THRONE WHERE THE PRINCESS SAT'	158
GERDA MADE HER A CURTSY	164
STRANGE-LOOKING SHADOWS	165
INITIAL LETTER T	169
AT LAST THEY WERE IN LAPLAND	177
INITIAL LETTER T	178
THE WISE WOMAN OF FINMARK	180
INITIAL LETTER T	185
HE SAT STILL AS BEFORE—COLD, SILENT, MOTIONLESS .	188

THE WILD SWANS



AR hence, in a country whither the swallows fly in our winter-time, there dwelt a King who had eleven sons, and one daughter, the beautiful Elise. The eleven brothers — they were princes

—went to school with stars on their breasts and swords by their sides ; they wrote on golden tablets with diamond pens, and could read either with a book or without one ; in short, it was easy to perceive that they were princes. Their sister, Elise, used to sit upon a little glass stool, and had a picture-book which had cost the half of



A PICTURE-BOOK WORTH
HALF A KINGDOM

a kingdom. Oh! the children were so happy! but happy they could not be always.

Their father, the King, married a very wicked Queen, who was not at all kind to the poor children; they found this out on the first day after the marriage, when there was a grand gala at the palace; for when the children played at receiving company, instead of having as many cakes and sweetmeats as they liked, the Queen gave them only some sand in a little dish, and told them to imagine that was something nice.

The week after, she sent little Elise to be brought up by some peasants in the country, and it was not long before she told the King so many falsehoods about the poor Princes that he would have nothing more to do with them. 'Away! out into the world, and take care of yourselves!' said the wicked Queen; 'fly away in the form of great speechless birds.' But she could not make their transformation as disagreeable as she wished; the Princes were changed into eleven white Swans. Sending forth a strange cry, they flew out of the palace windows, over the park and over the wood.

It was still early in the morning when they passed by the place where Elise lay sleeping in the peasant's cottage. They flew several times round the roof, stretched their long necks, and flapped their wings, but no one either heard or saw them; they were forced to fly away, up to the clouds and into the wide world; so on they went to the deep, dark forest which stretched as far as the seashore.

The poor little Elise stood in the peasant's cottage amusing herself with a green leaf, for she had no other plaything. She pricked a hole in the leaf and peeped through it at the sun, and then she fancied she saw her brothers' bright eyes; and whenever the warm sunbeams shone full upon her cheeks, she thought of her brothers' kisses.

One day passed exactly like the other. When the Wind blew through the thick hedge of rose-trees in front of the house, he would whisper to the Roses, 'Who is more beautiful than you?' but the Roses would shake their heads, and say, 'Elise.' And when the peasant's wife sat on Sundays at the door of her cottage reading her

hymn-book, the Wind would rustle in the leaves and say to the book, 'Who is more pious than thou?' 'Elise,' replied the Hymn-book. And what the Roses and the Hymn-book said was no more than the truth.

Elise being fifteen years old, she was sent for to return home; but when the Queen saw how beautiful she was, she hated her the more, and would willingly have transformed her, like her brothers, into a wild swan, but she dared not do so, because the King wished to see his daughter.

So the next morning the Queen went into a bath made of marble, and fitted up with soft pillows and the gayest carpets: she took three toads, kissed them, and said to one, 'Settle thou upon Elise's head, that she may become dull and sleepy like thee.' 'Settle thou upon her forehead,' said she to another, 'and let her become ugly like thee, so that her father may not know her again.' And 'Do thou place thyself upon her bosom,' whispered she to the third, 'that her heart may become corrupt and evil, a torment to herself.' She then put the toads into the clear water, which was immediately tinted with

a green colour, and having called Elise, took off her clothes and made her get into the bath. And one toad settled among her hair, another on her forehead, and a third upon her bosom; but Elise seemed not at all aware of it; she rose up, and three poppies were seen floating on the water. Had not the animals been poisonous and kissed by a witch, they would have been changed into roses whilst they rested on Elise's head and heart,—she was too good for magic to have any power over her. When the Queen saw this, she rubbed walnut-juice all over the maiden's skin, so that it became quite swarthy, smeared a nasty salve over her lovely face, and entangled her long thick hair. It was impossible to recognise the beautiful Elise after this.



MADE HER GET INTO
THE BATH

So when her father saw her he was shocked,

and said she could not be his daughter; no one would have anything to do with her but the mastiff and the swallows; but they, poor things, could not say anything in her favour.

Poor Elise wept, and thought of her eleven brothers, not one of whom she saw at the palace. In great distress she stole away and wandered the whole day over fields and moors, till she reached the forest. She knew not where to go, but she was so sad, and longed so much to see her brothers, who had been driven out into the world, that she made up her mind to seek and find them.

She had not been long in the forest when night came on, and she lost her way amid the darkness. So she lay down on the soft moss, said her evening prayer, and leaned her head against the trunk of a tree. It was very still in the forest, the air was mild, and from the grass and mould around gleamed the green light of many hundred glow-worms, and when Elise lightly touched one of the branches hanging over her, bright insects fell down upon her like falling stars.

All the night long she dreamed of her brothers. They were all children again, played together, wrote with diamond pens upon golden tablets, and looked at the pictures in the beautiful book which had cost half a kingdom. But they did not, as formerly, make straight strokes and pot-hooks upon the tablets,—no, they wrote of the bold deeds they had done, and of the strange adventures they had met with, and in the picture-book everything seemed alive; the birds sang, men and women stepped from the book and talked to Elise and her brothers: however, when she turned over the leaves, they jumped back into their places, so that the pictures did not get confused together.

When Elise awoke the sun was already high in the heavens. She could not see it certainly, for the tall trees of the forest closely entwined their thickly leaved branches, which, as the sunbeams played upon them, looked like a golden veil waving to and fro. And the air was fragrant, and the birds perched upon Elise's shoulders. She heard the noise of water; there were several springs forming a pool with the prettiest pebbles

at the bottom, bushes were growing thickly round, but the deer had trodden a broad path through them, and by this path Elise went down to the water's edge. The water was so clear that, had not the boughs and bushes around been moved to and fro by the wind, you might have fancied they were painted upon the smooth surface, so distinctly was each little leaf mirrored upon it, whether glowing in the sunlight or lying in the shade.

As soon as Elise saw her face reflected in the water she was quite startled, so brown and ugly did it look: however, when she had wetted her little hand and rubbed her brow and eyes, the white skin showed again. So Elise took off her clothes, stepped into the fresh water, and in the whole world there was not a king's daughter more beautiful than she then appeared.

After she had dressed herself, and had braided her long hair, she went to the bubbling spring, drank out of the hollow of her hand, and then wandered farther into the forest. She knew not where she was going, but she thought of her brothers, and of the good God, who, she felt, would never forsake her. He it was who made

the wild crab-trees grow in order to feed the hungry, and who showed her a tree whose boughs bent under the weight of their fruit. She made her noonday meal under its shade, propped up the boughs, and then walked on amid the dark twilight of the forest. It was so still that she could hear her own footsteps, and the rustling of each little withered leaf that was crushed beneath her feet; not a bird was to be seen, not a single sunbeam pierced through the thick foliage, and the tall stems of the trees stood so close together, that when she looked straight before her, she seemed enclosed by trellis-work upon trellis-work. Oh! there was a solitariness in this forest such as Elise had never known before.

And the night was so dark! not a single glow-worm sent forth its light. Sad and melancholy, she lay down to sleep, and then it seemed to her as though the boughs above her opened, and that she saw the Angel of God looking down upon her with gentle aspect, and a thousand little cherubs all around Him. When she awoke in the morning she could not tell whether this was a dream, or whether she had really been so watched.

She walked on a little farther and met an old woman with a basketful of berries ; the old woman gave her some of them, and Elise asked if she had not seen eleven Princes ride through the wood.

‘No,’ said the old woman, ‘but I saw yesterday eleven Swans with golden crowns on their heads swim down the brook near this place.’



THE BROOK

And she led Elise on a little farther to a precipice, the base of which was washed by a brook ; the trees on each side stretched their long leafy branches towards each other, and where they

could not unite, the roots had disengaged themselves from the earth and hung their interlaced fibres over the water.

Elise bade the old woman farewell, and wandered by the side of the stream till she came to the place where it reached the open sea.

The great, the beautiful sea lay extended before the maiden's eyes, but not a ship, not a boat was to be seen ; how was she to go on ? She observed the numberless little stones on the shore, all of which the waves had washed into a round form ; glass, iron, stone, everything that lay scattered there, had been moulded into shape, and yet the water which had effected this was much softer than Elise's delicate, little hand. 'It rolls on unweariedly,' said she, 'and subdues what is so hard ; I will be no less unwearied ! Thank you for the lesson you have given me, ye bright rolling waves ! some day, my heart tells me, you shall carry me to my dear brothers !'

There lay upon the wet seaweed eleven white swan-feathers ; Elise collected them together ; drops of water hung about them, whether dew or tears she could not tell. She was quite alone on the

seashore, but she did not mind that; the sea presented an eternal variety to her—more, indeed, in a few hours than the gentle inland waters would have offered in a whole year. When a black cloud passed over the sky, it seemed as if the sea would say, ‘I, too, can look dark’: and then the wind would blow and the waves fling out their white foam; but when the clouds shone with a bright red tint, and the winds were asleep, the sea also became like a rose-leaf in hue. It was now green, now white, but it ever reposed peacefully; sometimes a light breeze would be astir on the shore, causing the water to heave gently, like the bosom of a sleeping child.

At sunset Elise saw eleven Wild Swans with golden crowns on their heads fly towards the land; they flew one behind another, looking like a streaming white riband. Elise climbed the precipice, and concealed herself behind a bush: the Swans settled close to her, and flapped their long white wings.

As the sun sank beneath the water the Swans also vanished, and in their place stood eleven handsome Princes, the brothers of Elise. She

uttered a loud cry, for although they were very much altered, Elise knew that they were, felt that they must be, her brothers; she ran into their arms, called them by their names—and how happy were *they* to see and recognise their sister, now grown so tall and so beautiful! They laughed and wept, and soon told each other how wickedly their stepmother had acted towards them.

‘We,’ said the eldest of the brothers, ‘fly or swim as long as the sun is above the horizon, but when it sinks below, we appear again in our human form; we are therefore obliged to look out for a safe resting-place, for if, at sunset, we were flying among the clouds, we should fall down as soon as we resumed our own form. We do not dwell here; a land quite as beautiful as this lies on the opposite side of the sea, but it is far off. To reach it we have to cross the deep waters, and there is no island midway on which we may rest at night; one little solitary rock rises from the waves, and upon it we only just find room enough to stand side by side. There we spend the night in our human form, and when the sea is rough, we are sprinkled by its foam; but we are thankful for

this resting-place, for without it we should never be able to visit our dear native country. Only once in the year is this visit to the home of our fathers allowed; we require two of the longest days for our flight, and can remain here only eleven days, during which time we fly over the large forest, whence we can see the palace in which we were born, where our father dwells, and the tower of the church in which our mother was buried. Here, even the trees and bushes seem of kin to us; here the wild horses still race over the plains, as in the days of our childhood; here the charcoal-burner still sings the same old tunes to which we used to dance in our youth; hither we are still attracted; and here we have found thee, thou dear little sister! We have yet two days longer to stay here, then we must fly over the sea to a land beautiful indeed, but not our fatherland. How shall we take thee with us? we have neither ship nor boat!’

‘How shall I be able to release you?’ said the sister. And so they went on talking almost the whole of the night; they slumbered only a few hours.

Elise was awakened by the rustling of swans' wings, which were fluttering above her. Her brothers were again transformed, and for some time flew round in large circles; at last they flew far, far away. Only one of them remained behind—it was the youngest; he laid his head in her lap,



SHE STROKED HIS WHITE WINGS

and she stroked his white wings; they remained the whole day together. Towards evening the others came back, and when the sun was set, again they stood on the firm ground in their natural form.

‘To-morrow we shall fly away, and may not return for a year, but we cannot leave thee; hast

thou courage to accompany us? My arm is strong enough to bear thee through the forest: shall we not have sufficient strength in our wings to transport thee over the sea?’

‘Yes, take me with you,’ said Elise. They spent the whole night in weaving a mat of the pliant willow bark and the tough rushes, and their mat was thick and strong. Elise lay down upon it; and when the sun had risen, and the brothers were again transformed into Wild Swans, they seized the mat with their beaks, and flew up high among the clouds with their dear sister, who was still sleeping. The sunbeams shone full upon her face, so one of the Swans flew over her head, and shaded her with his broad wings.

They were already far from land when Elise awoke: she thought she was still dreaming, so strange did it appear to her to be travelling through the air, and over the sea. By her side lay a cluster of pretty berries, and a handful of savoury roots. Her youngest brother had collected and laid them there; and she thanked him with a smile, for she knew him as the Swan who flew overhead and shaded her with his wings.

They flew so high, that the first ship they saw beneath them seemed like a white seagull skimming over the water. Elise saw behind her a large cloud; it looked like a mountain; and on it she saw the gigantic shadows of herself and the eleven Swans: it formed a picture more splendid than any she had ever yet seen. Soon, however, the sun rose higher, the cloud remained far behind, and then the floating, shadowy picture disappeared.

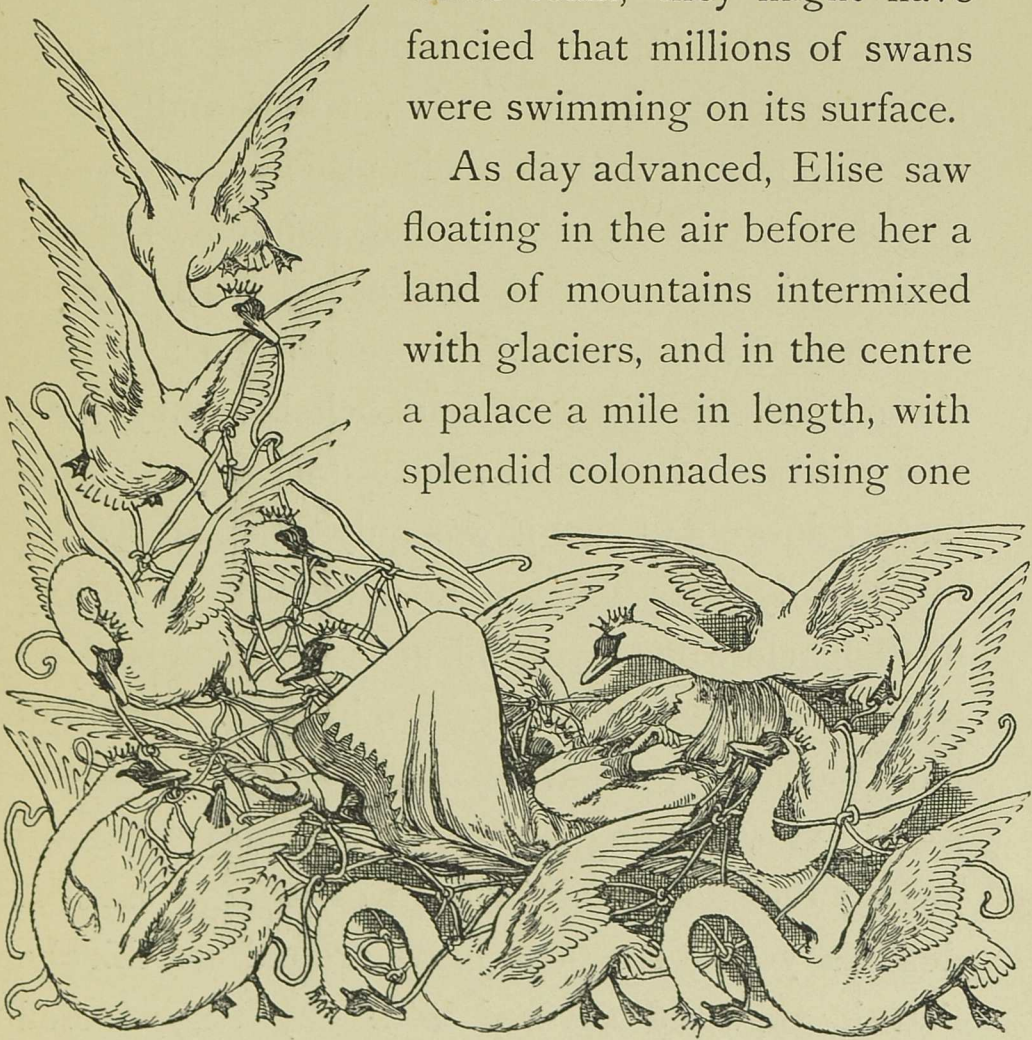
The whole day they continued flying with a whizzing noise somewhat like an arrow, but yet they went slower than usual—they had their sister to carry. A heavy tempest was gathering—the evening approached; anxiously did Elise watch the sun—it was setting; still the solitary rock could not be seen; it appeared to her that the Swans plied their wings with increasing vigour. Alas! it would be her fault if her brothers did not arrive at the place in time; they would become human beings when the sun set; and if this happened before they reached the rock, they must fall into the sea and be drowned. She prayed to God most fervently—still no rock was to be seen; the black clouds drew nearer—violent gusts of

wind announced the approach of a tempest—the clouds rested perpendicularly upon a fearfully large wave which rolled quickly forwards—one flash of lightning rapidly succeeded another.

The sun was now on the rim of the sea. Elise's heart beat violently; the Swans shot downwards so swiftly that she thought she must fall, but again they began to hover; the sun was half sunk beneath the water, and at that moment she saw the little rock below her; it looked like a seal's head when he raises it just above the water. And the sun was sinking fast—it seemed scarcely larger than a star; her foot touched the hard ground, and it vanished altogether, like the last spark on a burnt piece of paper. Arm in arm stood her brothers around her; there was only just room for her and them; the sea beat tempestuously against the rock, flinging over them a shower of foam; the sky seemed in a continual blaze with the fast-succeeding flashes of fire that lightened it, and peal after peal rolled on the thunder, but sister and brothers kept firm hold of each others' hands. They sang a psalm, and their psalm gave them comfort and courage.

By daybreak the air was pure and still, and as soon as the sun rose, the Swans flew away with Elise from the rock. The waves rose higher and higher, and when they looked from the clouds down upon the blackish-green sea, covered as it was with white foam, they might have fancied that millions of swans were swimming on its surface.

As day advanced, Elise saw floating in the air before her a land of mountains intermixed with glaciers, and in the centre a palace a mile in length, with splendid colonnades rising one



THE SWANS FLEW AWAY WITH ELISE

above another, palm-trees and gorgeous-looking flowers as large as mill-wheels growing beneath. She asked if this were the country to which they were flying, but the Swans shook their heads, for what she saw was the beautiful fairy castle of the fairy Morgana, where no human being was admitted: and whilst Elise still bent her eyes upon it, mountains, trees, and castle all disappeared, and in their place stood twelve churches with high towers and pointed windows. She fancied she heard the organ play, but it was only the murmur of the sea. She was now close to these churches, but, behold! they have changed into a large fleet sailing under them. She looked down, and saw it was only a sea-mist passing rapidly over the water. An eternal variety floated before her eyes, till at last the actual land whither she was bound appeared in sight. Beautiful blue mountains, cedar woods, towns, and castles rose to view. Long before sunset Elise sat down among the mountains, in front of a large cavern; delicate young creepers grew around so thickly, that it appeared covered with gay embroidered carpets.

‘Now we shall see what thou wilt dream of to-night!’ said her youngest brother, as he showed her the sleeping-chamber destined for her.

‘Oh that I could dream how you might be released from the spell!’ said she; and this thought completely occupied her; she prayed most earnestly for God’s assistance; nay, even in her dreams she continued praying; and it appeared to her that she was flying up high in the air towards the castle of the fairy Morgana. The fairy came forward to meet her, radiant and beautiful, and yet she fancied she resembled the old woman who had given her berries in the forest, and told her of the Swans with golden crowns.

‘Thou *canst* release thy brothers,’ she said, ‘but hast thou courage and patience sufficient? The water is indeed softer than thy delicate hands, and yet can mould the hard stones to its will, but then it cannot feel the pain which thy tender fingers will feel: it has no heart, and cannot suffer the anxiety and grief which thou must suffer. Dost thou see these stinging nettles which I have in my hand? there are many of the same kind growing round the cave where thou art sleeping; only those that grow

there or on the graves in the churchyard are of use—remember that! Thou must pluck them, although they will sting thy hand; thou must trample on the nettles with thy feet, and get yarn from them; and with this yarn thou must weave eleven shirts with long sleeves;—throw them over the eleven Wild Swans, and the spell is broken. But, mark this! from the moment that thou beginnest thy work till it is completed, even should it occupy thee for years, thou must not speak a word; the first syllable that escapes thy lips will fall like a dagger into the hearts of thy brothers; on thy tongue depends their life. Mark well all this!’

And at the same moment the fairy touched Elise’s hands with a nettle, which made them burn like fire, and Elise awoke. It was broad daylight, and close to her lay a nettle like the one she had seen in her dream. She fell upon her knees, thanked God, and then went out of the cave in order to begin her work. She plucked with her own delicate hands the disagreeable stinging nettles: they burned large blisters on her hands and arms, but she bore the pain willingly in the hope of releasing her dear brothers. She trampled on the

nettles with her naked feet, and spun the green yarn.

At sunset came her brothers. Elise's silence quite frightened them; they thought it must be the effect of some fresh spell of their wicked step-mother; but when they saw her blistered hands, they found out what their sister was doing for their sakes. The youngest brother wept, and when his tears fell upon her hands, Elise felt no more pain—the blisters disappeared.

The whole night she spent in her work, for she could not rest till she had released her brothers. All the following day she sat in her solitude, for the Swans had flown away; but never had time passed so quickly. One shirt was ready; she now began the second.

Suddenly a hunting-horn resounded among the mountains. Elise was frightened. The noise came nearer; she heard the hounds barking. In great terror she fled into the cave, bound up the nettles which she had gathered and combed into a bundle, and sat down upon it.

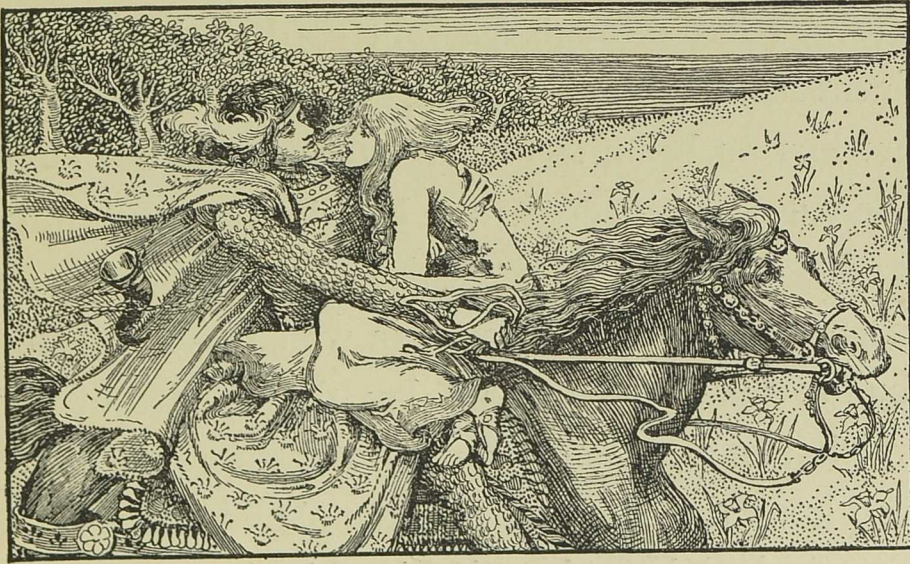
In the same moment a large dog sprang out from the bushes; two others immediately followed; they

barked loudly, ran away, and then returned. It was not long before the hunters stood in front of the cave; the handsomest among them was the King of that country; he stepped up to Elise. Never had he seen a lovelier maiden.

‘How camest thou here, thou beautiful child?’ said he. Elise shook her head: she dared not speak; a word might have cost her the life of her brothers, and she hid her hands under her apron lest the King should see how she was suffering.

‘Come with me,’ said he, ‘thou must not stay here! If thou art good as thou art beautiful, I will dress thee in velvet and silk; I will put a gold crown upon thy head, and thou shalt dwell in my palace!’ So he lifted her upon his horse, while she wept and wrung her hands; but the King said, ‘I only desire thy happiness! thou shalt thank me for this some day!’ and away he rode over mountains and valleys, holding her on his horse in front, whilst the other hunters followed. When the sun set, the King’s magnificent capital, with its churches and cupolas, lay before them, and the King led Elise into the palace, where, in a high marble hall, fountains were playing, and the walls and ceiling

displayed the most beautiful paintings. But Elise cared not for all this splendour; she wept and mourned in silence, even while some female attendants dressed her in royal robes, wove costly pearls



HOLDING HER ON HIS HORSE

in her hair, and drew soft gloves over her blistered hands.

And now she was fully dressed, and as she stood in her splendid attire, her beauty was so dazzling that the courtiers all bowed low before her, and the King chose her for his bride, although the Archbishop shook his head, and whispered that 'the beautiful lady of the wood must certainly be a

witch, who had blinded their eyes, and infatuated the King's heart.'

But the King did not listen; he ordered music to be played, and a sumptuous banquet served up; the loveliest maidens danced round the bride, and she was led through fragrant gardens into magnificent halls, but not a smile was seen to play upon her lips or beam from her eyes. The King then opened a small room next her sleeping-apartment; it was adorned with costly green tapestry, and exactly resembled the cave in which she had been found: upon the ground lay the bundle of yarn which she had spun from the nettles, and by the wall hung the shirt she had completed. One of the hunters had brought all this, thinking there must be something wonderful in it.

'Here thou mayest dream of thy former home,' said the King; 'here is the work which employed thee: amidst all thy present splendour it may sometimes give thee pleasure to fancy thyself there again.'

When Elise saw what was so dear to her heart she smiled, and the blood returned to her cheeks; she thought her brothers might still be released,

and she kissed the King's hand; he pressed her to his heart, and ordered the bells of all the churches in the city to be rung, to announce the celebration of their wedding. The beautiful dumb maiden of the wood was to become Queen of the land.

The Archbishop whispered evil words in the King's ear, but they made no impression upon him; the marriage was solemnised, and the Archbishop himself was obliged to put the crown upon her head. In his rage he pressed the narrow rim so firmly on her forehead that it hurt her; but a heavier weight—sorrow for her brothers—lay upon her heart: she did not feel bodily pain. She was still silent—a single word would have killed her brothers; her eyes, however, beamed with heartfelt love to the King, so good and handsome, who had done so much to make her happy. She became more warmly attached to him every day. Oh, how much she wished she might confide to him all her sorrows! but she was forced to remain silent; she could not speak until her work was completed! To this end she stole away every night, and went into the little room that was fitted up in imitation of the cave; there she worked at

her shirts, but by the time she had begun the seventh all her yarn was spent.

She knew that the nettles she needed grew in the churchyard, but she must gather them herself: how was she to get them?

‘Oh, what is the pain in my fingers compared to the anguish my heart suffers?’ thought she. ‘I must venture to the churchyard; the good God will not withdraw His protection from me!’

Fearful, as though she were about to do something wrong, one moonlight night she crept down to the garden, and through the long avenues got into the lonely road leading to the churchyard. She saw sitting on one of the broadest tombstones a number of ugly old witches. They took off their ragged clothes as if they were going to bathe, and digging with their long lean fingers into the fresh grass, drew up the dead bodies and devoured the flesh. Elise was obliged to pass close by them, and the witches fixed their wicked eyes upon her; but she repeated her prayer, gathered the stinging-nettles, and took them back with her into the palace. One person only had seen her—it was the Archbishop; he was awake when others slept.



THE CHURCHYARD

Now he was convinced that all was not right about the Queen ; she must be a witch, who had through her enchantments infatuated the King and all the people.

In the confessional he told the King what he had seen and what he feared ; and when the slanderous words came from his lips, the sculptured images of the saints shook their heads, as though they would say, 'It is untrue ; Elise is innocent !' But the Archbishop explained the omen quite otherwise ; he thought it was a testimony against her that the holy images shook their heads at hearing of her sin.

Two large tears rolled down the King's cheeks ; he returned home in doubt ; he pretended to sleep at night, though sleep never visited him ; and he noticed that Elise rose from her bed every night, and every time he followed her secretly and saw her enter her little room.

His countenance became darker every day ; Elise perceived it, though she knew not the cause. She was much pained, and, besides, what did she not suffer in her heart for her brothers ? Her bitter tears ran down on the royal velvet and purple ;

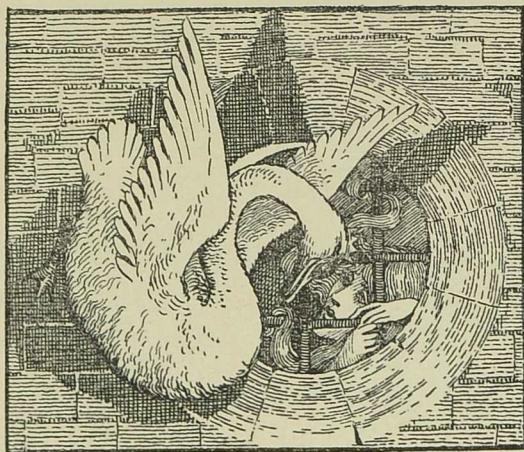
they looked like bright diamonds, and all who saw the magnificence that surrounded her wished themselves in her place. She had now nearly finished her work—only one shirt was wanting; unfortunately, yarn was wanting also—she had not a single nettle left. Once more, only this one time, she must go to the churchyard and gather a few handfuls. She shuddered when she thought of the solitary walk and the horrid witches, but her resolution was as firm as her trust in God.

Elise went; the King and the Archbishop followed her: they saw her disappear at the churchyard door, and when they came nearer, they saw the witches sitting on the tombstones, as Elise had seen them, and the King turned away, for he believed her whose head had rested on his bosom that very evening to be amongst them. ‘Let the people judge her!’ said he. And the people condemned her to be burnt.

She was now dragged from the King’s sumptuous apartments into a dark, damp prison, where the wind whistled through the grated window. Instead of velvet and silk, they gave her the bundle of nettles she had gathered—on that must she lay her

head ; the shirts she had woven must serve her as mattress and counterpane ; but they could not have given her anything she valued so much : and she continued her work, at the same time praying earnestly to her God. The boys sang scandalous songs about her in front of her prison ; not a soul comforted her with one word of love.

Towards evening she heard the rustling of Swan's wings at the grating. It was the youngest of her brothers, who had at last found his sister, and she sobbed aloud for joy, although she knew that the coming night would probably be the last of her life ; but then her work was almost finished, and her brother was near.



THE RUSTLING OF SWAN'S WINGS AT THE
GRATING

The Archbishop came in order to spend the last hour with her ; he had promised the King he would ; but she shook her head and entreated him with her eyes and gestures to go : this night she

must finish her work, or all she had suffered—her pain, her anxiety, her sleepless nights—would be in vain. The Archbishop went away with many angry words, but the unfortunate Elise knew herself to be perfectly innocent, and went on with her work.

Little mice ran busily about and dragged the nettles to her feet, wishing to help her; and the thrush perched on the iron bars of the window, and sang all night as merrily as he could, that Elise might not lose courage.

It was still twilight, just an hour before sunrise, when the eleven brothers stood before the palace-gates, requesting an audience with the King; but it could not be, they were told: it was still night, the King was asleep, and they dared not wake him. They entreated, they threatened, the guard came up, the King himself at last stepped out to ask what was the matter: at that moment the sun rose, the brothers could be seen no longer, and eleven white Swans flew away over the palace.

The people poured forth from the gates of the city, all eager to see the witch burnt. One wretched horse drew the cart in which Elise was

placed, a coarse frock of sackcloth had been put on her, her beautiful long hair hung loosely over her shoulders, her cheeks were of a deadly paleness, her lips moved gently, and her fingers wove the green yarn. Even on her way to her cruel death she did not give up her work ; the ten shirts lay at



THE PEOPLE WERE EAGER TO SEE THE WITCH BURNT

her feet—she was now labouring to complete the eleventh. The rabble insulted her.

‘Look at the witch, how she mutters! she has not a hymn-book in her hand : no, there she sits, with her accursed witchery. Tear it from her! tear it into a thousand pieces!’

And they all crowded about her, and were on the

point of snatching away the shirts, when eleven white Swans came flying towards the cart; they settled all round her, and flapped their wings. The crowd gave way in terror.

‘It is a sign from Heaven! she is certainly innocent!’ whispered some; they dared not say so aloud.

The Sheriff now seized her by the hand—in a moment she threw the eleven shirts over the Swans, and eleven handsome Princes appeared in their place. The youngest had, however, only one arm, and a wing instead of the other, for one sleeve was deficient in his shirt—it had not been quite finished.

‘Now I may speak,’ said she: ‘I am innocent!’

And the people who had seen what had happened bowed before her as before a saint. She, however, sank lifeless in her brothers’ arms; suspense, fear, and grief had quite exhausted her.

‘Yes, she is innocent,’ said her eldest brother, and he now related their wonderful history. Whilst he spoke a fragrance as delicious as though it proceeded from millions of roses filled the air, for every piece of wood in the funeral pile had taken

root and sent forth branches, a hedge of blooming red roses surrounded Elise, and above all the others blossomed a flower of dazzling white colour, bright as a star; the King plucked it and laid it on Elise's bosom, whereupon she awoke from her trance with peace and joy in her heart.



SHE AWOKE FROM HER TRANCE

And all the church-bells began to ring of their own accord, and birds flew to the spot in flocks, and there was a joyful procession back to the palace, such as no King has ever seen equalled.

THE UGLY DUCKLING



T was beautiful in the country ; it was summer-time ; the wheat was yellow, the oats were green, the hay was stacked up in the green meadows, and the stork paraded about on his long red legs, discoursing in Egyptian, which language he had learned from his mother. The fields and meadows were skirted by thick woods, and a deep lake lay in the midst of the woods. Yes, it was indeed beautiful in the country ! The sunshine fell warmly on an old mansion, surrounded by deep canals, and from the walls down to the water's edge there grew large burdock-leaves, so high that children could stand upright among them without being seen. The spot was as wild and unfrequented as the thickest part of the wood, and on that account a duck had chosen to make her nest

there. She was sitting on her eggs; but the pleasure she had felt at first was now almost gone, because she had been there so long, and had so few visitors, for the other ducks preferred swimming on the canals to sitting among the burdock-leaves gossiping with her.

At last the eggs cracked one after another, 'Tchick, tchick!' All the eggs were alive, and one little head after another peered forth. 'Quack, quack!' said the Duck, and all got up as well as they could; they peeped about from under the green leaves; and as green is good for the eyes, their mother let them look as long as they pleased.

'How large the world is!' said the little ones, for they found their present situation very different to their former confined one, while yet in the eggshells.

'Do you imagine this to be the whole of the world?' said the mother; 'it extends far beyond the other side of the garden to the pastor's field; but I have never been there. Are you all here?' And then she got up. 'No, not all, but the largest egg is still here. How long will this last? I am so weary of it!' And then she sat down again.

‘Well, and how are you getting on?’ asked an old Duck, who had come to pay her a visit.

‘This one egg keeps me so long,’ said the mother, ‘it will not break; but you should see the others! they are the prettiest little ducklings I have seen in all my days; they are all like their father,—the good-for-nothing fellow, he has not been to visit me once!’

‘Let me see the egg that will not break,’ said the old Duck; ‘depend upon it, it is a turkey’s egg. I was cheated in the same way once myself, and I had such trouble with the young ones; for they were afraid of the water, and I could not get them there. I called and scolded, but it was all of no use. But let me see the egg—ah, yes! to be sure, that is a turkey’s egg. Leave it, and teach the other little ones to swim.’

‘I will sit on it a little longer,’ said the Duck. ‘I have been sitting so long, that I may as well spend the harvest here.’

‘It is no business of mine,’ said the old Duck, and away she waddled.

The great egg burst at last. ‘Tckick! tchick!’ said the little one, and out it tumbled—but, oh!

how large and ugly it was! The Duck looked at it. 'That is a great, strong creature,' said she; 'none of the others are at all like it; can it be a young turkey-cock? Well, we shall soon find out; it must go into the water, though I push it in myself.'

The next day there was delightful weather, and the sun shone warmly upon all the green leaves when Mother Duck with all her family went down to the canal: plump she went into the water. 'Quack! quack!' cried she, and one duckling after another jumped in. The water closed over their heads, but all came up again, and swam together in the pleasantest manner; their legs moved without effort. All were there, even the ugly, grey one.

'No! it is not a turkey,' said the old Duck; 'only see how prettily it moves its legs! how upright it holds itself! it is my own child: it is also really very pretty, when one looks more closely at it. Quack! quack! now come with me, I will take you into the world, introduce you in the duck-yard; but keep close to me, or some one may tread on you; and beware of the cat.'

So they came into the duck-yard. There was a

horrid noise; two families were quarrelling about the remains of an eel, which in the end was secured by the cat.

‘See, my children, such is the way of the world,’ said the Mother Duck, wiping her beak, for she, too, was fond of eels. ‘Now use your legs,’ said she, ‘keep together, and bow to the old Duck you see yonder. She is the most distinguished of all the fowls present, and is of Spanish blood, which accounts for her dignified appearance and manners. And look, she has a red rag on her leg! that is considered extremely handsome, and is the greatest distinction a duck can have. Don’t turn your feet inwards; a well-educated duckling always keeps his legs far apart, like his father and mother, just so—look! now bow your necks, and say, “quack.”’

And they did as they were told. But the other Ducks who were in the yard looked at them, and said aloud, ‘Only see, now we have another brood, as if there were not enough of us already; and fie! how ugly that one is; we will not endure it’; and immediately one of the Ducks flew at him, and bit him in the neck.

‘Leave him alone,’ said the mother, ‘he is doing no one any harm.’

‘Yes, but he is so large, and so strange-looking, and therefore he shall be teased.’

‘Those are fine children that our good mother has,’ said the old Duck with the red rag on her leg. ‘All are pretty except one, and that has not turned out well; I almost wish it could be hatched over again.’

‘That cannot be, please your highness,’ said the mother. ‘Certainly he is not handsome, but he is a very good child, and swims as well as the others, indeed rather better. I think he will grow like the others all in good time, and perhaps will look smaller. He stayed so long in the egg-shell, that is the cause of the difference’; and she scratched the Duckling’s neck, and stroked his whole body. ‘Besides,’ added she, ‘he is a drake: I think he will be very strong, therefore it does not matter so much; he will fight his way through.’

‘The other ducks are very pretty,’ said the old Duck. ‘Pray make yourselves at home, and if you find an eel’s head you can bring it to me.’

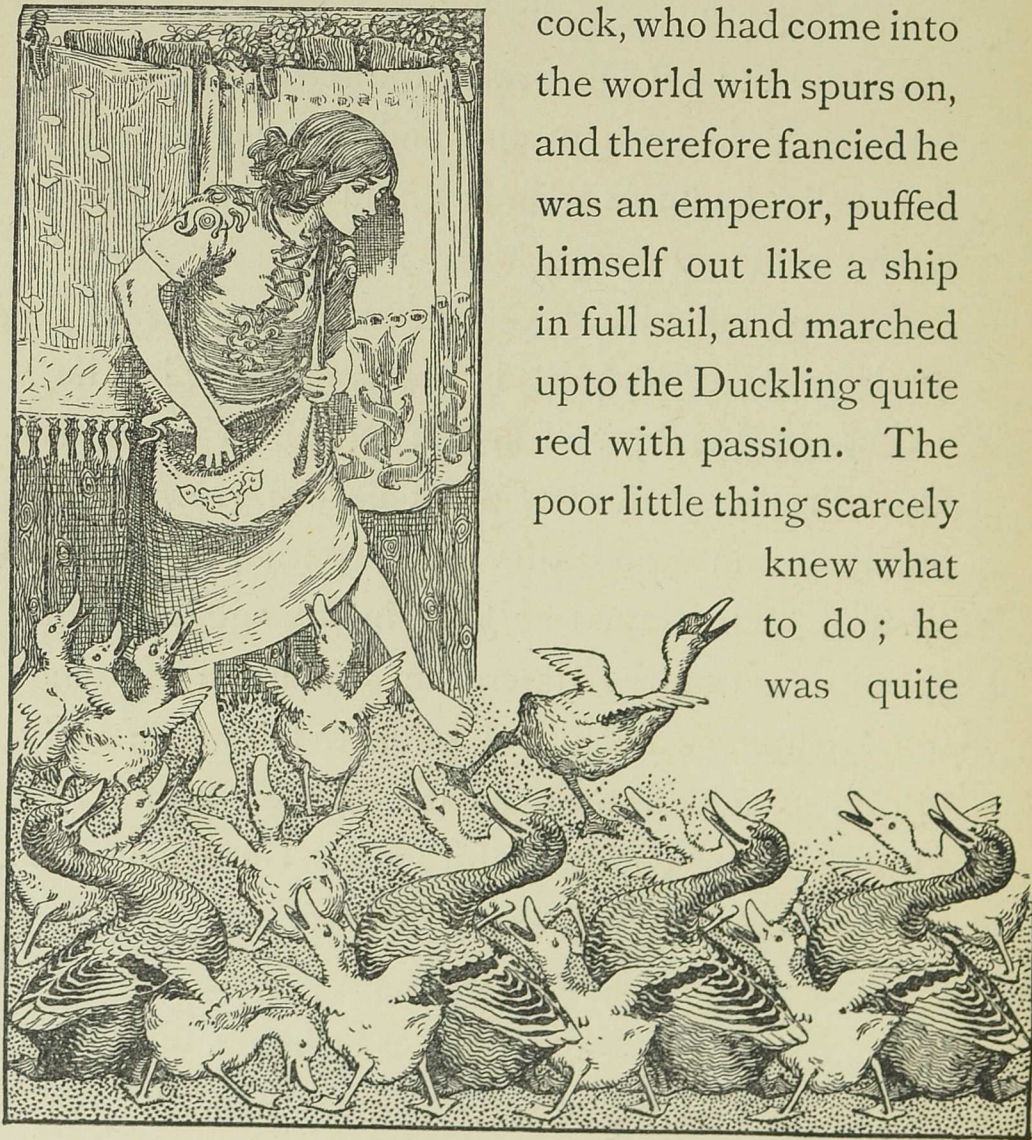
And accordingly they made themselves at home.

But the poor little Duckling, who had come last out of its egg-shell, and who was so ugly, was bitten, pecked, and teased by both Ducks and Hens.

‘It is so large!’ said they all. And the Turkey-

cock, who had come into the world with spurs on, and therefore fancied he was an emperor, puffed himself out like a ship in full sail, and marched up to the Duckling quite red with passion. The poor little thing scarcely

knew what to do; he was quite



THE GIRL WHO FED THE POULTRY KICKED HIM

distressed, because he was so ugly, and because he was the jest of the poultry-yard.

So passed the first day, and afterwards matters grew worse and worse—the poor Duckling was scorned by all. Even his brothers and sisters behaved unkindly, and were constantly saying, ‘The cat fetch thee, thou nasty creature!’ The mother said, ‘Ah, if thou wert only far away!’ The Ducks bit him, the Hens pecked him, and the girl who fed the poultry kicked him. He ran over the hedge; the little birds in the bushes were terrified. ‘That is because I am so ugly,’ thought the Duckling, shutting his eyes, but he ran on. At last he came to a wide moor, where lived some Wild Ducks; here he lay the whole night, so tired and so comfortless. In the morning the Wild Ducks flew up, and perceived their new companion. ‘Pray, who are you?’ asked they; and our little Duckling turned himself in all directions, and greeted them as politely as possible.

‘You are really uncommonly ugly!’ said the Wild Ducks; ‘however, that does not matter to us, provided you do not marry into our families.’ Poor thing! he had never thought of marrying;

he only begged permission to lie among the reeds, and drink the water of the moor.

There he lay for two whole days—on the third day there came two Wild Geese, or rather Ganders, who had not been long out of their egg-shells, which accounts for their impertinence.

‘Hark ye,’ said they, ‘you are so ugly that we like you infinitely well; will you come with us, and be a bird of passage? On another moor, not far from this, are some dear, sweet wild geese, as lovely creatures as have ever said “hiss, hiss.” You are truly in the way to make your fortune, ugly as you are.’

Bang! a gun went off all at once, and both Wild Geese were stretched dead among the reeds; the water became red with blood; bang! a gun went off again; whole flocks of wild geese flew up from among the reeds, and another report followed.

There was a grand hunting-party: the hunters lay in ambush all around; some were even sitting in the trees, whose huge branches stretched far over the moor. The blue smoke rose through the thick trees like a mist, and was dispersed as it fell

over the water ; the hounds splashed about in the mud, the reeds and rushes bent in all directions. How frightened the poor little Duck was ! he turned his head, thinking to hide it under his wings, and in a moment a most formidable-looking dog stood close to him, his tongue hanging out of his mouth, his eyes sparkling fearfully. He opened wide his jaws at the sight of our Duckling, showed him his sharp white teeth, and splash, splash ! he was gone, —gone without hurting him.

‘ Well ! let me be thankful,’ sighed he ; ‘ I am so ugly, that even the dog will not eat me.’

And now he lay still, though the shooting continued among the reeds, shot following shot.

The noise did not cease till late in the day, and even then the poor little thing dared not stir ; he waited several hours before he looked around him, and then hastened away from the moor as fast as he could ; he ran over fields and meadows, though the wind was so high that he had some difficulty in proceeding.

Towards evening he reached a wretched little hut, so wretched that it knew not on which side to fall, and therefore remained standing. The wind

blew violently, so that our poor little Duckling was obliged to support himself on his tail, in order to stand against it ; but it became worse and worse. He then noticed that the door had lost one of its hinges, and hung so much awry that he could creep through the crevice into the room, which he did.

In this room lived an old woman, with her Tomcat and her Hen ; and the Cat, whom she called her little son, knew how to set up his back and purr ; indeed, he could even emit sparks when stroked the wrong way. The Hen had very short legs, and was therefore called ‘Cuckoo Short-legs’ ; she laid very good eggs, and the old woman loved her as her own child.

The next morning the new guest was perceived ; the Cat began to mew, and the Hen to cackle.

‘What is the matter ?’ asked the old woman, looking round. However, her eyes were not good, so she took the young Duckling to be a fat duck who had lost her way. ‘This is a capital catch,’ said she ; ‘I shall now have duck’s eggs, if it be not a drake : we must try.’

And so the Duckling was put to the proof for three weeks, but no eggs made their appearance.



‘WHAT IS THE MATTER?’ ASKED THE OLD WOMAN

Now the Cat was the master of the house, and the Hen was the mistress, and they used always to say, 'We and the world,' for they imagined themselves to be not only the half of the world, but also by far the better half. The Duckling thought it was possible to be of a different opinion, but that the Hen would not allow.

'Can you lay eggs?' she asked.

'No.'

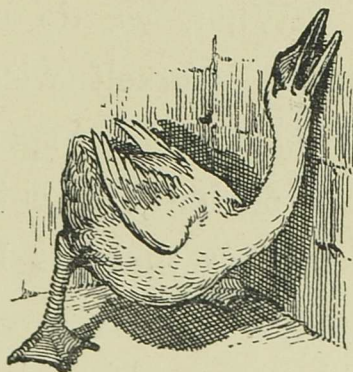
'Well, then, hold your tongue.'

And the Cat said, 'Can you set up your back? can you purr?'

'No.'

'Well, then, you should have no opinion when reasonable persons are speaking.'

So the Duckling sat alone in a corner, and was in a very bad humour; however, he happened to think of the fresh air and bright sunshine, and these thoughts gave him such a strong desire to swim again, that he could not help telling it to the Hen.



SAT ALONE IN A CORNER

'What ails you?' said the Hen. 'You have

nothing to do, and therefore brood over these fancies ; either lay eggs or purr, then you will forget them.'

' But it is so delicious to swim ! ' said the Duckling ; ' so delicious when the waters close over your head, and you plunge to the bottom ! '

' Well, that is a queer sort of pleasure,' said the Hen ; ' I think you must be crazy. Not to speak of myself, ask the Cat—he is the most sensible animal I know—whether he would like to swim, or to plunge to the bottom of the water. Ask our mistress, the old woman,—there is no one in the world wiser than she ; do you think she would take pleasure in swimming, and in the waters closing over her head ? '

' You do not understand me,' said the Duckling.

' What, we do not understand you ! So you think yourself wiser than the Cat and the old woman, not to speak of myself. Do not fancy any such thing, child, but be thankful for all the kindness that has been shown you. Are you not lodged in a warm room, and have you not the advantage of society from which you can learn something ? But you are a simpleton, and it is

wearisome to have anything to do with you. Believe me, I wish you well. I tell you unpleasant truths, but it is thus that real friendship is shown. Come, for once give yourself the trouble to learn to purr, or to lay eggs.'

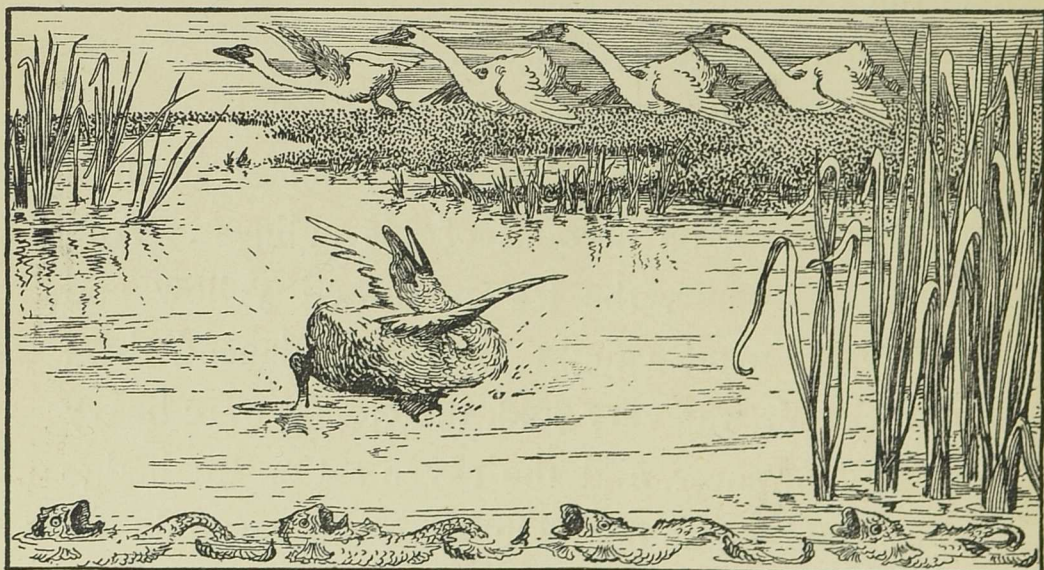
'I think I will go out into the wide world again,' said the Duckling.

'Well, go,' answered the Hen.

So the Duckling went. He swam on the surface of the water, he plunged beneath, but all animals passed him by, on account of his ugliness. And the autumn came, the leaves turned yellow and brown, the wind caught them and danced them about, the air was very cold, the clouds were heavy with hail or snow, and the raven sat on the hedge and croaked :—the poor Duckling was certainly not very comfortable !

One evening, just as the sun was setting with unusual brilliancy, a flock of large, beautiful birds rose from out of the brushwood ; the Duckling had never seen anything so beautiful before ; their plumage was of a dazzling white, and they had long, slender necks. They were swans ; they uttered a singular cry, spread out their long, splendid wings,

and flew away from these cold regions to warmer countries, across the open sea. They flew so high, so very high ! and the little Ugly Duckling's feelings were so strange ; he turned round and round in the water like a mill-wheel, strained his neck to look after them, and sent forth such a loud and



HE TURNED ROUND AND ROUND IN THE WATER LIKE A MILL-WHEEL

strange cry, that it almost frightened himself. Ah ! he could not forget them, those noble birds ! those happy birds ! When he could see them no longer, he plunged to the bottom of the water, and when he rose again was almost beside himself. The Duckling knew not what the birds were called,

knew not whither they were flying, yet he loved them as he had never before loved anything; he envied them not, it would never have occurred to him to wish such beauty for himself; he would have been quite contented if the ducks in the duck-yards had but endured his company—the poor, ugly animal!

And the winter was so cold, so cold! The Duckling was obliged to swim round and round in the water, to keep it from freezing; but every night the opening in which he swam became smaller and smaller; it froze so that the crust of ice crackled; the Duckling was obliged to make good use of his legs to prevent the water from freezing entirely; at last, wearied out, he lay stiff and cold in the ice.

Early in the morning there passed by a peasant, who saw him, broke the ice in pieces with his wooden shoe, and brought him home to his wife.

He now revived; the children would have played with him, but our Duckling thought they wished to tease him, and in his terror jumped into the milk-pail, so that the milk was spilled about the room: the good woman screamed and clapped her hands; he flew thence into the pan where the butter was

kept, and thence into the meal-barrel, and out again, and then how strange he looked !

The woman screamed, and struck at him with the tongs, the children ran races with each other



THE CHILDREN WOULD HAVE PLAYED WITH HIM

trying to catch him, and laughed and screamed likewise. It was well for him that the door stood open ; he jumped out among the bushes into the new-fallen snow—he lay there as in a dream.

But it would be too melancholy to relate all the trouble and misery that he was obliged to suffer during the severity of the winter : he was lying on a moor among the reeds, when the sun began to

shine warmly again, the larks sang, and beautiful spring had returned.

And once more he shook his wings. They were stronger than formerly, and bore him forwards quickly, and before he was well aware of it, he was in a large garden where the apple-trees stood in full bloom, where the syringas sent forth their fragrance, and hung their long green branches down into the winding canal. Oh! everything was so lovely, so full of the freshness of spring! And out of the thicket came three beautiful white Swans. They displayed their feathers so proudly, and swam so lightly, so lightly! The Duckling knew the glorious creatures, and was seized with a strange melancholy.

‘I will fly to them, those kingly birds!’ said he. ‘They will kill me, because I, ugly as I am, have presumed to approach them; but it matters not, better to be killed by them than to be bitten by the ducks, pecked by the hens, kicked by the girl who feeds the poultry, and to have so much to suffer during the winter!’ He flew into the water, and swam towards the beautiful creatures; they saw him and shot forward to meet him. ‘Only kill me,’

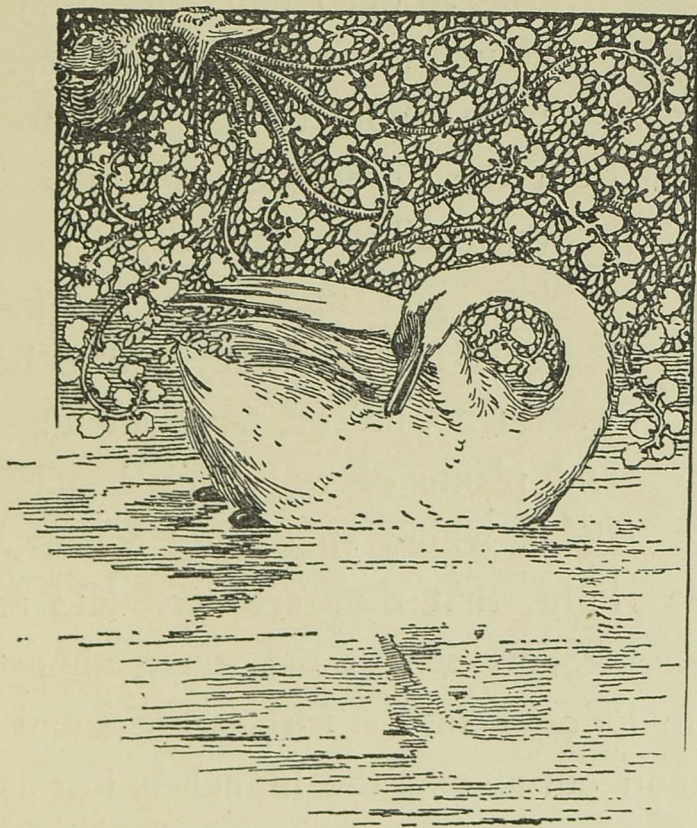
said the poor animal, and he bowed his head low, expecting death ; but what did he see in the water ? He saw beneath him his own form, no longer that of a plump, ugly, grey bird—it was that of a Swan.

It matters not to have been born in a duck-yard, if one has been hatched from a swan's egg.

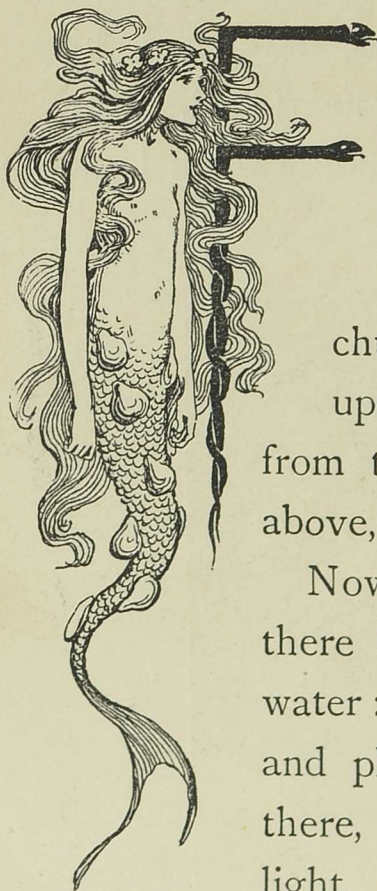
The good creature felt himself really elevated by all the troubles and adversities he had experienced. He could now rightly estimate his own happiness, and the larger Swans swam round him, and stroked him with their beaks.

Some little children were running about in the garden ; they threw grain and bread into the water, and the youngest exclaimed, ' There is a new one ! ' the others also cried out, ' Yes, there is a new swan come ! ' and they clapped their hands, and danced around. They ran to their father and mother, bread and cake were thrown into the water, and every one said, ' The new one is the best, so young and so beautiful ! ' and the old Swans bowed before him. The young Swan felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wings ; he scarcely knew what to do, he was all too happy, but still not proud, for a good heart is never proud.

He remembered how he had been persecuted and derided, and he now heard every one say, he was the most beautiful of all beautiful birds. The syringas bent down their branches towards him low into the water, and the sun shone so warmly and brightly—he shook his feathers, stretched his slender neck, and in the joy of his heart said, ‘How little did I dream of so much happiness when I was the ugly, despised Duckling!’



THE LITTLE MERMAID



FAIR out in the wide sea, where the water is blue as the loveliest corn-flower, and clear as the purest crystal, where it is so deep that very, very many church-towers must be heaped one upon another in order to reach from the lowest depth to the surface above, dwell the Mer-people.

Now you must not imagine that there is nothing but sand below the water: no, indeed, far from it! Trees and plants of wondrous beauty grow there, whose stems and leaves are so light, that they are waved to and fro by the slightest motion of the water, almost as if they were living beings. Fishes, great and small, glide in and out among the branches, just as birds fly about among our trees.

Where the water is deepest stands the palace of the Mer-king. The walls of this palace are of coral, and the high, pointed windows are of amber; the roof, however, is composed of mussel-shells, which, as the billows pass over them, are continually opening and shutting. This looks exceedingly pretty, especially as each of these mussel-shells contains a number of bright, glittering pearls, one only of which would be the most costly ornament in the diadem of a king in the upper world.

The Mer-king, who lived in this palace, had been for many years a widower; his old mother managed the household affairs for him. She was, on the whole, a sensible sort of a lady, although extremely proud of her high birth and station, on which account she wore twelve oysters on her tail, whilst the other inhabitants of the sea, even those of distinction, were allowed only six. In every other respect she merited unlimited praise, especially for the affection she showed to the six little Princesses, her grand-daughters. These were all very beautiful children; the youngest was, however, the most lovely; her skin was as soft and delicate as a rose-leaf, her eyes were of as deep a blue as the sea,

but, like all other mermaids, she had no feet; her body ended in a tail like that of a fish.

The whole day long the children used to play in the spacious apartments of the palace, where beautiful flowers grew out of the walls on all sides around them. When the great amber windows were opened, fishes would swim into these apartments as swallows fly into our rooms; but the fishes were



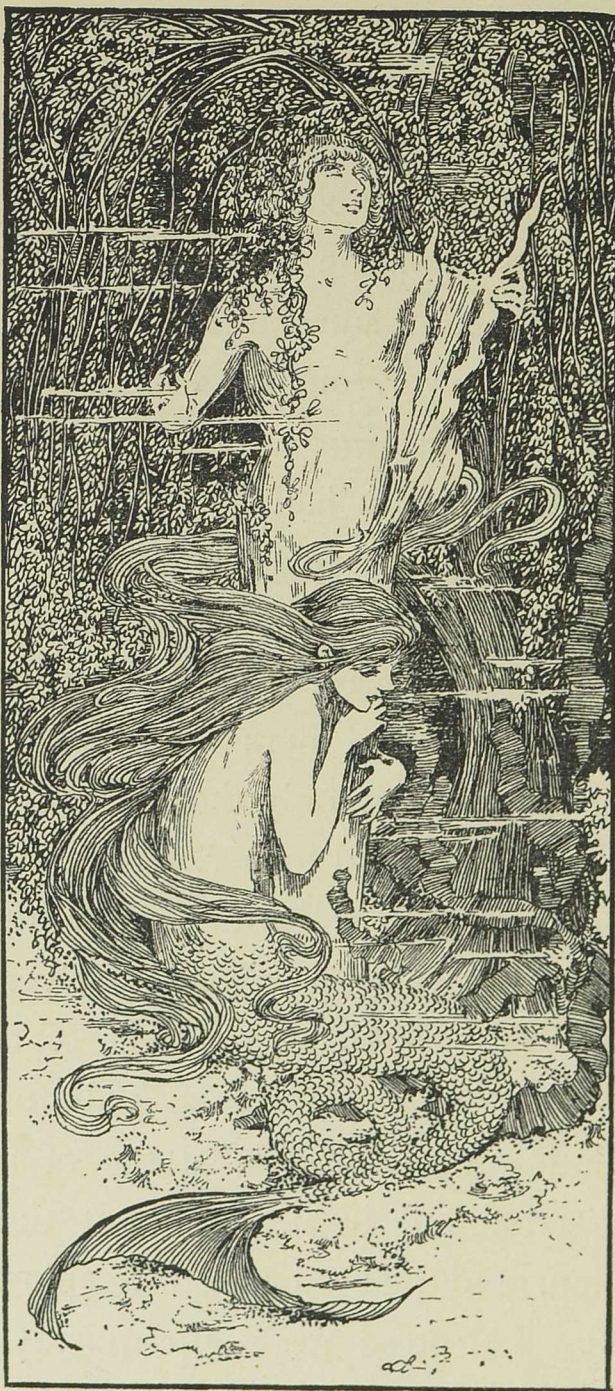
THE FISHES ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO BE CARESSED

bolder than the swallows—they swam straight up to the little Princesses, ate from their hands, and allowed themselves to be caressed.

In front of the palace there was a large garden, full of fiery red and dark blue trees; the fruit upon them glittered like gold, and the flowers resembled a bright, burning sun. The sand that formed the soil of the garden was of a bright blue colour,

somewhat like flames of sulphur; and a strangely beautiful blue was spread over the whole, so that one might have fancied oneself raised very high in the air, with the sky at once above and below—certainly not at the bottom of the sea. When the waters were quite still, the sun might be seen looking like a purple flower, out of whose cup streamed forth the light of the world.

Each of the little Princesses had her own plot in the garden, where she might plant and sow at her pleasure. One chose hers to be made in the shape of a whale, another preferred the figure of a mermaid, but the youngest had hers quite round like the sun, and planted in it only those flowers that were red, as the sun seemed to her. She was certainly a singular child, very quiet and thoughtful. Whilst her sisters were adorning themselves with all sorts of gay things that came out of a ship which had been wrecked, she asked for nothing but a beautiful white marble statue of a boy, which had been found in it. She put the statue in her garden, and planted a red weeping willow by its side. The tree grew up quickly, and let its long boughs fall upon the bright blue



A BEAUTIFUL WHITE MARBLE STATUE OF A BOY

ground, where ever-moving shadows played in violet hues, as if boughs and root were embracing.

Nothing pleased the little Princess more than to hear about the world of human beings living above the sea. She made her old grandmother tell her everything she knew about ships, towns, men, and land animals, and was particularly pleased when

she heard that the flowers of the upper world had a pleasant fragrance (for the flowers of the sea are scentless), and that the woods were green, and the fishes fluttering among the branches of various gay colours, and that they could sing with a loud, clear voice. The old lady meant birds, but she called them fishes, because her grandchildren, having never seen a bird, would not otherwise have understood her.

‘When you have attained your fifteenth year,’ added she, ‘you will be permitted to rise to the surface of the sea; you will then sit by moonlight in the clefts of the rocks, see the ships sail by, and learn to distinguish towns and men.’

The next year the eldest of the sisters reached this happy age, but the others—alas! the second sister was a year younger than the eldest, the third a year younger than the second, and so on. The youngest had still five whole years to wait till that joyful time should come when she also might rise to the surface of the water and see what was going on in the upper world; however, the eldest promised to tell the others about everything she might see, when the first day of her being of age

arrived; for the grandmother gave them but little information, and there was so much that they wished to hear.

But none of all the sisters longed so ardently for the day when she should be released from childish restraint as the youngest—she who had longest to wait, and was so quiet and thoughtful. Many a night she stood by the open window, looking up through the clear blue water, whilst the fishes were leaping and playing around her. She could see the sun and the moon; their light was pale, but they appeared larger than they do to those who live in the upper world. If a shadow passed over them, she knew it must be either a whale, or a ship sailing by full of human beings. Never could these last have imagined that, far beneath them, a little mermaid was passionately stretching forth her white hands towards their ship's keel.

The day had now arrived when the eldest Princess had attained her fifteenth year, and was therefore allowed to rise up to the surface of the sea.

When she returned she had a thousand things

to relate. Her chief pleasure had been to sit upon a sand-bank in the moonlight, looking at the large town which lay on the coast, where lights were beaming like stars, and where music was playing; she had heard the distant noise of men and carriages, she had seen the high church-towers, had listened to the ringing of the bells; and just because she could not go on shore she longed the more after all these things.

How attentively did her youngest sister listen to her words! And when she next stood, at night-time, by her open window, gazing upward through the blue waters, her thoughts dwelt so eagerly upon the great city, full of life and sound, that she fancied she could hear the church-bells ringing.

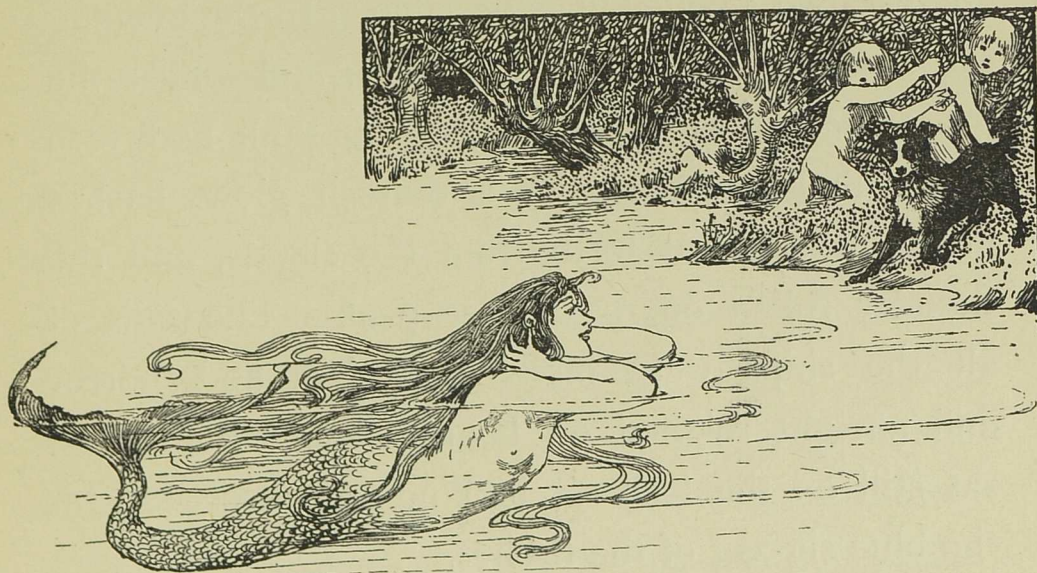
Next year the second sister received permission to swim wherever she pleased. She rose to the surface of the sea, just when the sun was setting; and this sight so delighted her, that she declared it to be more beautiful than anything else she had seen above the waters.

‘The whole sky seemed tinged with gold,’ said she; ‘and it is impossible for me to describe to you the beauty of the clouds. Now red, now

violet, they glided over me ; but still more swiftly flew over the water a flock of white swans, just where the sun was descending : I looked after them, but the sun disappeared, and the bright rosy light on the surface of the sea and on the edges of the clouds died gradually away.'

It was now time for the third sister to visit the upper world. She was the boldest of the six, and ventured up a river. On its shores she saw green hills, covered with woods and vineyards, from among which arose houses and castles. She heard the birds singing, and the sun shone with so much power, that she was continually obliged to plunge below, in order to cool her burning face. In a little bay she met with a number of children, who were bathing and jumping about ; she would have joined in their gambols, but the children fled back to land in great terror, and a little black animal barked at her in such a manner, that she herself was frightened at last, and swam back to the sea. But never could she forget the green woods, the verdant hills, and the pretty children, who, although they had no fins, were swimming about in the river so fearlessly.

The fourth sister was not so bold ; she remained in the open sea, and said, on her return home, she thought nothing could be more beautiful. She had seen ships sailing by—so far off that they looked like sea-gulls ; she had watched the merry



THE CHILDREN FLED BACK TO THE LAND IN TERROR

dolphins gambolling in the water, and the enormous whales sending up into the air a thousand sparkling fountains.

The year after, the fifth sister attained her fifteenth year,—her birthday happened at a different season to that of her sisters ; it was winter, the sea was of a green colour, and immense icebergs were floating on its surface. These, she said,

looked like pearls, although all were much larger than the church-towers in the land of human beings. She sat down upon one of these pearls, and let the wind play with her long hair, but then all the ships hoisted their sails in terror, and escaped as quickly as possible. In the evening the sky was covered with clouds; and whilst the great mountains of ice alternately sank and rose again, and beamed with a reddish glow, flashes of lightning burst forth from the clouds, and the thunder rolled on, peal after peal. The sails of all the ships were instantly furled, and horror and affright reigned on board; but the Princess sat still on the iceberg, looking unconcernedly at the blue zig-zag of the flashes.

The first time that either of these sisters rose out of the sea, she was quite enchanted at the sight of so many new and beautiful objects; but the novelty was soon over, and it was not long ere their own home appeared far more attractive than the upper world.

Many an evening would the five sisters rise hand in hand from the depths of the ocean. Their voices were far sweeter than any human voice,

and when a storm was coming on, they would swim in front of the ships and sing,—oh, how sweetly did they sing!—describing the happiness of those who lived at the bottom of the sea, and entreating the sailors not to be afraid, but to come down to them.

But the mariners did not understand their words,—they fancied the song was only the whistling of the wind,—and thus they lost the hidden glories of the sea; for if their ships were wrecked, all on board were drowned, and none but dead men ever entered the Mer-king's palace.

Whilst the sisters were swimming at evening-time, the youngest would remain motionless and alone in her father's palace, looking up after them. She would have wept, but mermaids cannot weep, and therefore, when they are troubled, they suffer infinitely more than human beings do.

‘Oh! if I were but fifteen!’ sighed she; ‘I know that I should love the upper world and its inhabitants so much!’

At last the time she had so longed for arrived.

‘Well, now it is your turn,’ said the grandmother; ‘come here, that I may adorn you like

your sisters.' And winding around her hair a wreath of white lilies, whose every petal was the half of a pearl, she commanded eight large oysters to fasten themselves to the Princess's tail, in token of her high rank.

'But that is so very uncomfortable!' said the little Princess.

'One must not mind slight inconveniences when one wishes to look well,' said the old lady.

How willingly would the Princess have given up all this splendour, and exchanged her heavy crown for the red flowers of her garden, which were so much more becoming to her. But she dared not do so. 'Farewell!' said she; and she rose from the sea, light as a flake of foam.

When, for the first time in her life, she appeared on the surface of the water, the sun had just sunk below the horizon, the clouds were beaming with bright golden and rosy hues, the evening star was shining in the pale western sky, the air was mild and refreshing, and the sea as smooth as a looking-glass. A large ship with three masts lay on the still waters; one sail only was unfurled, for not a breath was stirring, and the sailors were quietly

seated on the cordage and ladders of the vessel. Music and song resounded from the deck, and after it grew dark hundreds of lamps all on a sudden burst forth into light, whilst innumerable flags were fluttering overhead. The little Mermaid swam close up to the captain's cabin, and every now and then, when the ship was raised by the motion of the water, she could look through the clear window-panes. She saw within many richly dressed men; the handsomest among them was a young Prince with large black eyes. He could not certainly be more than sixteen years old, and it was in honour of his birthday that a grand festival was being celebrated. The crew were dancing on the deck, and when the young Prince appeared among them, a hundred rockets were sent up into the air, turning night into day, and so terrifying the little Mermaid, that for some minutes she plunged beneath the water. However, she soon raised her little head again, and then it seemed as if all the stars were falling down upon her. Such a fiery shower she had never seen before,—never had she heard that men possessed such wonderful powers. Large

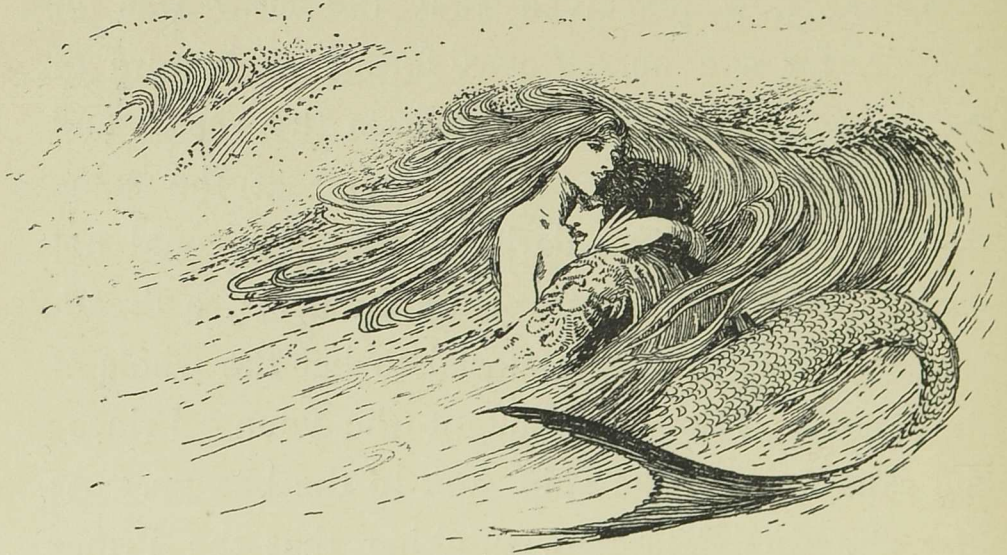
suns revolved around her, bright fishes floated in the air, and all these marvels were reflected on the clear surface of the sea. It was so light in the ship that everything could be seen distinctly. Oh, how happy the young Prince was! He shook hands with the sailors, laughed and jested with them, whilst sweet notes of music mingled with the silence of the night.

It was now late, but the little Mermaid could not tear herself away from the ship and the handsome young Prince. She remained looking through the cabin window, rocked to and fro by the waves. There was a foaming and fermentation in the depths beneath, and the ship began to move on faster,—the sails were spread, the waves rose high, thick clouds gathered over the sky, and the noise of distant thunder was heard. The sailors perceived that a storm was coming on, so they again furled the sails. The great vessel was tossed about on the tempestuous ocean like a light boat, and the waves rose to an immense height, towering over the ship, which alternately sank beneath and rose above them. To the little Mermaid this seemed most delightful, but the

ship's crew thought very differently. The vessel cracked, the stout masts bent under the violence of the billows, the water rushed in. For a minute the ship tottered to and fro, then the main-mast broke, as if it had been a reed; the ship turned over, and was filled with water. The little Mermaid now perceived that the crew was in danger, for she herself was forced to beware of the beams and splinters torn from the vessel, and floating about on the waves. But at the same time it became pitch dark, so that she could not distinguish anything; presently, however, a dreadful flash of lightning disclosed to her the whole of the wreck. Her eyes sought the young Prince; the same instant the ship sank to the bottom. At first she was delighted, thinking that the Prince must now come to her abode, but she soon remembered that man cannot live in water, and that therefore, if the Prince ever entered her palace, it would be as a corpse.

‘Die! no, he must not die!’ She swam through the fragments with which the water was strewn, regardless of the danger she was incurring, and at last found the Prince all but exhausted, and with

great difficulty keeping his head above water. He had already closed his eyes, and must inevitably have been drowned, had not the little Mermaid come to his rescue. She seized hold of him and kept him above water, suffering the current to bear them on together.



SHE KEPT HIM ABOVE WATER

Towards morning the storm was hushed; no trace, however, remained of the ship. The sun rose like fire out of the sea; his beams seemed to restore colour to the Prince's cheeks, but his eyes were still closed. The Mermaid kissed his high forehead and stroked his wet hair away from his face. He looked like the marble statue in her

garden; she kissed him again, and wished most fervently that he might recover.

She now saw the dry land, with its mountains glittering with snow. A green wood extended along the coast, and at the entrance of the wood stood a chapel or convent, she could not be sure which. Citron and melon trees grew in the garden adjoining it, an avenue of tall palm-trees led up to the door. The sea here formed a little bay, in which the water was quite smooth, but very deep, and under the cliffs there were dry, firm sands. Hither swam the little Mermaid with the seemingly dead Prince; she laid him upon the warm sand, and took care to place his head high, and to turn his face to the sun.

The bells began to ring in the large white building which stood before her, and a number of young girls came out to walk in the garden. The Mermaid went away from the shore, hid herself behind some stones, covered her head with foam, so that her little face could not be seen, and watched the Prince with unremitting attention.

It was not long before one of the young girls approached; she seemed quite frightened at finding

the Prince in this state, apparently dead ; soon, however, she recovered herself, and ran back to call her sisters. The little Mermaid saw that the Prince revived, and that all around smiled kindly and joyfully upon him ; for her, however, he looked not ; he knew not that it was she who had saved him ; and when the Prince was taken into the house, she felt so sad that she immediately plunged beneath the water, and returned to her father's palace.

If she had been before quiet and thoughtful, she now grew still more so. Her sisters asked her what she had seen in the upper world, but she made no answer.

Many an evening she rose to the place where she had left the Prince. She saw the snow on the mountains melt, the fruits in the garden ripen and gathered, but the Prince she never saw ; so she always returned sorrowfully to her home under the sea. Her only pleasure was to sit in her little garden, gazing on the beautiful statue so like the Prince. She cared no longer for her flowers ; they grew up in wild luxuriance, covered the steps, and entwined their long stems and tendrils among the

boughs of the trees, until her whole garden became a bower.

At last, being unable to conceal her sorrow any longer, she revealed the secret to one of her sisters, who told it to the other Princesses, and they to some of their friends. Among them was a young mermaid who recollected the Prince, having been an eye-witness herself to the festivities in the ship; she knew also in what country the Prince lived, and the name of its king.

‘Come, little sister!’ said the Princesses, and, embracing her, they rose together arm in arm, out of the water, just in front of the Prince’s palace.

This palace was built of bright yellow stones, a flight of white marble steps led from it down to the sea. A gilded cupola crowned the building, and white marble figures, which might almost have been taken for real men and women, were placed among the pillars surrounding it. Through the clear glass of the high windows one might look into magnificent apartments hung with silken curtains, the walls adorned with beautiful paintings. It was a real treat to the little royal mermaids to behold so splendid an abode; they gazed through

the windows of one of the largest rooms, and in the centre saw a fountain playing, whose waters sprang up so high as to reach the glittering cupola above, through which fell the sunbeams, dancing on the water, and brightening the pretty plants which grew around it.

The little Mermaid now knew where her beloved Prince dwelt, and henceforth she went there almost every evening. She often approached nearer the land than her sisters had ventured, and even swam up the narrow channel that flowed under the marble balcony. Here, on bright moonlight nights, she would watch the young Prince, whilst he believed himself alone.

Sometimes she saw him sailing on the water in a gaily painted boat, with many coloured flags waving above. She would then hide among the green reeds which grew on the banks, listening to his voice; and if any one in the boat noticed the rustling of her long silver veil, when it was caught now and then by the light breeze, they only fancied it was a swan flapping his wings.

Many a night, when the fishermen were casting their nets by the beacon's light, she heard them

talking of the Prince, and relating the noble actions he had performed. She was then so happy, thinking how she had saved his life when struggling with the waves, and remembering how his head had rested on her bosom, and how she had kissed him when he knew nothing of it, and could never even dream of her existence.

Human beings became more and more dear to her every day; she wished that she were one of them. Their world seemed to her much larger than that of the mer-people; they could fly over the ocean in their ships, as well as climb to the summits of those high mountains that rose above the clouds; and their wooded domains extended much farther than a mermaid's eye could penetrate.

There were many things that she wished to hear explained, but her sisters could not give her any satisfactory answer; she was again obliged to have recourse to the old Queen-mother, who knew a great deal about the upper world, which she used to call 'the country above the sea.'

'Do men, when they are not drowned, live for ever?' she asked one day; 'do they not die as we do who live at the bottom of the sea?'

‘Yes,’ was the grandmother’s reply, ‘they must die like us, and their life is much shorter than ours. We live to the age of three hundred years, but, when we die, we become foam on the sea, and are not allowed even to share a grave among those that are dear to us. We have no immortal souls, we can never live again, and are like the green rushes which when once cut down are withered for ever. Human beings, on the contrary, have souls that continue to live when their bodies become dust, and as we rise out of the water to admire the abode of man, even so these souls ascend to glorious unknown dwellings in the skies, which we are not permitted to see.’

‘Why have not *we* immortal souls?’ asked the little Mermaid. ‘I would willingly give up my three hundred years to be a human being for only one day, thus to become entitled to that heavenly world above.’

‘You must not think of that,’ answered her grandmother, ‘it is much better as it is; we live longer, and are far happier than human beings.’

‘So I must die, and be dashed like foam over the sea, never to rise again and hear the gentle murmur

of the ocean, never again to see the beautiful flowers and the bright sun! Tell me, dear grandmother, are there no means by which I may obtain an immortal soul?’

‘No!’ replied the old lady. ‘It is true that if thou couldst so win the affections of a human being as to become dearer to him than either father or



THE MERMAID AND HER GRANDMOTHER

mother; if he loved thee with all his heart, and promised, whilst the priest joined his hands with thine, to be always faithful to thee; then his soul would flow into thine, and thou wouldest become partaker of human bliss. But that can never be! for what in our eyes is the most beautiful part of our body, the tail, the inhabitants of the earth think

hideous : they cannot bear it. To appear handsome to them, the body must have two clumsy props, which they call legs.

The little Mermaid sighed, and looked mournfully at the scaly part of her form, otherwise so fair and delicate.

‘We are happy,’ added the old lady ; ‘we shall jump and swim about merrily for three hundred years ; that is a long time, and afterwards we shall repose peacefully in death. This evening we have a court-ball.’

The ball which the Queen-mother spoke of was far more splendid than any that earth has ever seen. The walls of the saloon were of crystal, very thick, but yet very clear ; hundreds of large mussel-shells were planted in rows along them : these shells were some of rose-colour, some green as grass, but all sending forth a bright light, which not only illuminated the whole apartment, but also shone through the glassy walls so as to light up the waters around, and making the scales of the numberless fishes, great and small, crimson and purple, silver and gold-coloured, appear more brilliant than ever.

Through the centre of the saloon flowed a bright, clear stream, on the surface of which danced mermen and mermaids to the melody of their own sweet voices—voices far sweeter than those of the dwellers upon earth. The little Princess sang most sweetly of all, and they clapped their hands and applauded her. For a moment it pleased her to be thus reminded that there was neither on earth nor in the sea a more beautiful voice than hers. But her thoughts soon returned to the world above her; she could not forget the handsome Prince; she could not control her sorrow at not having an immortal soul. She stole away from her father's palace, and whilst all was joy within, she sat alone, lost in thought, in her little neglected garden. On a sudden she heard the tones of horns resounding over the water far away in the distance, and she said to herself, 'Now he is going out to hunt—he whom I love more than my father and my mother, with whom my thoughts are constantly occupied, and to whom I would so willingly trust the happiness of my life! All, all! will I risk to win him—and an immortal soul! Whilst my sisters are still dancing in the palace, I will go to the enchantress

whom I have hitherto feared so much, but who is, nevertheless, the only person who can advise and help me.'

So the little Mermaid left the garden and went to the foaming whirlpool beyond which dwelt the enchantress. She had never been this way before ; neither flowers nor sea-grass bloomed along her path ; she had to traverse an extent of bare, grey sand till she reached the whirlpool, whose waters were eddying and whizzing like mill-wheels, tearing everything they could seize along with them into the abyss below. She was obliged to make her way through this horrible place, in order to arrive at the territory of the enchantress. Then she had to pass through a boiling, slimy bog, which the enchantress called her turf-moor ; her house stood in a wood beyond this, and a strange abode it was. All the trees and bushes around were polypi, looking like hundred-headed serpents shooting up out of the ground ; their branches were long, slimy arms with fingers of worms, every member, from the root to the uttermost tip, ceaselessly moving and extending on all sides. Whatever they seized they fastened upon so that it could not loosen itself from

their grasp. The little Mermaid stood still for a minute looking at this horrible wood ; her heart beat with fear, and she would certainly have returned without attaining her object had she not remembered the Prince—and immortality. The thought gave her new courage, she bound up her long, waving hair, that the polypi might not catch hold of it, crossed her delicate arms over her bosom, and, swifter than a fish can glide through the water, she passed these unseemly trees, who stretched their eager arms after her in vain. She could not, however, help seeing that every polypus had something in its grasp, held as firmly by a thousand little arms as if enclosed by iron bands. The whitened skulls of a number of human beings who had been drowned in the sea, and had sunk into the abyss, grinned horribly from the arms of these polypi ; helms, chests, skeletons of land animals were also held in their embrace ; among other things might be seen even a little mermaid whom they had seized and strangled ! What a fearful sight for the unfortunate Princess !

But she got safely through this wood of horrors, and then arrived at a slimy place, where immense,

fat snakes were crawling about, and in the midst of this place stood a house built of the bones of



HERE SAT THE WITCH

unfortunate people who had been shipwrecked. Here sat the witch caressing a toad in the same manner as some persons would a pet bird. The ugly fat snakes she called her chickens, and she permitted them to crawl about her.

‘I know well what you would ask of me,’ said she to the little Princess. ‘Your wish is foolish enough, yet it shall be fulfilled, though its accomplishment is sure to bring misfortune on you, my fairest Princess. You wish to get rid of your tail, and to have instead two stilts, like those of human beings, in order that the young Prince may fall in love with you, and that you may obtain an immortal soul—is it not so?’ Whilst the witch spoke these words she laughed so violently that her pet toad and snakes fell from her lap. ‘You come just at the

right time,' continued she ; ' had you come after sunset, it would not have been in my power to have helped you before another year. I will prepare for you a drink, with which you must swim to land ; you must sit down upon the shore and swallow it, and then your tail will fall and shrink up to the things which men call legs. This transformation will, however, be very painful : you will feel as though a sharp knife passed through your body. All who look on you, after you have been thus changed, will say that you are the loveliest child of earth they have ever seen : you will retain your peculiar undulating movements, and no dancer will move so lightly ; but every step you take will cause you pain all but unbearable ; it will seem to you as though you were walking on the sharp edges of swords, and your blood will flow. Can you endure all this suffering ? If so, I will grant your request.'

' Yes, I will,' answered the Princess, with a faltering voice ; for she remembered her dear Prince, and the immortal soul which her suffering might win.

' Only consider,' said the witch, ' that you can

never again become a mermaid when once you have received a human form. You may never return to your sisters and your father's palace; and unless you shall win the Prince's love to such a degree that he shall leave father and mother for you, that you shall be mixed up with all his thoughts and wishes, and unless the priest join your hands, so that you become man and wife, you will never obtain the immortality you seek. The morrow of the day on which he is united to another will see your death; your heart will break with sorrow, and you will be changed to foam on the sea.'

'Still I will venture!' said the little Mermaid, pale and trembling as a dying person.

'Besides all this, I must be paid, and it is no slight thing that I require for my trouble. Thou hast the sweetest voice of all the dwellers in the sea, and thou thinkest by its means to charm the Prince; this voice, however, I demand as my recompense. The best thing thou possessest I require in exchange for my magic drink; for I shall be obliged to sacrifice my own blood in order to give it the sharpness of a two-edged sword.'

'But if you take my voice from me,' said the

Princess, 'what have I left with which to charm the Prince?'

'Thy graceful form,' replied the witch, 'thy undulating motion, and speaking eyes. With such as these it will be easy to infatuate a vain human heart. Well now! hast thou lost courage? Put out thy little tongue that I may cut it off, and take it for myself in return for my magic elixir.'

'Be it so!' said the Princess, and the witch took up her caldron, in order to mix her potion. 'Cleanliness is a good thing,' remarked she, as she began to rub the caldron with a handful of snails. She then scratched her bosom, and let the black blood trickle down into the caldron, every moment throwing in new ingredients, the smoke from the mixture assuming such horrible forms as were enough to fill beholders with terror, and a moaning and groaning proceeding from it which might be compared to the weeping of crocodiles. The magic drink at length became clear and transparent as pure water: it was ready.

'Here it is!' said the witch to the Princess, cutting out her tongue at the same moment. The

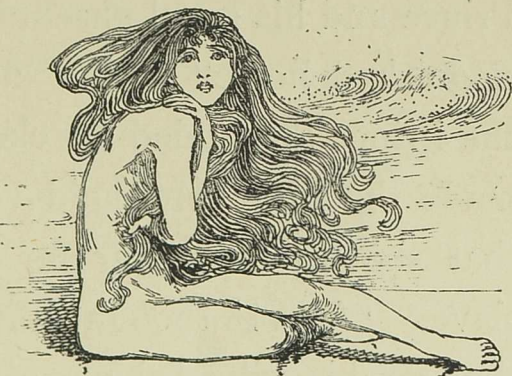
poor little Mermaid was now dumb—she could neither sing nor speak.

‘If the polypi should attempt to seize you, as you pass through my little grove,’ said the witch, ‘you have only to sprinkle some of this liquid over them, and their arms will burst into a thousand pieces.’ But the Princess had no need of this counsel, for the polypi drew hastily back as soon as they perceived the bright phial that glittered in her hand like a star: thus she passed safely through the formidable wood, over the moor, and across the foaming mill-stream.

She now looked once again at her father’s palace; the lamps in the saloon were extinguished, and all the family were asleep. She would not go in, for she could not speak if she did; she was about to leave her home for ever; her heart was ready to break with sorrow at the thought. She stole into the garden, plucked a flower from the bed of each of her sisters as a remembrance, kissed her hand again and again, and then rose through the dark blue waters to the world above.

The sun had not yet risen when she arrived at the Prince’s dwelling, and ascended those well-

known marble steps. The moon still shone in the sky when the little Mermaid drank off the wonderful liquid contained in her phial,—she felt it run through her like a sharp knife, and she fell down in a swoon. When the sun rose she awoke, and felt a burning pain in all her limbs, but—she saw standing close to her the object of her love, the handsome young Prince, whose coal-black eyes were fixed inquiringly upon her. Full of shame, she cast down her own, and perceived, instead of the long, fish-like tail she had hitherto borne, two slender legs; but she



WHEN THE SUN ROSE, SHE AWOKE

was quite naked, and tried in vain to cover herself with her long, thick hair. The Prince asked who she was, and how she had got there: and she, in reply, smiled, and gazed upon him with her bright blue eyes, for, alas! she could not speak. He then led her by the hand into the palace. She found that the witch had told her true; she felt as though she were walking on the edges of sharp

swords, but she bore the pain willingly : on she passed, light as a zephyr, and all who saw her wondered at her light, undulating movements.

When she entered the palace, rich clothes of muslin and silk were brought to her ; she was lovelier than all who dwelt there, but she could neither speak nor sing. Some female slaves, gaily dressed in silk and gold brocade, sang before the Prince and his royal parents ; and one of them distinguished herself by her clear, sweet voice, which the Prince applauded by clapping his hands. This made the little Mermaid very sad, for she knew that she used to sing far better than the young slave. ‘Alas !’ thought she, ‘if he did but know that for his sake I have given away my voice for ever.’

The slaves began to dance : our lovely little Mermaid then arose, stretched out her delicate white arms, and hovered gracefully about the room. Every motion displayed more and more the perfect symmetry and elegance of her figure ; and the expression which beamed in her speaking eyes touched the hearts of the spectators far more than
* the song of the slaves.

All present were enchanted, but especially the young Prince, who called her his dear little foundling. And she danced again and again, although every step cost her excessive pain. The Prince then said she should always be with him ; and accordingly a sleeping-place was prepared for her on velvet cushions in the anteroom of his own apartment.

The Prince caused a suit of male apparel to be made for her, in order that she might accompany him in his rides ; so together they traversed the fragrant woods, where green boughs brushed against their shoulders, and the birds sang merrily among the fresh leaves. With him she climbed up steep mountains ; and although her tender feet bled, so as to be remarked by the attendants, she only smiled, and followed her dear Prince to the heights, whence they could see the clouds chasing each other beneath them, like a flock of birds migrating to other countries.

During the night she would, when all in the palace were at rest, walk down the marble steps, in order to cool her burning feet in the deep waters ; she would then think of those beloved ones who dwelt in the lower world.

One night, as she was thus bathing her feet, her sisters swam together to the spot, arm in arm, and



SHE WAS BATHING HER FEET

singing, but alas ! so mournfully ! She beckoned to them, and they immediately recognised her, and told her how great was the mourning in her father's house for her loss. From this time the sisters visited her every night ; and once they brought with them the old grandmother, who had not seen the upper world for a great many years ; they likewise brought their father, the Mer-king, with his crown on his head ; but these two old people did not venture near enough to land to be able to speak to her.

The little Mermaid became dearer and dearer to the Prince every day ; but he only looked upon her as a sweet, gentle child ; and the thought of making her his wife never entered his head. And yet his wife she must be, ere she could receive an immortal soul ; his wife she must be, or she would change into foam, and be driven restlessly over the billows of the sea !

‘Dost thou not love me above all others?’ her eyes seemed to ask, as he pressed her fondly in his arms, and kissed her lovely brow.

‘Yes,’ the Prince would say, ‘thou art dearer to me than any other, for no one is as good as thou art! Thou lovest me so much; and thou art so like a young maiden, whom I have seen but once, and may never see again. I was on board a ship, which was wrecked by a sudden tempest; the waves threw me on the shore, near a holy temple, where a number of young girls are occupied constantly with religious services. The youngest of them found me on the shore, and saved my life. I saw her only once, but her image is vividly impressed upon my memory, and her alone can I love. But she belongs to the holy temple; and thou, who resemblest her so much, hast been given to me for consolation; never will we be parted!’

‘Alas! he does not know that it was I who saved his life,’ thought the little Mermaiden, sighing deeply; ‘I bore him over the wild waves into the wooded bay, where the holy temple stood; I sat behind the rocks, waiting till some one should come. I saw the pretty maiden approach, whom

he loves more than me,'—and again she heaved a deep sigh, for she could not weep. 'He said that the young girl belongs to the holy temple; she never comes out into the world, so they cannot meet each other again,—and I am always with him, see him daily; I will love him, and devote my whole life to him.'

'So the Prince is going to be married to the beautiful daughter of the neighbouring king,' said the courtiers; 'that is why he is having that splendid ship fitted out. It is announced that he wishes to travel, but in reality he goes to see the princess; a numerous retinue will accompany him.' The little Mermaid smiled at these and similar conjectures, for she knew the Prince's intentions better than any one else.

'I must go,' he said to her; 'I must see the beautiful princess; my parents require me to do so; but they will not compel me to marry her, and bring her home as my bride. And it is quite impossible for me to love her, for she cannot be so like the beautiful girl in the temple as thou art; and if I were obliged to choose, I should prefer thee, my little silent foundling, with the speaking

eyes.' And he kissed her rosy lips, played with her locks, and folded her in his arms, whereupon arose in her heart a sweet vision of human happiness and immortal bliss.

'Thou art not afraid of the sea, art thou, my sweet, silent child?' asked he tenderly, as they stood together in the splendid ship which was to take them to the country of the neighbouring king. And then he told her of the storms



HE KISSED HER ROSY LIPS

that sometimes agitate the waters, of the strange fishes that inhabit the deep, and of the wonderful things seen by divers. But she smiled at his words, for she knew better than any child of earth what went on in the depths of the ocean.

At night-time, when the moon shone brightly,

and when all on board were fast asleep, she sat in the ship's gallery, looking down into the sea. It seemed to her, as she gazed through the foamy track made by the ship's keel, that she saw her father's palace and her grandmother's silver crown. She then saw her sisters rise out of the water, looking sorrowful, and stretching out their hands towards her. She nodded to them, smiled, and would have explained that everything was going on quite according to her wishes; but just then the cabin-boy approached, upon which the sisters plunged beneath the water so suddenly, that the boy thought what he had seen on the waves was nothing but foam.

The next morning the ship entered the harbour of the King's splendid capital. Bells were rung, trumpets sounded, and soldiers marched in procession through the city, with waving banners and glittering bayonets. Every day witnessed some new entertainment; balls and parties followed each other; the princess, however, was not yet in the town; she had been sent to a distant convent for education, there to be taught the practice of all royal virtues. At last she arrived at the palace.

The little Mermaid had been anxious to see this unparalleled princess ; and she was now obliged to confess that she had never before seen so beautiful a creature.

The skin of the Princess was so white and delicate that the veins might be seen through it, and her dark eyes sparkled beneath a pair of finely formed eyebrows.

‘It is herself!’ exclaimed the Prince, when they met ; ‘it is she who saved my life, when I lay like a corpse on the seashore!’ and he pressed his blushing bride to his beating heart.

‘Oh, I am all too happy!’ said he to his dumb foundling ; ‘what I never dared to hope for has come to pass. Thou must rejoice in my happiness, for thou lovest me more than all others who surround me.’—And the little Mermaid kissed his hand in silent sorrow ; it seemed to her as if her heart was breaking already, although the morrow of his marriage-day, which must inevitably see her death, had not yet dawned.

Again rung the church-bells, whilst heralds rode through the streets of the capital, to announce the approaching bridal. Odorous flames burned in

silver candlesticks on all the altars; the priests swung their golden censers, and bride and bridegroom joined hands, whilst the holy words that united them were spoken. The little Mermaid, clad in silk and cloth of gold, stood behind the Princess, and held the train of the bridal dress; but her ear heard nothing of the solemn music; her eye saw not the holy ceremony: she remembered her approaching end; she remembered that she had lost both this world and the next.

That very same evening, bride and bridegroom went on board the ship; cannons were fired, flags waved with the breeze, and in the centre of the deck was raised a magnificent pavilion of purple and cloth of gold, fitted up with the richest and softest couches. Here the princely pair were to spend the night. A favourable wind swelled the sails, and the ship glided lightly over the blue waters.

As soon as it was dark, coloured lamps were hung out, and dancing began on the deck. The little Mermaid was thus involuntarily reminded of what she had seen the first time she rose to the upper world. The spectacle that now presented

itself was equally splendid—and she was obliged to join in the dance, hovering lightly as a bird over the ship boards. All applauded her, for never had she danced with more enchanting grace. Her little feet suffered extremely, but she no longer felt the pain; the anguish her heart suffered was much greater. It was the last evening she might see him for whose sake she had forsaken her home and family, had given away her beautiful voice, and suffered daily the most violent pain—all without his having the least suspicion of it. It was the last evening that she might breathe the same atmosphere in which he, the beloved one, lived,—the last evening when she might behold the deep blue sea and the starry heavens—an eternal night, in



SHE WAS OBLIGED TO JOIN
THE DANCE

which she might neither think nor dream, awaited her. And all was joy in the ship; and she, her heart filled with thoughts of death and annihilation, smiled and danced with the others till past midnight. Then the Prince kissed his lovely bride, and arm in arm they entered the magnificent tent prepared for their repose.

All was now still; the steersman alone stood at the ship's helm. The little Mermaid leaned her white arms on the gallery, and looked towards the east, watching for the dawn; she well knew that the first sunbeam would witness her dissolution. She saw her sisters rise out of the sea; deadly pale were their features; and their long hair no more fluttered over their shoulders—it had all been cut off.

‘We have given it to the witch,’ said they, ‘to induce her to help thee, so that thou mayest not die. She has given to us a penknife—here it is! Before the sun rises, thou must plunge it into the Prince’s heart; and when his warm blood trickles down upon thy feet, they will again be changed to a fish-like tail; thou wilt once more become a mermaid, and wilt live thy full three hundred years,



HER SISTERS ROSE OUT OF THE WATER, STRETCHING OUT THEIR
HANDS TOWARDS HER

ere thou changest to foam on the sea. But hasten ! either he or thou must die before sunrise. Our aged mother mourns for thee so much, her grey hair has fallen off through sorrow, as ours fell before the scissors of the witch. Kill the Prince, and come down to us ! Hasten ! hasten ! dost thou not see the red streaks on the eastern sky, announcing the near approach of the sun ? A few minutes more and he rises, and then all will be over with thee.' At these words they sighed deeply and vanished.

The little Mermaid drew aside the purple curtains of the pavilion where lay the bride and bridegroom ; bending over them, she kissed the Prince's forehead, and then glancing at the sky, she saw that the dawning light became every moment brighter. The Prince's lips unconsciously murmured the name of his bride—he was dreaming of her, and her only, whilst the fatal penknife trembled in the hand of the unhappy Mermaid. All at once, she threw far out into the sea the instrument of death ; the waves rose like bright blazing flames around, and the water where it fell seemed tinged with blood. With eyes fast becoming dim and fixed, she looked once more at her beloved Prince,

then plunged from the ship into the sea, and felt her body slowly but surely dissolving into foam.

The sun rose from his watery bed; his beams fell so softly and warmly upon her, that our little Mermaid was scarcely sensible of dying. She still saw the glorious sun; and over her head hovered a thousand beautiful, transparent forms,—so transparent were they, that through them she could distinguish the white sails of the ship, and the bright red clouds in the sky. The voices of these airy creatures had a melody so sweet and soothing, that a human ear would be as little able to catch the sound as the eye to discern their forms; they hovered around her without wings, borne by their own lightness through the air. The little Mermaid at last saw that she had a body transparent as theirs, and felt herself raised gradually from the foam of the sea to higher regions.

‘Where are they taking me?’ asked she, and her accents sounded just like the voices of those heavenly beings.

‘Speak you to the daughters of air?’ was the answer. ‘The mermaid has no immortal soul, and can only acquire that heavenly gift by winning the

love of one of the sons of men ; her immortality depends upon union with man. Neither do the daughters of air possess immortal souls, but they can acquire them by their own good deeds. We fly to hot countries, where the children of earth are wasting away under sultry skies—our fresh, cooling breath revives them. We diffuse ourselves through the atmosphere ; we perfume it with the delicious fragrance of flowers ; and thus spread delight and health over the earth. By doing good in this manner, for three hundred years, we win immortality, and receive a share of the eternal bliss of human beings. And thou, poor little Mermaid ! who, following the impulse of thine own heart, hast done and suffered so much, thou art now raised to the airy world of spirits, that, by performing deeds of kindness for three hundred years, thou mayest acquire an immortal soul.'

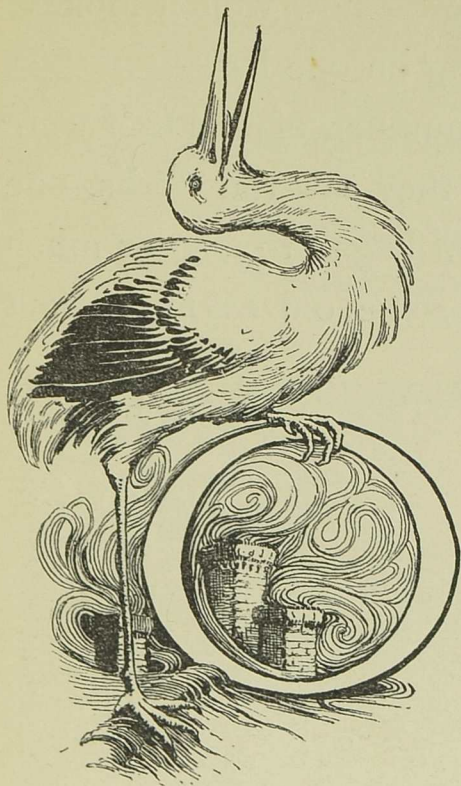
The little Mermaid stretched out her transparent arms to the sun, and, for the first time in her life, tears moistened her eyes.

And now again all were awake and rejoicing in the ship ; she saw the Prince, with his pretty bride ; they had missed her ; they looked sorrowfully down

on the foamy waters, as if they knew she had plunged into the sea : unseen, she kissed the bridegroom's forehead, smiled upon him, and then, with the rest of the children of air, soared high above the rosy cloud which was sailing so peacefully over the ship.

‘After three hundred years we shall fly in the kingdom of heaven!’

‘We may arrive there even sooner,’ whispered one of her sisters. ‘We fly invisibly through the dwellings of men, where there are children ; and whenever we find a good child, who gives pleasure to its parents and deserves their love, the good God shortens our time of probation. No child is aware that we are flitting about its room ; and that whenever joy draws from us a smile, a year is struck out of our three hundred. But when we see a rude, naughty child, we weep bitter tears of sorrow, and every tear we shed adds a day to our time of probation.’



THE STORKS

ON the roof of a house situated on the outskirts of a small town, a Stork had built his nest. There sat the mother-stork, with her four young ones, who all stretched out their little black bills, which had not yet become red. Not far off, upon the parapet, erect and proud, stood the father-stork ; he had drawn one of his legs under him, being weary of standing on two. You might have fancied him carved in wood, he stood so motionless. ‘It looks so grand,’ thought he, ‘for my wife to have a sentinel to keep guard over her nest ; people cannot know that I am her husband ; they will certainly think that I

am commanded to stand here—how well it looks!’ and so he remained standing on one leg.

In the street below, a number of children were playing together. When they saw the storks, one of the liveliest among them began to sing as much as he could remember of some old rhymes about



‘Stork ! stork ! long-legged stork !
Into thy nest I prithee walk.’

storks, in which he was soon joined by the others :—

‘Stork ! stork ! long-legged stork !
Into thy nest I prithee walk ;

There sits thy mate,
With her four children so great.

The first we'll hang like a cat,
The second we'll burn,
The third on a spit we'll turn,
The fourth drown dead as a rat !'

'Only listen to what the boys are singing,' said the little Storks; 'they say we shall be hanged and burnt!'

'Never mind,' said the mother, 'don't listen to them; they will do you no harm.'

But the boys went on singing, and pointed their fingers at the storks: only one little boy, called Peter, said it was 'a sin to mock and tease animals,' and that he would have nothing to do with it.

The mother-stork again tried to comfort her little ones. 'Never mind,' said she; 'see how composedly your father is standing there, and upon one leg only.'

'But we are so frightened!' said the young ones, drawing their heads down into the nest.

The next day, when the children were again

assembled to play together, and saw the Storks, they again began their song :—

‘ The first we ’ll hang like a cat,
The second we ’ll burn ! ’—

‘ And are we really to be hanged and burnt ? asked the young Storks.

‘ No, indeed ! ’ said the mother. ‘ You shall learn to fly : I will teach you myself. Then we can fly over to the meadow, and pay a visit to the frogs. They will bow to us in the water, and say, “ Croak, croak ! ” and then we shall eat them : will not that be nice ? ’

‘ And what then ? ’ asked the little Storks.

‘ Then all the storks in the country will gather together, and the autumnal exercise will begin. It is of the greatest consequence that you should fly well then ; for every one who does not, the general will stab to death with his bill ; so you must pay great attention when we begin to drill you, and learn very quickly.’

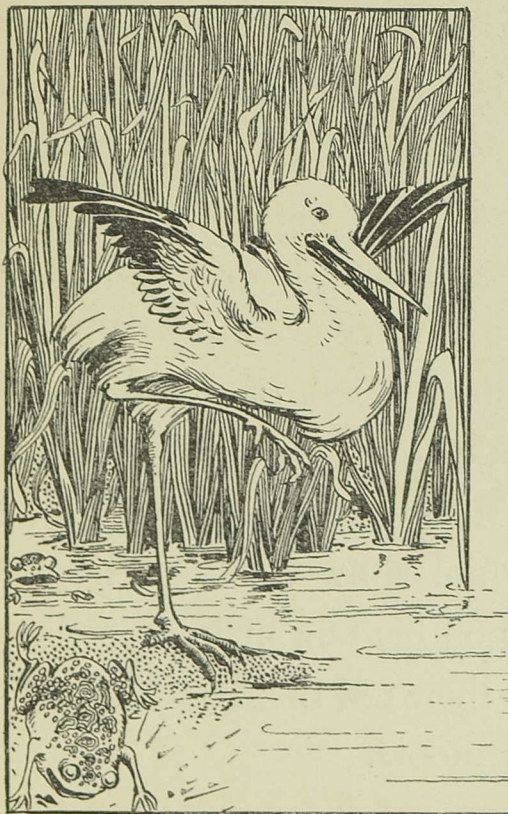
‘ Then we shall really be killed after all, as the boys said ! Oh, listen ! they are singing it again ! ’

‘Attend to me, and not to them!’ said the mother. ‘After the grand exercise, we shall fly to warm countries, far, far away from here, over mountains and forests. We shall fly to Egypt, where there are three-cornered stone houses whose summits reach the clouds: they are called pyramids, and are older than it is possible for storks to imagine. There is a river, too, which overflows its banks, so as to make the

whole country like a marsh, and we shall go into the marsh and eat frogs.’

‘Oh!’ said the young ones.

‘Yes, it is delightful! one does nothing

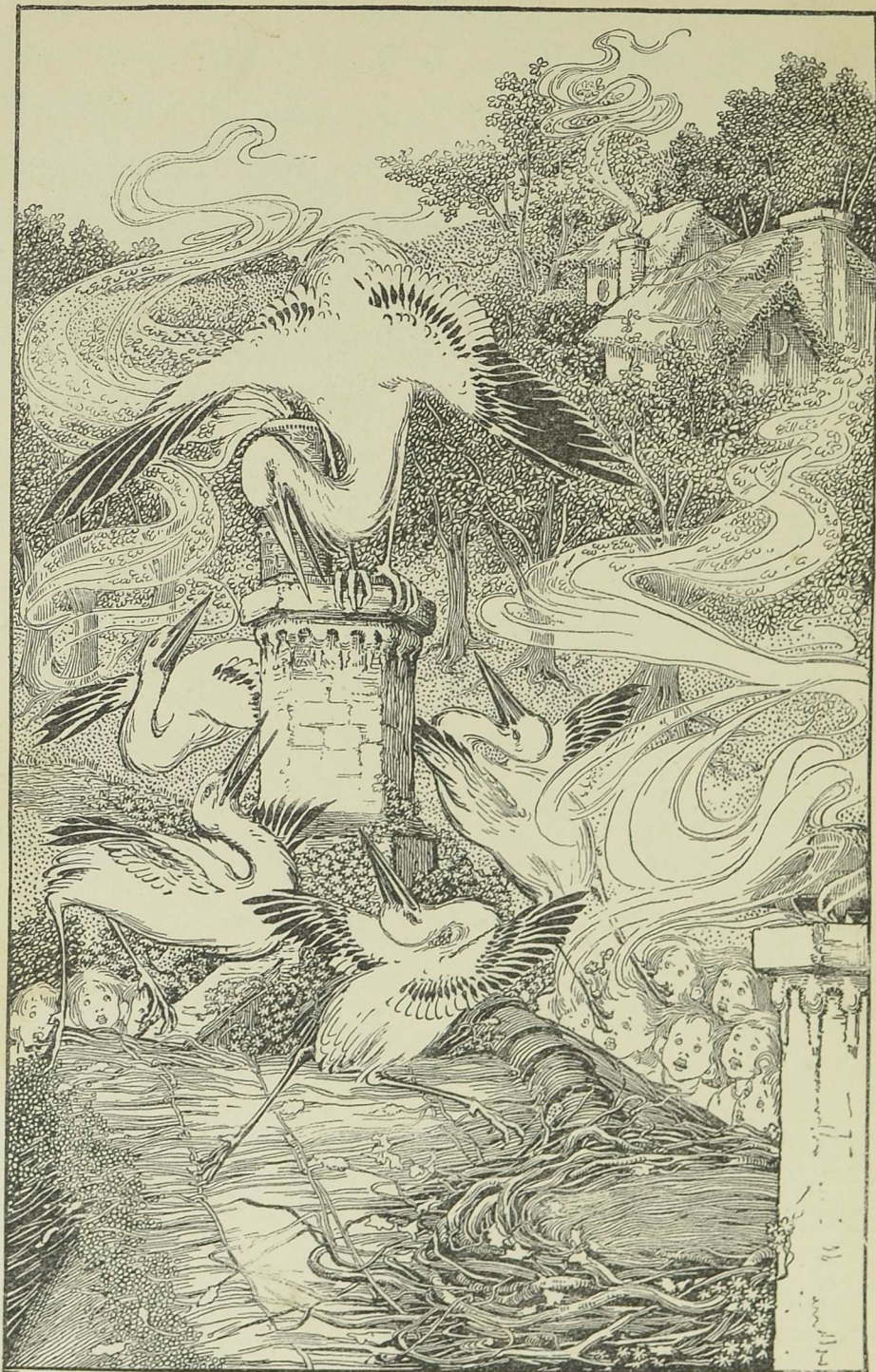


but eat all the day long. And whilst we are so comfortable, in this country not a single green leaf is left on the trees, and it is so cold that the clouds are frozen, and fall down upon the earth in little white pieces.' She meant snow, but she could not express herself more clearly.

'And will the naughty boys be frozen to pieces too?' asked the young Storks.

'No, they will not be frozen to pieces; but they will be nearly as badly off as if they were; they will be obliged to crowd round the fire in their little dark rooms; while you, on the contrary, will be flying about in foreign lands, where there are beautiful flowers and warm sunshine.'

Well, time passed away, and the young Storks grew so tall, that when they stood upright in the nests they could see the country around to a great distance. The father-stork used to bring them every day the nicest little frogs, as well as snails, and all the other stork tit-bits he could find. Oh! it was so droll to see him show them his tricks; he would lay his head upon his tail, make a rattling noise with his bill, and then tell them such charming stories, all about the moors.



THE STORKS

‘Now you must learn to fly!’ said the mother one day; and accordingly all the four young Storks were obliged to come out upon the parapet. Oh, how they trembled! And though they balanced themselves on their wings, they were very near falling.

‘Only look at me,’ said the mother. ‘This is the way you must hold your heads; and in this manner place your feet—one, two! one, two! this will help you to get on.’ She flew a little way, and the young ones made an awkward spring after her,—bounce! down they fell; for their bodies were heavy.

‘I will not fly!’ said one of the young ones, as he crept back into the nest; ‘I do not want to go into the warm countries!’

‘Do you want to be frozen to death during the winter? Shall the boys come, and hang, burn, or roast you? Wait a little, I will call them!’

‘Oh no!’ said the little Stork; and again he began to hop about on the roof like the others. By the third day they could fly pretty well, and so they thought they could also sit and take their ease in the air; but bounce! down they tumbled, and found themselves obliged to make use of their

wings. The boys now came into their street, singing their favourite song—

‘Stork ! stork ! long-legged stork !’

‘ Shall not we fly down and peck out their eyes ? ’ said the young ones.

‘ No, leave them alone ! ’ said the mother. ‘ Attend to me, that is of much more importance ! —one, two, three, now to the right !—one, two, three, now to the left, round the chimney-pot ! That was very well ; you managed your wings so neatly last time, that I will permit you to come with me to-morrow to the marsh ; several first-rate stork families will be there with their children. Let it be said that mine are the prettiest and best behaved of all ; and remember to stand very upright, and to throw out your chest ; that looks well, and gives an air of distinction ! ’

‘ But are we not to take revenge upon those rude boys ? ’ asked the young ones.

‘ Let them screech as much as they please ! You will fly among the clouds, you will go to the land of the pyramids, when they must shiver with cold, and have not a single green leaf to look at, nor a single sweet apple to eat ! ’

‘Yes, we shall be revenged!’ whispered they, one to another. And then they were drilled again.

Of all the boys in the town, the forwardest in singing nonsensical verses was always the same one who had begun teasing the storks, a little urchin not more than six years old. The young Storks, indeed, fancied him a hundred years old, because he was bigger than either their father or mother; and what should they know about the ages of children, or grown-up human beings! All their schemes of revenge were aimed at this little boy; he had been the first to tease them, and he teased them still. The young Storks were highly excited about it, and the older they grew, the less they were inclined to endure persecution. Their mother, in order to



A LITTLE URCHIN NOT MORE THAN
SIX YEARS OLD

pacify them, at last promised that they should be revenged, but not until the last day of their stay in this place.

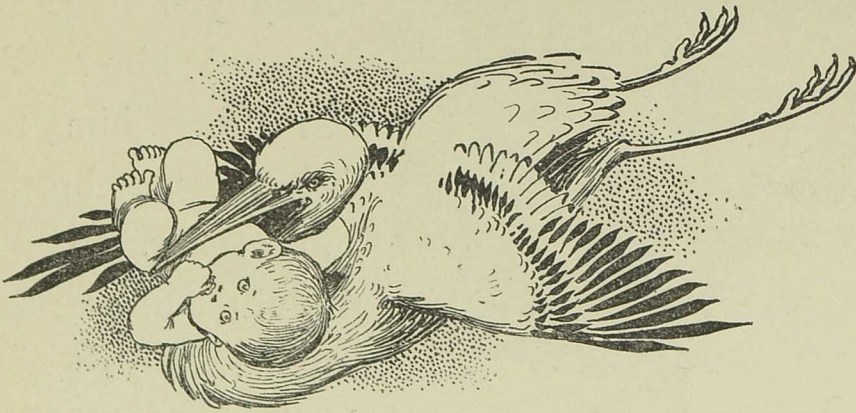
‘We must first see how you behave yourselves at the grand exercise; if then you should fly badly, and the general should thrust his beak into your breast, the boys will, in some measure, be proved in the right. Let me see how well you will behave!’

‘Yes, that you shall!’ said the young ones. And now they really took great pains, practised every day, and at last flew so lightly and prettily, that it was a pleasure to see them.

Well, now came the autumn. All the storks assembled, in order to fly together to warm countries for the winter. What a practising there was! Away they went over woods and fields, towns and villages, merely to see how well they could fly, for they had a long journey before them. The young Storks distinguished themselves so honourably that they were pronounced ‘worthy of frogs and serpents.’ This was the highest character they could obtain; now they were allowed to eat frogs and serpents—and eat them they did.

‘Now we will have our revenge!’ said they.

‘Very well!’ said the mother; ‘I have been thinking what will be best. I know where is the pool, in which all the little human children lie until the storks come and take them to their parents: the pretty little things sleep and dream so pleasantly as they will never dream again. All parents like



THE STORKS HAVE THEIR REVENGE

to have a little child, and all children like to have a little brother or sister. We will fly to the pool and fetch one for each of the boys who has not sung that wicked song, nor made a jest of the storks; and the other naughty children shall have none.’

‘But he who first sung those naughty rhymes—that great ugly fellow! what shall we do to him?’ cried the young Storks.

‘In the pool there lies a little child who has

dreamed away his life; we will take it for him, and he will weep because he has only a little dead



IN THE POOL LIES A LITTLE
DEAD CHILD

brother. But as to the good boy who said it was a sin to mock and tease animals, surely you have not forgotten him? We will bring him two little ones, a brother and a sister. And as this little boy's name is Peter, you, too, shall for the future be called "Peter!"

And it came to pass just as the mother said; and all the Storks were called 'Peter,' and are still so called to this very day.



THE SNOW QUEEN

PART THE FIRST

WHICH TREATS OF THE MIRROR AND ITS FRAGMENTS



ISTEN! We are beginning our story! When we arrive at the end of it we shall, it is to be hoped, know more than we do now.

There was once a magician! a wicked magician!! a most wicked magician!!! Great was his delight at having constructed a mirror possessing this peculiarity, viz. that everything good and beautiful, when reflected in it, shrank up almost to nothing, whilst those things that were ugly and useless were magnified, and made to appear ten times worse than before. The loveliest landscapes reflected in this mirror looked like boiled spinach, and the

handsomest persons appeared odious, or as if standing upon their heads, their features being so distorted that their friends could never have recognised them. Moreover, if one of them had a freckle, he might be sure that it would seem to spread over his nose and mouth; and if a good or pious thought glanced across his mind, a wrinkle was seen in the mirror. All this the magician thought highly entertaining, and he chuckled with delight at his own clever invention. Those who frequented the school of magic where he taught spread abroad the fame of this wonderful mirror, and declared that, by its means, the world and its inhabitants might be seen now, for the first time, as they really were. They carried the mirror from place to place, till at last there was no country nor person that had not been misrepresented in it. Its admirers now must needs fly up to the sky with it, to see if they could not carry on their sport even there. But the higher they flew the more wrinkled did the mirror become,—they could scarcely hold it together. They flew on and on, higher and higher, till at last the mirror trembled so fearfully that it escaped from their hands, and fell to the earth, breaking into millions,

billions, and trillions of pieces. And then it caused far greater unhappiness than before, for fragments of it, scarcely so large as grains of sand, would be flying about in the air, and sometimes get into people's eyes, causing them to view everything the wrong way, or to have power to see only what was perverted and corrupt, each little fragment having retained the peculiar properties of the entire mirror. Some people were so unfortunate as to receive a little splinter into their hearts. That was terrible!—the heart became cold and hard, like a lump of ice. Some pieces were large enough to be used as window-panes, but it was of no use to look at one's friends through such panes as those. Other fragments were made into spectacles, and then what trouble people had with setting and resetting them! The wicked magician was greatly amused with all this, and he laughed till his sides ached.

There are still some little splinters of this mischievous mirror flying about in the air; we shall hear more about them very soon.

PART THE SECOND

A LITTLE BOY AND A LITTLE GIRL



IN a large town, where there are so many houses and inhabitants that there is not room enough for all the people to possess a little garden of their own, and therefore many are obliged to content themselves with keeping a few plants in pots, there dwelt two poor children whose garden was somewhat larger than a flower-pot. They were not brother and sister, but they loved each other as much as if they had been, and their parents lived in two attics exactly opposite one another. The roof of one neighbour's house nearly joined the other, the gutter ran along between, and there was on each roof a little window, so that you could

stride across the gutter from one window to the other.

The parents of each child had a large wooden box in which grew herbs for kitchen use, and they had placed these boxes upon the gutter, so near that they almost touched each other. A beautiful little rose-tree grew in each box, scarlet-runners entwined their long shoots over the windows, and, uniting with the branches of the rose-trees, formed a flowery arch across the street. The boxes were very high, and the children knew that they might not climb over them, but they often obtained leave to sit on their little stools under the rose-trees, and thus they passed many a delightful hour.

But when winter came there was an end to these pleasures. The windows were often quite frozen over, and then they heated half-pence on the stove, held the warm copper against the frozen pane, and thus made a little round peep-hole, behind which would sparkle a bright gentle eye, one from each window.

The little boy was called Kay, the little girl's name was Gerda. In summer-time they could get out of window and jump over to each other ; but in

winter there were stairs to run down, and stairs to run up, and sometimes the wind roared, and the snow fell out of doors.

‘Those are the white bees swarming there!’ said the old grandmother.

‘Have they a queen bee?’ asked the little boy, for he knew that the real bees have one.

‘They have,’ said the grandmother. ‘She flies yonder where they swarm so thickly: she is the largest of them, and never remains upon the earth, but flies up again into the black cloud. Sometimes, on a winter’s night, she flies through the streets of the town, and breathes with her frosty breath upon the windows, and then they are covered with strange and beautiful forms, like trees and flowers.’

‘Yes, I have seen them!’ said both the children—they knew that this was true.

‘Can the Snow Queen come in here?’ asked the little girl.

‘If she does come in,’ said the boy, ‘I will put her on the warm stove, and then she will melt.’

And the grandmother stroked his hair and told him some stories.

That same evening, after little Kay had gone home, and was half-undressed, he crept upon the chair by the window and peeped through the little round hole. Just then a few snowflakes fell outside, and one, the largest of them, remained lying on the edge of one of the flower-pots. The snowflake appeared larger and larger, and at last took the form of a lady dressed in the finest white crape, her attire being composed of millions of star-like particles. She was exquisitely fair and delicate, but entirely of ice,—glittering, dazzling ice; her eyes gleamed like two bright stars, but there was no rest nor repose in them. She nodded at the window, and beckoned with her hand. The little boy was frightened, and



KAY PEEPED THROUGH THE LITTLE
ROUND HOLE

jumped down from the chair; he then fancied he saw a large bird fly past the window.

There was a clear frost next day, and soon afterwards came spring,—the trees and flowers budded, the swallows built their nests, the windows were opened, and the little children sat once more in their little garden upon the gutter that ran along the roofs of the houses.

The roses blossomed beautifully that summer, and the little girl had learned a hymn in which there was something about roses: it reminded her of her own. So she sang it to the little boy, and he sang it with her:—

‘Our roses bloom and fade away,
Our Infant Lord abides away.
May we be blessed His face to see,
And ever little children be!’

And the little ones held each other by the hand, kissed the roses, and looked up into the blue sky, talking away all the time. What glorious summer days were those! how delightful it was to sit under those lovely rose-trees, which seemed as if they never intended to leave off blossoming! One day Kay and Gerda were sitting looking at their

picture-book, full of birds and animals, when suddenly—the clock on the old church-tower was just striking five—Kay exclaimed, ‘Oh dear! what was that shooting pain in my heart? and now again, something has certainly got into my eye!’

The little girl turned and looked at him; he winked his eyes—no, there was nothing to be seen.

‘I believe it is gone,’ said he; but gone it was not. It was one of those glass splinters from the Magic Mirror,—the wicked glass which made everything great and good reflected in it to appear little and hateful, and which magnified everything ugly and mean. Poor Kay had also received a splinter in his heart,—it would now become hard and cold, like a lump of ice. He felt the pain no longer, but the splinter was there.

‘Why do you cry?’ asked he; ‘you look so ugly when you cry! there is nothing the matter with me. Fie!’ exclaimed he again, ‘this rose has an insect in it, and just look at this! after all they are ugly roses! and it is an ugly box they grow in!’ Then he kicked the box and tore off the roses.

‘O Kay, what are you doing?’ cried the little girl; but when he saw how it grieved her, he tore

off another rose, and jumped down through his own window, away from his once dear little Gerda.

Ever afterwards, when she brought forward the picture-book, he called it a baby's book ; and when her grandmother told stories, he interrupted her with a but, and sometimes, whenever he could manage it, he would get behind her, put on her spectacles, and speak just as she did ; he did this in a very droll manner, and so people laughed at him. Very soon he could mimic everybody in the street. All that was singular and awkward about them Kay could imitate, and his neighbours said, 'What a remarkable head that boy has !' But no, it was the glass splinter which had fallen into his eye, the glass splinter which had pierced into his heart—it was these which made him regardless whose feelings he wounded, and even made him tease the little Gerda who loved him so fondly.

His games were now quite different from what they used to be—they were so rational ! One winter's day, when it was snowing, he came out with a large burning-glass in his hand, and, holding up the skirts of his blue coat, let the snowflakes fall upon them.

‘Now, look through the glass, Gerda!’ said he, returning to the house. Every snowflake seemed much larger, and resembled a splendid flower, or a star with ten points; they were quite beautiful. ‘See, how curious!’ said Kay; ‘these are far more interesting than real flowers; there is not a single blemish in them; they would be quite perfect if only they did not melt.’

Soon after this Kay came in again, with thick gloves on his hands, and his sledge slung across his back; he called out to Gerda, ‘I have got leave to drive on the great square where the other boys play!’ and away he went.

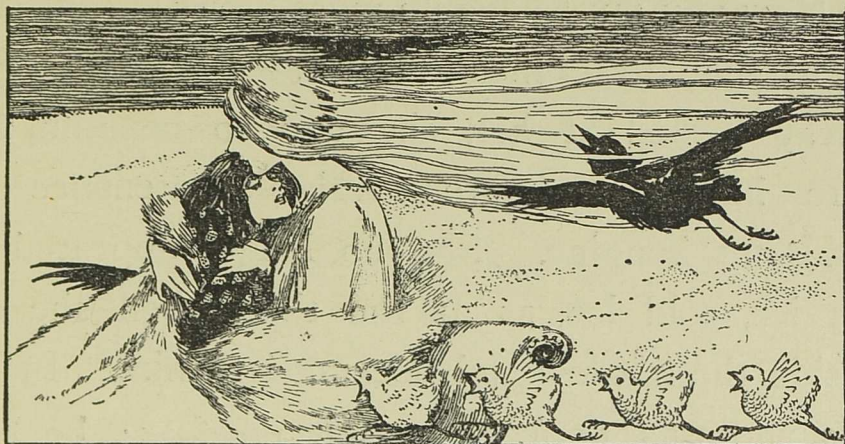
The boldest boys in the square used to fasten their sledges firmly to the wagons of the country-people, and thus drive a good way along with them; this they thought particularly pleasant. Whilst they were in the midst of their play, a large sledge, painted white, passed by; in it sat a person wrapped in a rough white fur, and wearing a rough white cap. When the sledge had driven twice round the square, Kay bound to it his little sledge, and was carried on with it. On they went, faster and faster, into the next street; the person who

drove the large sledge turned round and nodded kindly to Kay, just as if they had been old acquaintances, and every time Kay was going to loose his little sledge turned and nodded again, as if to signify that he must stay. So Kay sat still, and they passed through the gates of the town. Then the snow began to fall so thickly that the little boy could not see his own hand, but he was still carried on; he tried hastily to unloose the cords and free himself from the large sledge, but it was of no use, —his little carriage could not be unfastened, and glided on as swift as the wind. Then he cried out as loud as he could, but no one heard him —the snow fell and the sledge flew; every now and then it made a spring, as if driving over hedges and ditches. He was very much frightened; he would have repeated 'Our Father,' but he could remember nothing but the multiplication table.

The snowflakes seemed larger and larger; at last they looked like great white fowls. All at once they fell aside, the large sledge stopped, and the person who drove it arose from the seat; he saw that the cap and coat were entirely of snow,

that it was a lady, tall and slender, and dazzlingly white—it was the Snow Queen!

‘We have driven fast!’ said she, ‘but no one likes to be frozen—creep under my bear-skin.’ And she seated him in the sledge by her side,



SHE SPREAD HER CLOAK AROUND HIM

and spread her cloak around him: he felt as if he were sinking into a drift of snow.

‘Are you still cold?’ asked she, and then she kissed his brow. Oh! her kiss was colder than ice; it went to his heart, although that was half frozen already. He thought he should die: it was, however, only for a moment,—directly afterwards he was quite well, and no longer felt the intense cold around.

‘My sledge! do not forget my sledge!’—he

thought first of that—it was fastened to one of the white fowls which flew behind with it on his back. The Snow Queen kissed Kay again, and he entirely forgot little Gerda, her grandmother, and all at home.

‘Now you must have no more kisses!’ said she, ‘else I should kiss thee to death.’

Kay looked at her, she was so beautiful; a more intelligent, more lovely countenance he could not imagine. She no longer appeared to him ice, cold ice, as at the time when she sat outside the window and beckoned to him. In his eyes she was perfect; he felt no fear; he told her how well he could reckon in his head, even fractions, that he knew the number of square miles of every country, and the number of the inhabitants contained in different towns. She smiled, and then it occurred to him that, after all, he did not yet know so very much; he looked up into the wide, wide space, and she flew with him high up into the black cloud while the storm was raging; it seemed now to Kay as though singing songs of olden time.

They flew over woods and over lakes, over

sea and over land; beneath them the cold wind whistled, the wolves howled, the snow glittered, and the black crow flew cawing over the plain, whilst above them shone the moon, so clear and tranquil.

Thus did Kay spend the long, long winter night; all day he slept at the feet of the Snow Queen.

PART THE THIRD

THE ENCHANTED FLOWER-GARDEN



UT how fared it with little Gerda, when Kay never returned? Where could he be? No one knew; no one could give any account of him. The boys said that they had seen him fasten his sledge to another larger and very handsome one, which had

driven into the street, and thence through the gates of the town. No one knew where he was, and many were the tears that were shed; little

Gerda wept much and long, for the boys said he must be dead; he must have been drowned in the river that flowed not far from the town. Oh, how long and dismal the winter days were now!

At last came the spring, with its warm sunshine.

‘Alas, Kay is dead and gone!’ said little Gerda.

‘That I do not believe,’ said the Sunshine.

‘He is dead and gone,’ said she to the Swallows.

‘That we do not believe,’ returned they; and at last little Gerda herself did not believe it.

‘I will put on my new red shoes,’ said she one morning, ‘those which Kay has never seen, and then I will go down to the river and ask after him.’

It was quite early; she kissed her old grandmother, who was still sleeping, put on her red shoes, and went alone through the gates of the town toward the river.

‘Is it true,’ said she, ‘that thou hast taken my little playfellow away? I will give thee my red shoes if thou wilt restore him to me!’

And the wavelets of the river flowed towards her in a manner which she fancied was unusual; she fancied that they intended to accept her offer,

so she took off her red shoes, though she prized them more than anything else she possessed, and threw them into the stream; but they fell near the shore, and the little waves bore them back to her, as though they would not take from her what she most prized, as they had not got little Kay. However, she thought she had not thrown the shoes far enough, so she stepped into a little boat which lay among the reeds by the shore, and, standing at the farthest end of it, threw them from thence into the water. The boat was not fastened, and her movements in it caused it to glide away from the shore; she saw this, and hastened to get out, but by the time she reached the other end of the boat it was more than a yard distant from the land; she could not escape, and the boat glided on.

Little Gerda was much frightened, and began to cry, but no one besides the sparrows heard her, and they could not carry her back to the land; however, they flew along the banks, and sang as if to comfort her, 'Here we are, here we are!' The boat followed the stream, little Gerda sat in it quite still; her red shoes floated

behind her, but they could not overtake the boat, which glided along faster than they did.

Beautiful were the shores of that river,—lovely flowers, stately old trees, and bright green hills dotted with sheep and cows, were seen in abundance, but not a single human being.

‘Perhaps the river may bear me to my dear Kay,’ thought Gerda, and then she became more cheerful, and amused herself for hours with looking at the lovely country around her. At last she glided past a large cherry-garden, wherein stood a little cottage, with thatched roof and curious red and blue windows; two wooden soldiers stood at the door, who presented arms when they saw the little vessel approach.

Gerda called to them, thinking that they were alive, but they, naturally enough, made no answer. She came close up to them, for the stream drifted the boat to the land.

Gerda called still louder, whereupon an old lady came out of the house, supporting herself on a crutch; she wore a large hat, with most beautiful flowers painted on it.

‘Thou poor little child!’ said the old woman,

‘the mighty flowing river has indeed borne thee a long, long way.’ And she walked right into the water, seized the boat with her crutch, drew it to land, and took out the little girl.

Gerda was glad to be on dry land again, although she was a little afraid of the strange old lady.

‘Come and tell me who thou art, and how thou camest hither,’ said she.

And Gerda told her all, and the old lady shook her head, and said, ‘Hem! hem!’ And when Gerda asked if she had seen little Kay, the lady said that he had not arrived there yet, but that he would be sure to come soon, and that in the meantime Gerda must not be sad; that she might stay with her, might eat her cherries, and look at her flowers, which were prettier than any picture-book, and could each tell her a story.

She then took Gerda by the hand; they went together into the cottage, and the old lady shut the door. The windows were very high, and their panes of different-coloured glass, red, blue, and yellow, so that when the bright daylight streamed through them, various and beautiful

were the hues reflected upon the room. Upon a table in the centre was placed a plate of very



fine cherries, and of these Gerda was allowed to eat as many as she liked ; and whilst she was eating them, the old dame combed her hair with a golden comb, and the bright flaxen ringlets fell on each side of her pretty, gentle face, which looked as round and as fresh as a rose.

‘I have long wished for such a dear little girl,’ said the old lady. ‘We shall see if we cannot live very happily together.’ And as she combed little Gerda’s hair the child thought less and less of her foster-brother Kay,

THE OLD DAME COMBED HER HAIR

for the old lady was an enchantress. She did not,

however, practise magic for the sake of mischief, but merely for her own amusement. And now she wished very much to keep little Gerda to live with her; so, fearing that if Gerda saw her roses she would be reminded of her own flowers and of little Kay, and that then she might run away, she went out into the garden, and extended her crutch over all her rose-bushes, upon which, although they were full of leaves and blossoms, they immediately sank into the black earth, and no one would have guessed that such plants had ever grown there.

Then she led Gerda into this flower-garden. Oh, how beautiful and how fragrant it was! Flowers of all seasons and all climes grew there in fulness of beauty; certainly no picture-book could be compared with it. Gerda bounded with delight, and played among the flowers till the sun set behind the tall cherry-trees; after which a pretty little bed, with crimson silk cushions, stuffed with blue violet leaves, was prepared for her, and here she slept so sweetly, and had such dreams as a queen might have on her bridal eve.

The next day she again played among the

flowers in the warm sunshine, and many more days were spent in the same manner. Gerda



GERDA KNEW EVERY FLOWER IN THE
GARDEN

knew every flower in the garden; but numerous as they were, it seemed to her that one was wanting — she could not tell which. She was sitting one day looking at her hostess's hat, which had flowers painted on it, and behold, the loveliest among them was a rose! The old lady had entirely forgotten the painted rose on her hat when she made the real roses to disappear from her garden and sink into the ground. This is often the case when things are done hastily.

‘What!’ cried Gerda, ‘are there no roses in the garden?’ And she ran from one bed to another: sought and sought again, but no rose was to be found. She sat down and wept, and it so chanced

that her tears fell on a spot where a rose-tree had formerly stood, and as soon as her warm tears had moistened the earth, the bush shot up anew, as fresh and as blooming as it was before it had sunk into the ground ; and Gerda threw her arms around it, kissed the blossoms, and immediately recalled to memory the beautiful roses at home, and her little playfellow Kay.

‘ Oh, how could I stay here so long ? ’ exclaimed the little maiden ; ‘ I left my home to seek for Kay. Do you not know where he is ? ’ she asked of the Roses ; ‘ think you that he is dead ? ’

‘ Dead he is not, ’ said the Roses ; ‘ we have been down in the earth ; the dead are there, but not Kay. ’

‘ I thank you, ’ said little Gerda ; and she went to the other flowers, bent low over their cups, and asked, ‘ Know you not where little Kay is ? ’

But every flower stood in the sunshine dreaming its own little tale ; they related their stories to Gerda, but none of them knew anything of Kay.

‘ And what think you ? ’ said the Tiger-lily.

‘ Listen to the drums beating ; boom ! boom ! they have but two notes, always boom ! boom ! Listen

to the dirge the women are singing! listen to the chorus of the priests! Enveloped in her long red robes stands the Hindoo wife on the funeral pile, the flames blaze around her and her dead husband, but the Hindoo wife thinks not of the dead. She thinks only of the living, and the anguish which consumes her spirit is keener than the fire which will soon reduce her body to ashes. Can the flame of the heart expire amid the flames of the funeral pile?’

‘I do not understand that at all!’ said little Gerda.

‘That is my tale!’ said the Tiger-lily.

‘What says the Convolvulus?’

‘Hanging over a narrow mountain causeway behold an ancient baronial castle; thick evergreens grow amongst the time-stained walls, their leafy branches entwine about the balcony, and there stands a beautiful maiden; she bends over the balustrades and fixes her eyes with eager expectation on the road winding beneath. The rose hangs not fresher and lovelier on its stem than she; the apple-blossom which the wind threatens every moment to tear from its branch is not more fragile

and trembling. Listen to the rustling of her rich silken robe! Listen to her half-whispered words, "He comes not yet!"

'Is it Kay you mean?' asked little Gerda.

'I do but tell you my tale—my dream,' replied the Convolvulus.

'What says the little Snowdrop?'

'Between two trees hangs a swing; two pretty little maidens, their dress as white as snow, and long green ribands fluttering from their hats, sit and swing themselves in it; their brother stands up in the swing,—he has thrown his arms round the ropes to keep himself steady, for in one hand he holds a little cup, in the other a pipe made of clay—he is blowing soap-bubbles. The swing moves, and the bubbles fly upwards with bright, ever-changing colours; the last hovers on the edge of the pipe, and moves with the wind. The swing is still in motion, and a little black dog, almost as light as the soap bubbles, rises on his hind feet, and tries to get into the swing also; away goes the swing, the dog falls, is out of temper, and barks; he is laughed at, and the bubbles burst. A swinging-board, a frothy, fleeting image, is my song.'

‘What you describe may be all very pretty, but you speak so mournfully, and there is nothing about Kay.

‘What say the Hyacinths?’

‘There were three fair sisters—transparent and delicate they were; the kirtle of the one was red, that of the second blue, of the third pure white. Hand in hand they danced in the moonlight, beside the quiet lake; they were not fairies, but daughters of men. Sweet was the fragrance when the maidens vanished into the wood. The fragrance grew stronger; three biers, whereon lay the fair sisters, glided out from the depths of the wood and floated upon the lake; the glow-worms flew shining around like little hovering lamps. Sleep the dancing maidens, or are they dead? The odour from the flowers tells us they are corpses. The evening bells peal out their dirge.’

‘You make me quite sad,’ said little Gerda. ‘Your fragrance is so strong I cannot help thinking of the dead maidens; alas! and is little Kay dead? The Roses have been under the earth, and they say “No.”’

‘Ding dong! ding dong!’ rang the Hyacinth

bells. 'We toll not for little Kay—we know him not. We do but sing our own song—the only one we know.'

And Gerda went to the Buttercup, which shone so brightly from among her smooth green leaves.

'Thou art like a little bright sun,' said Gerda; 'tell me, if thou canst, where I may find my play-fellow.'

And the Buttercup glittered so brightly, and looked at Gerda. What song could the Buttercup sing? Neither was hers about Kay.

'One bright spring morning the sun shone warmly upon a little courtyard. The bright beams streamed down the white walls of a neighbouring house, and close by grew the first yellow flower of spring, glittering like gold in the warm sunshine. An old grandmother sat without in her armchair. Her granddaughter, a pretty, lowly maiden, had just returned home from a short visit; she kissed her grandmother,—there was gold, pure gold, in that loving kiss—

'Gold was the flower!

Gold the fresh, bright, morning hour!'

'That is my little story,' said the Buttercup.

‘My poor old grandmother!’ sighed Gerda. ‘Yes, she must be wishing for me, just as she wished for little Kay. But I shall soon go home again, and take Kay with me. It is of no use to ask the flowers about him, they only know their own song, they can give me no information.’ And she folded her little frock round her, that she might run the faster; but, in jumping over the Narcissus, it caught her foot, as if wishing to stop her. So she turned and looked at the tall yellow flower, saying, ‘Have you any news to give me?’ She bent over the Narcissus, waiting for an answer. And what said the Narcissus?

‘I can look at myself, I can see myself! Oh, how sweet is my fragrance! Up in the little attic-chamber stands a little dancer. She rests sometimes on one leg, sometimes on two. She has trampled the whole world under her feet: she is nothing but an illusion. She pours water from a teapot upon a piece of cloth she holds in her hand—it is her bodice. Cleanliness is a fine thing! Her white dress hangs on the hook; that has also been washed by the water from the teapot, and dried on the roof of the house; she puts it on, and wraps a

saffron-coloured handkerchief round her neck ; it makes the dress look all the whiter. With one leg extended, there she stands, as though on a stalk. I can look at myself—I see myself!’

‘I don’t care if you do,’ said Gerda. ‘You need not have told me that’; and away she ran to the end of the garden.

The gate was closed, but she pressed upon the rusty lock till it broke ; the gate sprang open, and little Gerda, with bare feet, ran out into the wide world. Three times she looked back ; there was no one following her. She ran till she could run no longer, and then sat down to rest upon a large stone. Casting a glance around, she saw that the summer was past, that it was now late in the autumn. Of course, she had not remarked this in the enchanted garden, where there were sunshine and flowers all the year round.

‘How long I must have stayed there!’ said little Gerda. ‘So, it is now autumn! Well, then, there is no time to lose’; and she rose to pursue her way.

Oh, how sore and weary were her little feet! and all around looked so cold and barren; the long

willow-leaves had already turned yellow, and the dew trickled down from them in large drops. The leaves fell off the trees, one by one; the sloe alone bore fruit, and its berries were so sharp and bitter! Cold, and grey, and sad seemed the world to her that day.



PART THE FOURTH

THE PRINCE AND THE PRINCESS

ERDA was again obliged to stop and take rest. Suddenly a large Raven hopped upon the snow in front of her, saying, 'Caw! caw! Good-day! good-day!' He had sat for some time on the withered branch of a tree just opposite, eyeing the little maiden, and wagging his head; and he now came forward to make acquaintance, and to ask her whither she was going all alone. That word 'alone' Gerda understood right well—she felt how sad a meaning it has. She told the Raven the history of her life and fortunes, and asked if he had seen Kay.

And the Raven nodded his head, half doubtfully, and said, 'That is possible!—possible!'

'Do you think so?' exclaimed the little girl, and she kissed the Raven so vehemently, that it is a wonder she did not squeeze him to death.

'More moderately!—moderately!' said the Raven. 'I think I know; I think it may be little Kay; but he has certainly forsaken thee for the Princess!'

'Dwells he with a Princess?' asked Gerda.

'Listen to me,' said the Raven; but it is so difficult to speak your language! Do you understand Ravenish? if so, I can tell you much better.'



'No, I have never learned Ravenish,' said Gerda, 'but my grandmother knew it, and Pye-language also. Oh, how I wish I had learned it!'

SHE KISSED THE RAVEN VEHEMENTLY

‘Never mind,’ said the Raven, ‘I will relate my story in the best manner I can, though bad will be the best’; and he told all he knew.

‘In the kingdom wherein we are now sitting there dwells a Princess, a most uncommonly clever Princess. All the newspapers in the world has she read, and forgotten them again, so clever is she. It is not long since she ascended the throne, which I have heard is not quite so agreeable a situation as one would fancy; and immediately after, she began to sing a new song, the burden of which was this, “Why should I not marry me?” “There is some sense in this song!” she said, and she determined she would marry; but at the same time declared that the man whom she would choose must be able to answer sensibly whenever people spoke to him, and must be good for something else besides merely looking grand and stately. The ladies of the court were then all drummed together, in order to be informed of her intentions, whereupon they were highly delighted; and one exclaimed, “That is just what I wish”; and another, that she had lately been thinking of the very same thing. Believe me,’ continued the Raven, ‘every



'STOOD BEFORE THE THRONE WHERE THE PRINCESS SAT'

word I say is true, for I have a tame beloved who hops at pleasure about the palace, and she has told me all this.'

Of course, the 'beloved' was also a raven, for birds of a feather flock together.

'Proclamations, adorned with borders of hearts, were immediately issued, wherein, after enumerating the style and titles of the Princess, it was set forth that every well-favoured youth was free to go to the palace and converse with the Princess; and that whoever should speak in such wise as showed that he felt himself at home, there would be the one the Princess would choose for her husband.

'Yes, indeed,' continued the Raven, 'you may believe me; all this is as true as I sit here. The people all crowded to the palace; there was famous pressing and squeezing. But it was all of no use, either the first or the second day; the young men could speak well enough while outside the palace gates, but when they entered, and saw the royal guard in silver uniform, and the lackeys on the staircase in gold, and the spacious saloon all lighted up, they were quite confounded. They stood before the throne where the Princess sat; and

when she spoke to them, they could only repeat the last word she had uttered, which, you know, it was not particularly interesting for her to hear over again. It was just as though they had been struck dumb the moment they entered the palace, for as soon as they got out they could talk fast enough. There was a regular procession constantly moving from the gates of the town to the gates of the palace. I was there, and saw it with my own eyes,' said the Raven. 'They grew both hungry and thirsty whilst waiting at the palace, but no one could get even so much as a glass of water. To be sure, some of them, wiser than the rest, had brought with them slices of bread and butter; but none would give any to his neighbour, for he thought to himself, "Let him look hungry, and then the Princess will be sure not to choose him."' "

'But Kay, little Kay, when did he come?' asked Gerda; 'was he among the crowd?'

'Presently, presently! we have just come to him. On the third day arrived a youth with neither horse nor carriage; gaily he marched up to the palace; his eyes sparkled like yours; he had long beautiful hair, but was very meanly clad.'

‘That was Kay!’ exclaimed Gerda. ‘Oh, then I have found him!’ and she clapped her hands with delight.

‘He carried a knapsack on his back,’ said the Raven.

‘No, not a knapsack,’ said Gerda, ‘a sledge, for he had a sledge with him when he left home.’

‘It is possible,’ rejoined the Raven; ‘I did not look very closely; but this I heard from my beloved, that when he entered the palace-gates and saw the royal guard in silver and the lackeys in gold upon the staircase, he did not seem in the least confused, but nodded pleasantly, and said to them, “It must be very tedious standing out here; I prefer going in.” The halls glistened with light; Cabinet Councillors and Excellencies were walking about barefooted, and carrying golden keys. It was just the place to make a man solemn and silent; and the youth’s boots creaked horribly, yet he was not at all afraid.’

‘That most certainly was Kay!’ said Gerda; ‘I know he had new boots; I have heard them creak in my grandmother’s room.’

‘Indeed they did creak!’ said the Raven; ‘but

merrily went he up to the Princess, who was sitting upon a pearl as large as a spinning-wheel, whilst all the ladies of the court, with the maids of honour and their handmaidens ranged in order, stood on one side, and all the gentlemen in waiting, with their gentlemen, and their gentlemen's gentlemen, who also kept pages, stood ranged in order on the other side, and the nearer they were to the door the prouder they looked. The gentlemen's gentlemen's page, who always wears slippers, one dare hardly look at, so proudly he stands at the door.'

'That must be dreadful!' said little Gerda. 'And has Kay really won the Princess?'

'Had I not been a Raven I should have won her myself, notwithstanding my being betrothed. The young man spoke as well as I speak when I converse in Ravenish; that I have heard from my tame beloved. He was handsome and lively. "He did not come to woo her," he said; "he had only come to hear the wisdom of the Princess"; and he liked her much, and she liked him in return.'

'Yes, to be sure, that was Kay,' said Gerda; 'he was so clever, he could reckon in his head even

fractions! Oh, will you not take me into the palace?’

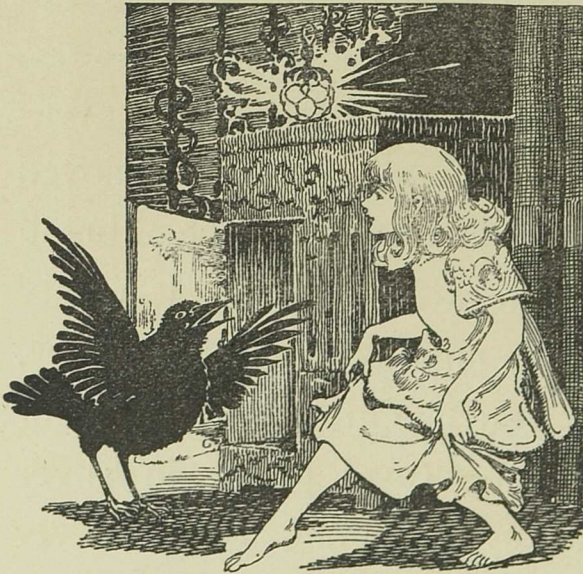
‘Ah! that is easily said,’ replied the Raven; ‘but how is it to be done? I will talk it over with my tame beloved; she will advise us what to do, for I must tell you that such a little girl as you are will never gain permission to enter publicly.’

‘Yes I shall!’ cried Gerda. ‘When Kay knows that I am here, he will immediately come out and fetch me.’

‘Wait for me at the trellis yonder,’ said the Raven. He wagged his head, and away he flew.

The Raven did not return till late in the evening. ‘Caw, caw!’ said he. ‘My tame beloved greets you kindly, and sends you a piece of bread which she took from the kitchen; there is plenty of bread there, and you must certainly be hungry. It is not possible for you to enter the palace, for you have bare feet; the royal guard in silver uniform, and the lackeys in gold, would never permit it; but do not weep, thou shalt go there. My beloved knows a little back-staircase leading to the sleeping-apartments, and she knows also where to find the key.

And they went into the garden, down the grand avenue, where the leaves dropped upon them as they passed along, and, when the lights in the palace one by one had all been extinguished, the Raven took Gerda to a back-door, which stood half open. Oh, how Gerda's heart beat with fear and expectation! it was just as though she was about to do something wrong, although she only wanted to know whether Kay was really there. Yes, it must be he! she remembered so well his bright eyes and



GERDA MADE HER A CURTSY

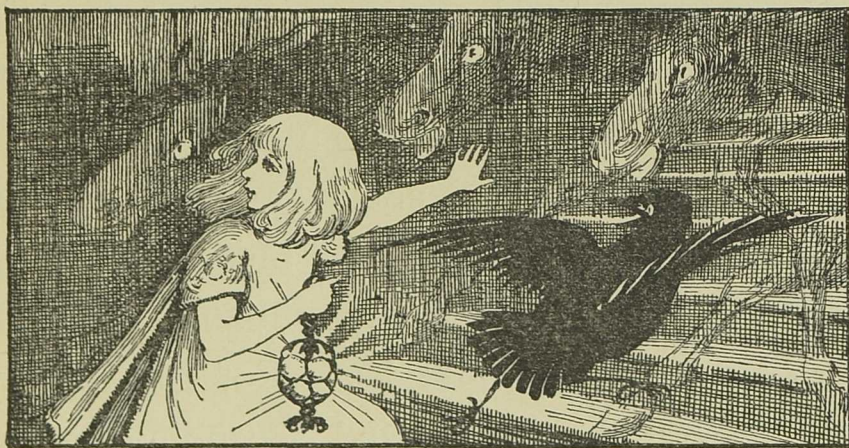
long hair. She would see if his smile were the same it used to be when they sat together under the rose-trees. He would be so glad to see her; to hear how far she had come for his sake;

how all at home mourned his absence. Her heart trembled with fear and joy.

They went up the staircase; a small lamp, placed

on a cabinet, gave a glimmering light; on the floor stood the tame Raven, who first turned her head on all sides, and then looked at Gerda, who made her a curtsy, as her grandmother had taught her.

‘My betrothed has told me much about you, my good young maiden,’ said the tame Raven; ‘your adventures, too, are extremely interesting! If you will take the lamp, I will show you the way. We are going straight on—we shall not meet any one now.’



STRANGE-LOOKING SHADOWS

‘It seems to me as if some one were behind us,’ said Gerda; and, in fact, there was a rushing sound as of something passing; strange-looking shadows flitted rapidly along the wall; horses, with long, slender legs and fluttering manes; huntsmen, knights, and ladies.

‘These are only Dreams!’ said the Raven; ‘they come to amuse the great personages here at night; you will have a better opportunity of looking at them when you are in bed. I hope that when you arrive at honours and dignities you will show a grateful heart.’

‘Do not talk of that!’ said the Wood-Raven.

They now entered the first saloon; its walls were covered with rose-coloured satin, embroidered with gold flowers. The Dreams rustled past them, but with such rapidity that Gerda could not see them. The apartments through which they passed vied with each other in splendour, and at last they reached the sleeping-hall. In the centre of this room stood a pillar of gold, resembling the stem of a large palm-tree, whose leaves of glass—costly glass—formed the ceiling, and depending from the tree, hung near the floor, on thick golden stalks, two beds in the form of lilies. The one was white, wherein reposed the Princess; the other was red, and here must Gerda seek her playfellow Kay. She bent aside one of the red leaves, and saw a brown neck. Oh, it must be Kay! She called him by his name aloud—held the lamp close to

him; the Dreams again rushed by; he awoke, turned his head, and, behold! it was not Kay.

The Prince resembled him only about the throat; he was, however, young and handsome. And the Princess looked out from the white lily-petals, and asked what was the matter. Then little Gerda wept and told her whole story, and what the Ravens had done for her.

‘Poor child!’ said the Prince and Princess; and they praised the Ravens, and said they were not at all angry with them. Such liberties must never be taken again in their palace, but this time they should be rewarded.

‘Would you like to fly away free to the woods?’ asked the Princess, addressing the Ravens; ‘or to have the appointment secured to you as Court-Ravens, with the perquisites belonging to the kitchen, such as crumbs and leavings?’

And both the Ravens bowed low and chose the appointment at court, for they thought of old age, and said it would be so comfortable to be well provided for in their declining years.

Then the Prince arose, and made Gerda sleep in his bed; and she folded her little hands, thinking,

‘How kind both men and animals are to me!’ She closed her eyes and slept soundly and sweetly, and all the dreams flitted about her; they looked like angels from heaven, and seemed to be drawing a sledge, whereon Kay sat and nodded to her; but this was only fancy, for as soon as she awoke all the beautiful visions had vanished.

The next day she was dressed from head to foot in silk and velvet. She was invited to stay at the palace and enjoy all sorts of diversions; but she begged only for a little carriage and a horse, and a pair of little boots. All she desired was to go again into the wide world to seek Kay.

And they gave her the boots, and a muff besides. She was dressed so prettily; and as soon as she was ready, there drove up to the door a new carriage of pure gold, with the arms of the Prince and Princess glittering upon it like a star, the coachman, footman, and outriders all wearing gold crowns. The Prince and Princess themselves helped her into the carriage and wished her success. The Wood-Raven, who was now married, accompanied her the first three miles; he sat by her side, for riding backwards was a thing he could not bear.

The other Raven stood at the door flapping her wings; she did not go with them on account of a headache she had felt ever since she had received her appointment, in consequence of eating too much. The carriage was well provided with sugar-plums, fruit, and gingerbread nuts.

‘Farewell! farewell!’ cried the Prince and Princess; little Gerda wept, and the Raven wept out of sympathy. But his farewell was a far sorer trial; he flew up to the branch of a tree, and flapped his black wings at the carriage till it was out of sight.

PART THE FIFTH

THE LITTLE ROBBER-MAIDEN



THEY drove through the dark, dark forest, the carriage shone like a torch; unfortunately, its brightness attracted the eyes of the robbers who dwelt in the forest-shades: they could not bear it.

‘That is gold! gold!’ cried they; forward they rushed, seized the horses, stabbed the

outriders, coachman, and footmen to death, and dragged little Gerda out of the carriage.

‘She is plump, she is pretty, she has been fed on nut-kernels!’ said the old Robber-wife, who had a long bristly beard, and eyebrows hanging like bushes over her eyes. ‘She is like a little fat lamb! And how smartly she is dressed!’ and she drew out her bright dagger, glittering most terribly.

‘Oh, oh!’ cried the woman; for at the very moment she had lifted her dagger to stab Gerda, her own wild and wilful daughter jumped upon her back and bit her ear violently. ‘You naughty child!’ said the mother.

‘She shall play with me,’ said the little Robber-maiden. ‘She shall give me her muff and her pretty frock, and sleep with me in my bed!’ And then she bit her mother again, till the Robber-wife sprang up and shrieked with pain, whilst the robbers all laughed, saying, ‘Look at her playing with her young one!’

‘I will get into the carriage!’ and so spoiled and wayward was the little Robber-maiden, that she always had her own way, and she and Gerda sat together in the carriage, and drove over stock and

stone, farther and farther into the wood. The little Robber-maiden was about as tall as Gerda, but much stronger ; she had broad shoulders, and a very dark skin ; her eyes were quite black, and had an expression almost melancholy. She put her arm round Gerda's waist, and said, ' She shall not kill thee so long as I love thee ! Art thou not a princess ? '

' No,' said Gerda ; and then she told her all that had happened to her, and how much she loved little Kay.

The Robber-maiden looked earnestly in her face, shook her head, and said, ' She shall not kill thee, even if I do quarrel with thee ; then, indeed, I would rather do it myself ! ' And she dried Gerda's tears, and put both her hands into the pretty muff that was so soft and warm.

The carriage at last stopped in the middle of the courtyard of the Robbers' castle. This castle was half-ruined ; crows and ravens flew out of the openings, and some fearfully large bulldogs, looking as if they could devour a man in a moment, jumped round the carriage ; they did not bark, for that was forbidden.

The maidens entered a large smoky hall, where

a tremendous fire was blazing on the stone floor ; the smoke rose up to the ceiling, seeking a way of escape, for there was no chimney ; a large caldron, full of soup, was boiling over the fire, whilst hares and rabbits were roasting on the spit.

‘Thou shalt sleep with me and my little pets to-night!’ said the Robber-maiden. Then they had some food, and afterwards went to a corner, wherein lay straw and a piece of carpet. Nearly a hundred pigeons were perched on staves and laths around them ; they seemed to be asleep, but were startled when the little maidens approached.

‘These all belong to me!’ said Gerda’s companion ; and seizing hold of one of the nearest, she held the poor bird by the feet, and swung it. ‘Kiss it,’ said she, flapping it into Gerda’s face. ‘The rabble from the wood sit up there,’ continued she, pointing to a number of laths fastened across a hole in the wall. Those are wood-pigeons ; they would fly away if I did not keep them shut up. And here is my old favourite!’ She pulled forward by the horn a Reindeer, who wore a bright copper ring round his neck, by which he was fastened to a large stone. ‘We are obliged to chain him up, or

he would run away from us. Every evening I tickle his neck with my sharp dagger; it makes him fear me so much!' and the Robber-maiden drew out a long dagger from a gap in the wall and passed it over the Reindeer's throat; the poor animal struggled and kicked, but the girl laughed, and then she pulled Gerda into bed with her.

'Will you keep the dagger in your hand whilst you sleep?' asked Gerda, looking timidly at the dangerous plaything.

'I always sleep with my dagger by my side,' replied the little Robber-maiden. 'One never knows what may happen. But now tell me all over again what you told me before about Kay, and the reason of your coming into the wide world all by yourself.' And Gerda again related her history, and the Wood-pigeons imprisoned above listened, but the others were fast asleep. The little Robber-maiden threw one arm round Gerda's neck, and holding the dagger with the other, was also soon asleep. One could hear her heavy breathing, but Gerda could not close her eyes throughout the night; she knew not what would become of her, whether she would even be suffered to live. The

robbers sat round the fire drinking and singing. Oh, it was a dreadful night for the poor little girl!

Then spoke the Wood-pigeons, 'Coo, coo, coo! We have seen little Kay. A white fowl carried his sledge; he himself was in the Snow Queen's chariot, which passed through the wood whilst we sat in our nest. She breathed upon us young ones as she passed, and all died of her breath excepting us two—coo, coo, coo!'

'What are you saying?' cried Gerda; 'where was the Snow Queen going? Do you know anything about it?'

'She travels most likely to Lapland, where ice and snow abide all the year round. Ask the Reindeer bound to the rope there.'

'Yes, ice and snow are there all through the year. It is a glorious land!' said the Reindeer. 'There, free and happy, one can roam through the wide, sparkling valleys! there the Snow Queen has her summer tent; her strong castle is very far off, near the North Pole, on the island called Spitzbergen.'

O Kay, dear Kay!' sighed Gerda.

'You must lie still,' said the Robber-maiden, 'or I will thrust my dagger into your side.'

When morning came Gerda repeated to her what the Wood-pigeons had said, and the little Robber-maiden looked grave for a moment, then nodded her head, saying, 'No matter! no matter! Do you know where Lapland is?' asked she of the Reindeer.

'Who should know but I?' returned the animal, his eyes kindling. 'There was I born and bred; there how often have I bounded over the wild icy plains!'

'Listen to me!' said the Robber-maiden to Gerda. You see all our men are gone; my mother is still here, and will remain; but towards noon she will drink a little out of the great flask, and after that she will sleep; then I will do something for you! And so saying she jumped out of bed, sprang upon her mother, pulled her by the beard, and said, 'My own dear mam, good morning!' And the mother caressed her so roughly that she was red and blue all over; however, it was from pure love.

When her mother was fast asleep, the Robber-maiden went up to the Reindeer and said, 'I should have great pleasure in stroking you a few more times with my sharp dagger, for then you look so droll; but never mind, I will unloose your chain, and help you to escape, on condition that you run as

fast as you can to Lapland, and take this little girl to the castle of the Snow Queen, where her playfellow is. You must have heard her story, for she speaks loud enough, and you know well how to listen.'

The Reindeer bounded with joy, and the Robber-maiden lifted Gerda on his back, taking the precaution to bind her on firmly, as well as to give her a little cushion to sit on. 'And here,' said she, 'are your fur boots, you will need them in that cold country. The muff I must keep myself, it is too pretty to part with. But you shall not be frozen; here are my mother's huge gloves—they reach up to the elbow—put them on. Now your hands look as clumsy as my old mother's!'

And Gerda shed tears of joy.

'I cannot bear to see you crying!' said the little Robber-maiden; 'you ought to look glad. See, here are two loaves and a piece of bacon for you, that you may not be hungry on the way.' She fastened this provender also on the Reindeer's back, opened the door, called away the great dogs, and then cutting asunder with her dagger the rope which bound the Reindeer, shouted to him, 'Now, then, run! but take good care of the little girl.'

And Gerda stretched out her hands to the Robber-maiden and bade her farewell, and the Reindeer fled through the forest,—over stock and stone, over desert and heath, over meadow and moor. The wolves howled and the ravens shrieked. ‘Isch! isch!’ a red light flashed; one might have fancied the sky was sneezing.

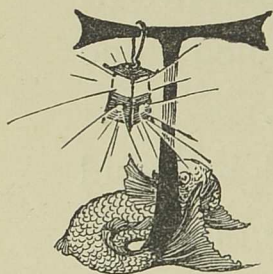
‘Those are my dear old Northern Lights,’ said the Reindeer; ‘look at them, how beautiful they are!’ And he ran faster than ever; night and day he ran. The loaves were eaten, so was the bacon; at last they were in Lapland.



AT LAST THEY WERE IN LAPLAND

PART THE SIXTH

THE LAPLAND WOMAN AND THE FINMARK WOMAN



THEY stopped at a little hut—a wretched hut it was; the roof very nearly touched the ground, and the door was so low that whoever wished to go either in or out was obliged to crawl upon hands and knees. No one was at home except an old Lapland woman, who was busy boiling fish over a lamp filled with train oil. The Reindeer related to her Gerda's whole history, not, however, till after he had made her acquainted with his own, which appeared to him of much more importance. Poor Gerda, meanwhile, was so overpowered by the cold that she could not speak.

‘Ah, poor things!’ said the Lapland woman, ‘you have still a long way before you! you have a hundred miles to run before you can arrive in Finmark. The Snow Queen dwells there, and burns blue lights every evening. I will write for

you a few words on a piece of dried stock-fish—paper I have none—and you may take it with you to the wise Finmark woman who lives there; she will advise you better than I can.'

So when Gerda had well warmed herself and taken some food, the Lapland woman wrote a few words on a dried stock-fish, bade Gerda take care of it, and bound her once more firmly on the Reindeer's back. Onwards they sped; the wondrous Northern Lights, now of the loveliest, brightest blue colour, shone all through the night; and amidst these splendid illuminations they arrived in Finmark and knocked at the chimney of the Wise-woman, for door to her house she had none.

Hot, very hot was it within, so much so that the Wise-woman wore scarcely any clothing. She was low in stature, and very dirty. She immediately loosened little Gerda's dress, took off her fur boots and thick gloves, laid a piece of ice on the Reindeer's head, and then read what was written on the stock-fish. She read it three times; after the third reading she knew it by heart, and threw the fish into the porridge-pot, for it might make a very excellent supper, and she never wasted anything.

The Reindeer then repeated his own story, and when that was finished he told of little Gerda's



THE WISE-WOMAN OF FINMARK

adventures, and the Wise-woman twinkled her wise eyes, but spoke not a word.

‘Thou art so powerful,’ continued the Reindeer, ‘that I know thou canst twist all the winds of the world into a rope, of which if the pilot loosen one

knot, he will have a favourable wind; if he loosen the second, it will blow sharp; and if he loosen the third, so tremendous a storm will arise that the trees of the forest will be uprooted, and the ship wrecked. Wilt thou not mix for this little maiden that wonderful draught which will give her the strength of twelve men, and thus enable her to overcome the Snow Queen?’

‘The strength of twelve men!’ repeated the Wise-woman; ‘that would be of much use, to be sure!’ and she walked away, drew forth a large

parchment roll from a shelf, and began to read. What strange characters were seen inscribed on the scroll, as the Wise-woman slowly unrolled it! She read so intently, that the perspiration ran down her forehead.

But the Reindeer pleaded so earnestly for little Gerda, and Gerda's eyes were raised so entreatingly and tearfully, that at last the Wise-woman's eyes began to twinkle again out of sympathy, and she drew the Reindeer into a corner, and putting a fresh piece of ice upon his head, whispered thus:—

‘Little Kay is still with the Snow Queen, in whose abode everything is according to his taste, and therefore he believes it to be the best place in the world. But that is because he has a glass splinter in his heart, and a glass splinter in his eye; until he has got rid of them he will never feel like a human being, and the Snow Queen will always maintain her influence over him.’

‘But canst thou not give something to little Gerda whereby she may overcome all these evil influences?’

‘I can give her no power so great as that which she already possesses. Seest thou not how strong she is? Seest thou not that both men and animals must serve her—a poor little girl, wandering bare-foot through the world? Her power is greater than ours; it proceeds from her heart—from her being a loving and innocent child. If this power, which she already possesses, cannot give her access to the Snow Queen’s palace, and enable her to free Kay’s eye and heart from the glass fragment, we can do nothing for her! Two miles hence is the Snow Queen’s garden, thither thou canst carry the little maiden; put her down close by the bush bearing red berries and half covered with snow: lose no time, and hasten back to this place!’

And the Wise-woman lifted Gerda on the Reindeer’s back, and away they went.

‘Oh, I have left my boots behind! I have left my gloves behind!’ cried little Gerda, when it was too late. The cold was piercing, but the Reindeer dared not stop; on he ran until he reached the bush with the red berries. Here he set Gerda down, kissed her, the tears rolling down his cheeks

the while, and ran fast back again, which was the best thing he could do. And there stood poor Gerda, without shoes, without gloves, alone in that barren region—that terrible icy-cold Finmark.

She ran on as fast as she could—a whole regiment of snowflakes came to meet her; they did not fall from the sky, which was cloudless and bright with the Northern Lights; they ran straight along the ground, and the farther Gerda advanced the larger they grew. Gerda then remembered how large and curious the snowflakes had appeared to her when one day she had looked at them through a burning-glass; these, however, were very much larger—they were living forms; they were, in fact, the Snow Queen's guards. Their shapes were the strangest that could be imagined; some looked like great ugly porcupines, others like snakes rolled into knots with their heads peering forth, and others like little fat bears with bristling hair,—all, however, were alike dazzlingly white,—all were living snowflakes.

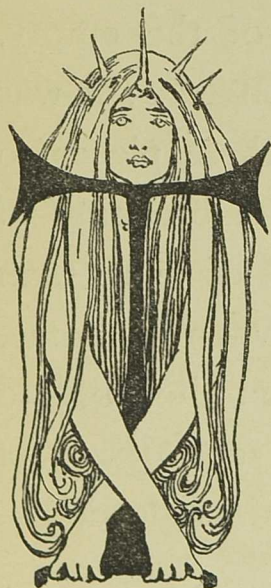
Little Gerda began to repeat 'Our Father.' Meanwhile the cold was so intense that she could see her own breath, which, as it escaped her mouth,

ascended into the air like vapour. More dense grew this vapour, and at length shaped itself into the forms of little bright angels, which, as they touched the earth, became larger and more distinct. They wore helmets on their heads, and carried shields and spears in their hands; their number increased so rapidly, that, by the time Gerda had finished her prayer, a whole legion stood around her. They thrust with their spears against the horrible snowflakes, which fell into thousands of pieces, and little Gerda walked on, unhurt and undaunted. The angels touched her hands and feet, and then she scarcely felt the cold, and boldly approached the Snow Queen's palace.

But before we accompany her there, let us see what Kay is doing. He is certainly not thinking of little Gerda, least of all can he imagine that she is now standing at the palace-gate.

PART THE SEVENTH

WHICH TREATS OF THE SNOW QUEEN'S
PALACE, AND OF WHAT CAME TO
PASS THEREIN



HE walls of the palace were formed of the driven snow, its doors and windows of the cutting winds; there were above a hundred halls, the largest of them many miles in extent, all illuminated by the Northern Lights; all alike vast, empty, icily cold, and dazzlingly white. No sounds of mirth ever resounded through these dreary spaces; no cheerful scene refreshed the sight—not even so much as a bear's ball, such as one might imagine sometimes takes place; the tempest forming a band of musicians, and the polar bears standing on their hind-paws and exhibiting themselves in the oddest positions. Nor was there ever a card-assembly, wherein the cards might be held in the mouth, and dealt out

by the paws ; nor even a small select coffee-party for the white young lady foxes. Vast, empty, and cold were the Snow Queen's chambers, and the Northern Lights flashed now high, now low, in regular gradations. In the midst of the empty, interminable snow-saloon lay a frozen lake ; it was broken into a thousand pieces ; but these pieces so exactly resembled each other, that the breaking of them might well be deemed a work of more than human skill. The Snow Queen, when at home, always sat in the centre of this lake ; she used to say that she was then sitting on the Mirror of Reason, and that hers was the best—indeed, the only one—in the world.

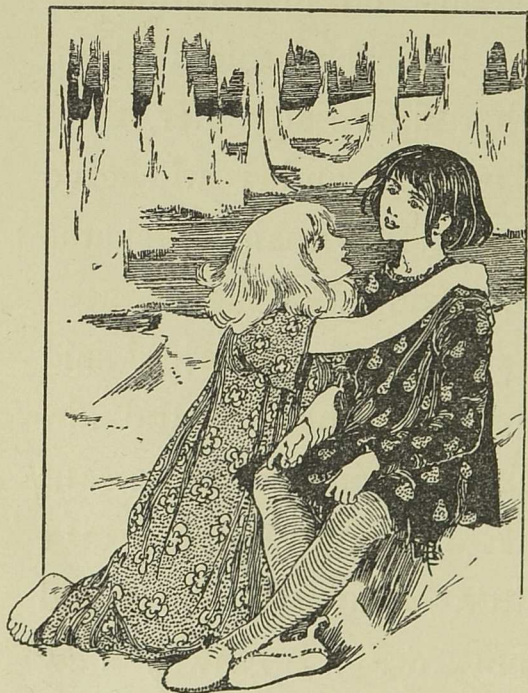
Little Kay was quite blue—nay, almost black, with cold ; but he did not observe it, for the Snow Queen had kissed away the shrinking feeling he used to experience, and his heart was like a lump of ice. He was busied among the sharp icy fragments, laying and joining them together in every possible way, just as people do with what are called Chinese Puzzles. Kay could form the most curious and complete figures, — this was the ice-puzzle of reason, — and in his

eyes these figures were of the utmost importance. He often formed whole words; but there was one word he could never succeed in forming—it was Eternity. The Snow Queen had said to him, ‘When thou canst put that figure together, thou shalt become thine own master, and I will give thee the whole world, and a new pair of skates besides.’ But he could never do it.

‘Now I am going to the warm countries,’ said the Snow Queen; ‘I shall flit through the air, and look into the black caldrons,’—she meant the burning mountains, Etna and Vesuvius. ‘I shall whiten them a little; that will be good for the citrons and vineyards.’ So away flew the Snow Queen, leaving Kay sitting all alone in the large, empty hall of ice. He looked at the fragments, and thought and thought till his head ached: he sat so still and so stiff that one might have fancied that he, too, was frozen.

Cold and cutting blew the winds when little Gerda passed through the palace-gates, but she repeated her evening prayer, and they immediately sank to rest. She entered the large, cold, empty

hall. She saw Kay, she recognised him, she flew upon his neck, she held him fast, and cried,



‘Kay! dear, dear Kay!
I have found thee at
last!’

But he sat still as before — cold, silent, motionless. His unkindness wounded poor Gerda deeply. Hot and bitter were the tears she shed; they fell upon his breast, they reached his heart, they thawed the ice, and dissolved

HE SAT STILL AS BEFORE—COLD,
SILENT, MOTIONLESS

the tiny splinter of glass within it. He looked at her whilst she sang her hymn—

‘Our roses bloom and fade away,
Our Infant Lord abides away!
May we be blessed His face to see,
And ever little children be!’

Then Kay burst into tears; he wept till the glass splinter floated in his eye and fell with his tears;

he knew his old companion immediately, and exclaimed with joy, 'Gerda, my dear little Gerda, where hast thou been all this time?—And where have I been?'

He looked around him, 'How cold it is here:—how wide and empty!' and he embraced Gerda whilst she laughed and wept by turns. Even the pieces of ice took part in their joy; they danced about merrily, and when they were wearied and lay down, they formed of their own accord the mystical letters of which the Snow Queen had said that when Kay could put them together, he should be his own master, and that she would give him the whole world, with a new pair of skates besides.

And Gerda kissed his cheeks, whereupon they became fresh and glowing as ever; she kissed his eyes, and they sparkled like her own; she kissed his hands and feet, and he was once more healthy and merry. The Snow Queen might now come home as soon as she liked—it mattered not; Kay's charter of freedom stood written on the mirror in bright icy characters.

They took each other by the hand, and wan-

dered forth out of the palace—talking, meanwhile, about the aged grandmother, and the rose-trees on the roof of their house; and as they walked on, the winds were hushed into a calm, and the sun burst forth in splendour from among the dark storm-clouds. When they arrived at the bush with the red berries, they found the Reindeer standing by, awaiting their arrival; he had brought with him another and younger Reindeer, whose udders were full, and who gladly gave her warm milk to refresh the young travellers.

The old Reindeer and the young Hind now carried Kay and Gerda on their backs, first to the little hot room of the Wise-woman of Finmark, where they warmed themselves, and received advice how to proceed in their journey home,—and afterwards to the abode of the Lapland woman, who made them some new clothes, and provided them with a sledge.

The whole party now ran on together till they came to the boundary of the country; but just where the green leaves began to sprout, the Lapland woman and the two Reindeers took

their leave. 'Farewell!—farewell!' said they all. And the first little birds they had seen for many a long day began to chirp and warble their pretty songs; and the trees of the forest burst upon them full of rich and variously tinted foliage. Suddenly, the green boughs parted asunder, and a spirited horse galloped up. Gerda knew it well, for it was the one which had been harnessed to her gold coach; and on it sat a young girl wearing a bright scarlet cap, and with pistols on the holster before her. It was, indeed, no other than the Robber-maiden, who, weary of her home in the forest, was going on her travels, first to the North, and afterwards to other parts of the world. She at once recognised Gerda, and Gerda had not forgotten her. Most joyful was their greeting!

'A fine gentleman you are, to be sure, you graceless young truant!' said she to Kay; 'I should like to know if you deserved that any one should be running to the end of the world on your account!'

But Gerda stroked her cheeks, and asked after the Prince and Princess.

‘They are gone travelling into foreign countries,’ replied the Robber-maiden.

‘And the Raven?’ asked Gerda.

‘Ah! the Raven is dead,’ returned she. ‘The tame beloved has become a widow; so she hops about with a piece of black worsted wound round her leg; she moans most piteously, and chatters more than ever! But tell me now all that has happened to you, and how you managed to pick up your old playfellow.’

And Gerda and Kay told their story.

‘Snip-snap-snurre-basselurre!’ said the Robber-maiden; she pressed the hands of both, promised that if ever she passed through their town she would pay them a visit, and then bade them farewell, and rode away out into the wide world.

Kay and Gerda walked on hand in hand, and wherever they went it was spring, beautiful spring, with its bright flowers and green leaves.

They arrived at a large town; the church bells were ringing merrily, and they immediately recognised the high towers rising into the sky—it was the town wherein they had lived. Joyfully

they passed through the streets, joyfully they stopped at the door of Gerda's grandmother. They walked up the stairs and entered the well-known room. The clock said 'Tick, tick!' and the hands moved as before; only one alteration could they find, and that was in themselves, for they saw that they were now full-grown persons. The rose-trees on the roof blossomed in front of the open window, and there beneath them stood the children's stools. Kay and Gerda went and sat down upon them, still holding each other by the hand; the cold, hollow splendour of the Snow Queen's palace they had forgotten, it seemed to them only an unpleasant dream. The grandmother, meanwhile, sat amid God's bright sunshine, and read from the Bible these words: 'Unless ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'

And Kay and Gerda gazed on each other; they now understood the words of their hymn—

'Our roses bloom and fade away,
Our Infant Lord abides alway!
May we be blessed His face to see,
And ever little children be!'

There they sat, those two happy ones, grown up and yet children—children in heart, while all around them glowed bright summer — warm, glorious summer.

SONGS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE

By NORMAN GALE

With Illustrations by HELEN STRATTON

Large crown 8vo, 6s. Extra cloth gilt, gilt top.

A COUNTRY MUSE

By NORMAN GALE

First and Second Series. 2 vols. Crown 8vo, 5s. each Volume.

'There is the same fine true touch, like the touch of the artist who carves a perfect cameo.'—*Spectator*.

'These fresh and impassioned rural lyrics keep their charm, and grow upon one the more they are read.'—*Scotsman*.

'His verses are voluntaries, and sing themselves . . . Is as fresh, sweet, and as irresistible as ever.'—*Glasgow Herald*.

'Nothing could be simpler, sweeter, more true to nature.'—*Literary World*.

'They well deserve their vogue.'—*St. James's Gazette*.

'The whole book is fresh and fragrant.'—*Speaker*.

'Are pretty little pastorals, which show a keen appreciation of rural sights and sounds, of brooks and blossoms, blackbirds and barley-fields, missel-thrushes and milkmaids.'—*Morning Post*.

'His pure sweet note awakens only the thought of woods and fields, of country lanes, of flowers, of birds, of innocent country love, of calm airs, of fragrant breezes.'—*Birmingham Post*.

BEYOND THE BORDER

TALES TOLD IN THE TWILIGHT

By WALTER DOUGLAS CAMPBELL

With Illustrations by ARTHUR LAYARD. 6s.

THE MARVELLOUS ADVENTURES OF

SIR JOHN MAUNDEVILE, Knight

Edited and Profusely Illustrated by ARTHUR LAYARD.

With a Preface by JOHN CAMERON GRANT.

Extra crown 8vo, cloth, extra gilt edges, 6s.; also buckram, paper label, uncut edges, 6s.

'A very handsome book it is externally; and Mr. Layard's illustrations are generous in number and excellent in quality . . . and we can think of no better wish for our friends than a long winter evening, an arm-chair, and Sir John for company.'—*The Bookman*.

'As a Christmas gift-book Mr. Layard's *Maundevile* will be sure of a wide popularity, for it should delight both young and old. The illustrations are among the very best of their kind which we know.'—*Publishers' Circular*.

'A brilliant and substantial volume. . . . The type and paper used are both admirable, and the drawings by Mr. Layard are full of fancy and imagination.'—*Globe*.

'Mr. Layard's illustrations are in a delightfully humorous vein.'—*Daily News*.

THE KITCHEN MAID

OR

SOMEONE WE KNOW VERY WELL

A PLAY FOR CHILDREN, IN TWO ACTS

By MARY F. GUILLEMARD

With Illustrations by BERNARD PARTRIDGE, E. M. HALL, MARGERY MAY,
AND HELEN STRATTON.

WESTMINSTER: ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND CO.

2 WHITEHALL GARDENS, S.W.

CONSTABLE'S REPRINT
OF THE
AUTHOR'S FAVOURITE EDITION OF
THE WAVERLEY NOVELS

With all the Original Plates and Vignettes
Re-engraved. In 48 Vols.

<i>Red cloth, paper back title,</i>	.	price	£3	12	0	<i>net per set.</i>
<i>Cloth gilt, gilt top,</i>	.	„	4	16	0	„ „
<i>Quarter leather, gilt top,</i>	.	„	6	0	0	„ „

A FEW OPINIONS OF THE PRESS

‘A delightful reprint. The price is lower than of many inferior editions.’
—*Athenæum*.

‘The excellence of the print and the convenient size of the volumes, and the association of this edition with Sir Walter Scott himself, should combine with so moderate a price to secure for this reprint a popularity as great as that which the original edition long and justly enjoyed with former generations of readers.’—*The Times*.

‘The illustrations have been re-engraved in a fashion which appears from the first specimens to be perfectly successful. This is one of the most charming editions of the Waverley Novels that we know, as well as one of the cheapest in the market.’—*Glasgow Herald*.

‘A remarkably cheap and well-printed re-issue.’—*Leeds Mercury*.

‘An exquisite reprint.’—*Black and White*.

‘Wonderfully cheap, and the re-issue could not have been presented more perfectly than it is now done.’—*Sheffield Telegraph*.

‘Those charming volumes.’—*Literary World*.

‘After many disappointments we now have a cheap Waverley on what has always been the best model.’—A. T. Q. C. in the *Speaker*.

WESTMINSTER: ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND CO.

2 WHITEHALL GARDENS, S.W.

