BROTHER SUNSHINE'S SERIES.

13 sorts,] See List at back of Cover. [6d. each.

THE

SEVEN WONDERFUL BROTHERS.

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THE
SEVEN WONDERFUL BROTHERS.

(Here you see them and their house.)

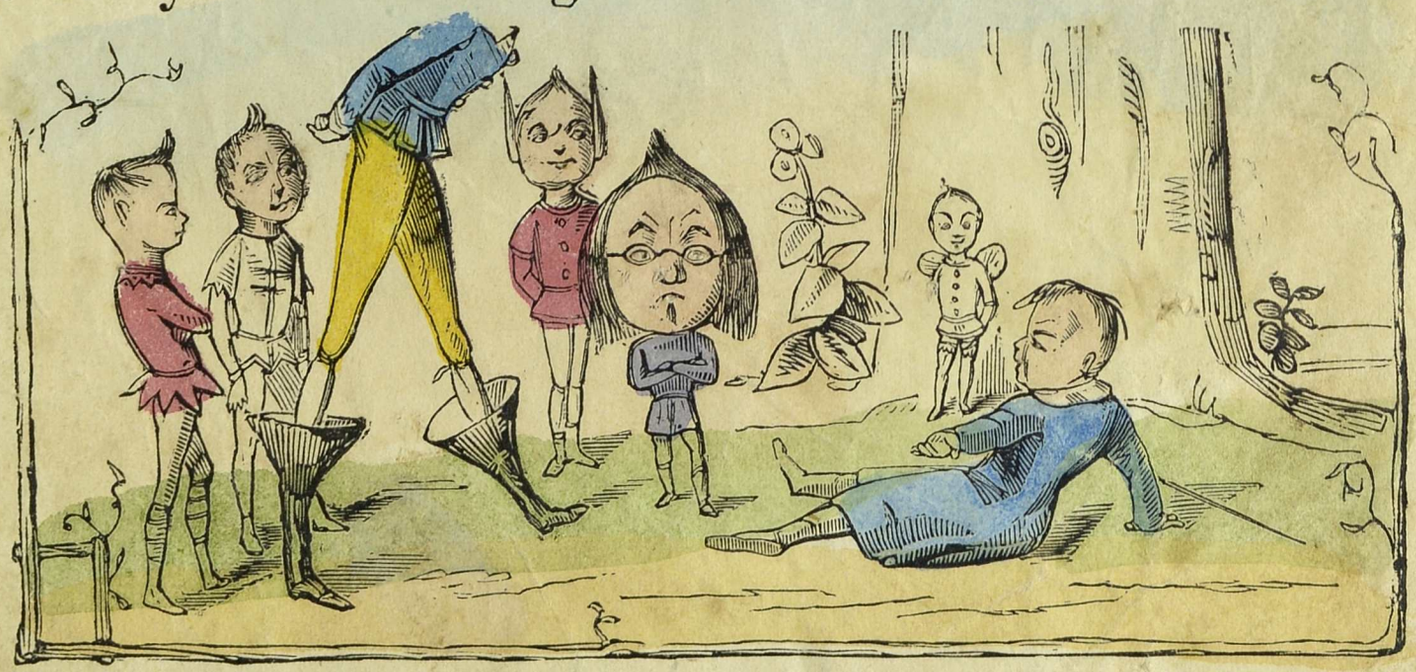
THERE was once, long, long ago, living in Fairy-land, seven wonderful brothers, who loved each other dearly, and were always ready to help each other. Their names were Long-legs, Large-head, Lazy-bones, Light-foot, Sharp-eyes, Quick-ears, and Petling.

One morning, these brothers went to walk in the woods, and wandered about until it was evening; and as it was getting late, Lazy-bones, who never could bear to hurry himself, begged that they might pass the night there. As

it was getting dark, Long-legs, who was the eldest, consented to stay, and told Sharp-eyes to look about for a snug place to rest in. Sharp-eyes soon spied a beautiful palace; "It is only a little way off, dear Long-legs," said he; "do let us go there directly."

But Large-head, in whose head there was room for much thought, said gravely, "Perhaps it is some dreadful giant's castle." "Had not I better run and see?" said Light-foot. "There is no need for that," said Quick-ears; "for if any giant had been near, I should have heard him breathing." "Let us all sit down, and think what we had best do," said Petling.

"Well done, little darling," said they all, "your advice is always worth having."



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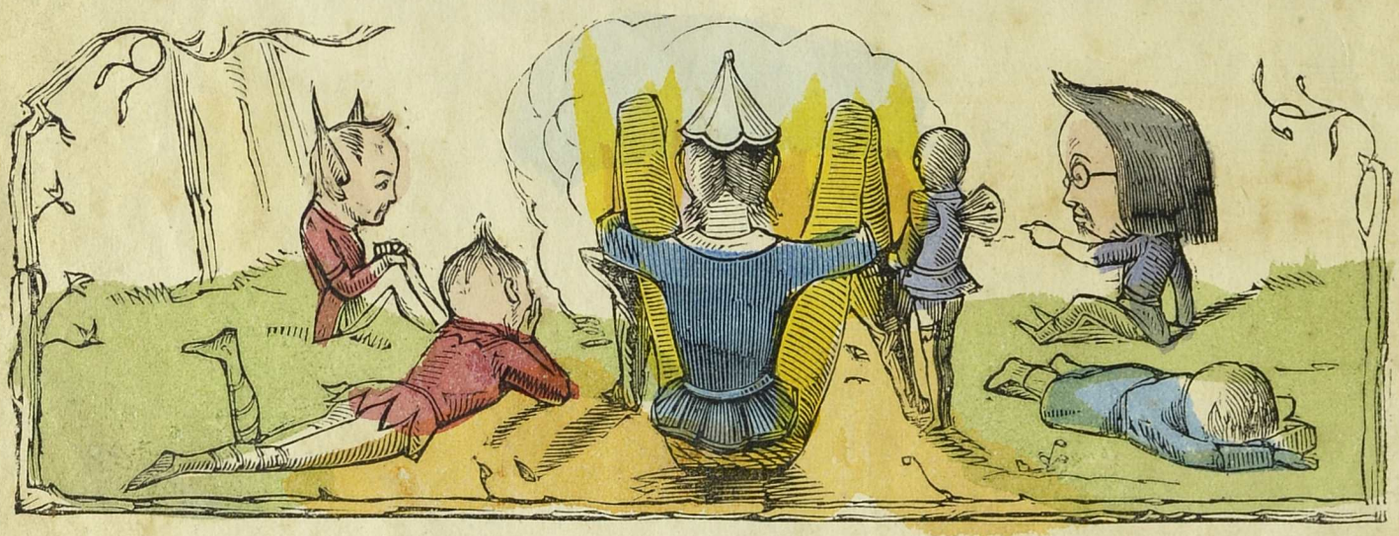
As it was getting very damp, they all agreed that there was danger of Petling taking cold, so they had better go to the castle. Accordingly, they went; but no sooner had they knocked at the great iron gate, than lo! out rushed a monstrous dragon. You may be sure that the brothers all ran off as fast as they could; but poor Sharp-eyes, who was last, was unfortunately knocked down by Long-legs, and the terrible dragon seized him up in a moment, and carried him to his cruel master, the giant.

Poor, poor little Sharp-eyes, well might he tremble with fear; he expected to be immediately devoured; but the giant said he was too thin at present, so he put him in a coop to fatten him for his table; and he grew stouter and stouter each day. Only look at him!

Poor Sharp-eyes was now quite plump, and the giant's mouth watered at the thought of what a nice supper he should have. But while he was thinking of this treat, let us see what the brothers were doing. Long-legs, who had been the cause of Sharp-eyes being caught, was running so fast at the time, that he knew nothing of the affair; but little Petling, who was in his arms, saw it all; and as soon as he could make himself heard, he told his brothers what had happened. They were all sadly distressed at the loss of poor Sharp-eyes; and Petling cried so much, that the rest were scarcely able to comfort him.

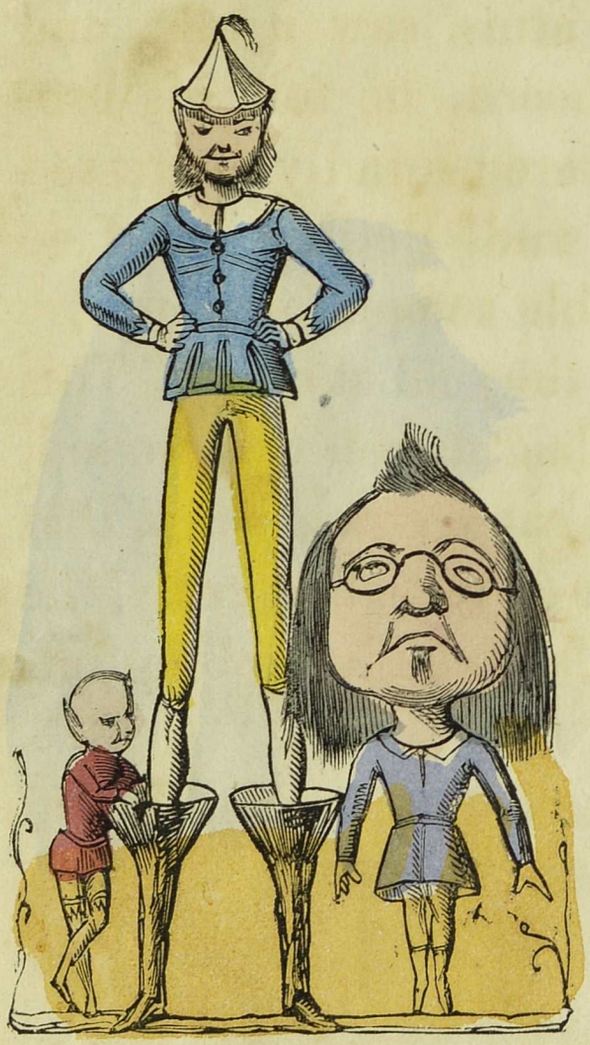
"Let us try to deliver him," said they all at once. This was soon agreed to: so Sharp-ears laid flat on the ground, with one ear to the earth, trying to catch some sound that might tell him where to find Sharp-eyes. Presently, he cried out, "I hear his voice, but alas! he is sobbing bitterly."

"Let us light a fire, and sit round it in council," said Long-legs; and this they immediately did.



Soon it was decided that Quick-ears should listen again, that they might discover in what part of the castle Sharp-eyes was confined, "Then," said Long-legs, "I will open the window of the room, and let our brother free."

"I hear a noise," said Quick-ears, again, "but it is too loud for the voice of Sharp-eyes." "Perhaps they have fattened him, and made him a large man, said Large-head." "That is very likely," said Long-legs; "you are a clever little fellow, Large-head, and I do not know what we should do without you."



Now Large-head, who was very small for his age, thought his dignity was hurt by being called little, so he felt himself offended, and appeared dull. His brothers observed this, and tried to persuade him to be cheerful again, and think no more about it; but it was of no use, for Large-head could not fancy the thought that his brother was taller than he was; so he stood boldly up and said, "Now, sir, let us measure and see which is tallest."

Well, up they both stood and measured, and then poor Large-head found out his mistake, as you may see by the picture. Of course his brothers laughed; but this only made matters worse, and it is very likely that unkind words would have followed, had not Petling reminded them of poor Sharp-eyes, who was pining in captivity.

This remark made the brothers begin to think they had been losing time, and Long-legs said, "I feel quite sorry that we have forgotten him so long; but, never mind, let us try at once to set the poor fellow free."

This was soon agreed to, and in their hurry to sit down, Long-legs overbalanced himself, and up went his legs so quickly, that little Petling was thrown so high up in the air, that he went quite out of sight.

Petling, you know, had been leaning on his brother Long-legs' boot, while he stood up to measure with Large-head, and he was quite forgotten in their hurry to sit down; and that was how the accident happened.

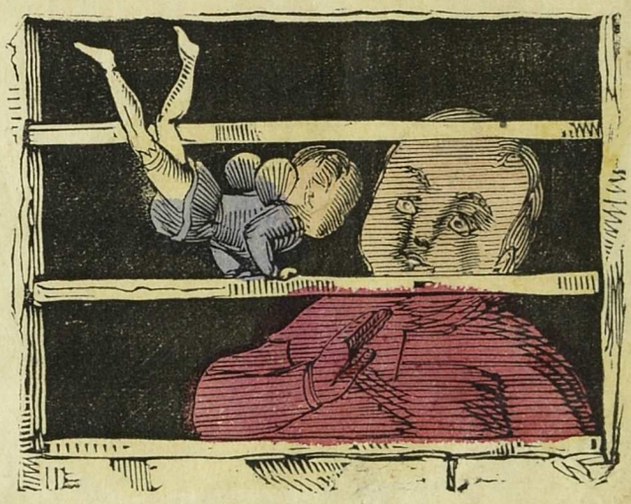
The five remaining brothers were now more frightened and distressed than ever. For three whole days they anxiously waited on that spot, and watched for the child's return; but Petling never came. They did not know what to do; for if they left the place, and Petling should return, he would certainly not know his way home; and as he was a favourite with them all, they did not mind the trouble of waiting for him.

Time passed heavily on, and they listened to every sound, for even the rustling of the leaves

alarmed them; at length Sharp-ears declared he heard a sound of wings fluttering through the air; and stretching out his arms to receive his brother, he clasped—who?—why, the horrible dragon.

Terribly frightened, indeed, they all were, but they bravely fought the dragon, and at last they killed him; then they stuck his body on a pole, and danced round it for joy.

While all these affairs were going on, poor Sharp-eyes sat trembling in his cell, thinking how glad he should be if he could just get a peep at his brothers, to see what they were doing; presently he fancied he heard something fluttering against the iron bars of his window, and looking up, he saw his dear little brother Petling.



Sharp-eyes, who was now so fat that his brother did not know him, hugged the little fellow so tightly that he cried with pain, and begged that his life might be spared.

"Why, do you not know me?" said Sharp-eyes. "Oh, is it you!" exclaimed Petling. "Yes, indeed," said Sharp-eyes; "I am rather fat, for the giant has fattened me." "Indeed he has," said Petling; "but never mind, I will go and tell our brothers, and we must and will set you free;" so after a kiss, the little one flew off.

As he was passing another window of the castle, he heard a great noise, like the snoring of a great many pigs.

Here he found the giant asleep, and as he saw an eagle flying past, he asked him to come and pick out the giant's eyes; this the royal bird quickly did. Loudly and frightfully the giant roared; but brave little Petling lured him to the edge of a deep precipice, into which he fell, and was killed on the spot.

Petling now hastened to fetch his brothers, who gladly welcomed him, and poor Sharp-eyes was quickly set free; and the affectionate brothers, having returned to their pleasant home, passed many years together in acts of kindness to each other, which always produces happiness and peace.

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