

THE
INTERESTING STORY
OF
BEAUTY
AND
THE BEAST.

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-WITH A
COLOURED ENGRAVING.

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DERBY:
THOMAS RICHARDSON.

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WITH A

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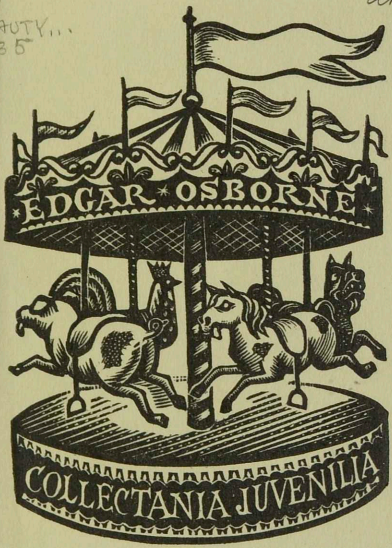
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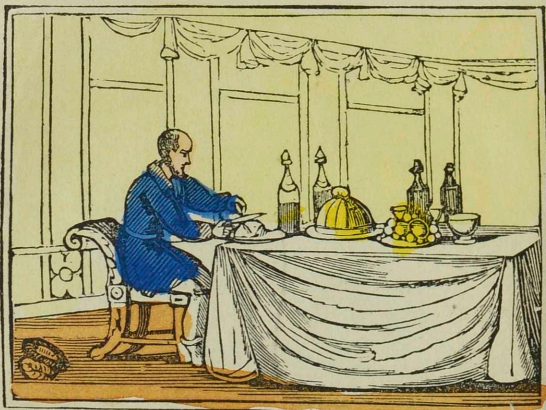
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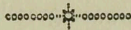
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THE
HISTORY OF
THE
UNITED STATES
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BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.



ONCE, there was a merchant, who had six children, three boys, and three girls; and the youngest girl was so exceedingly pretty, that she was called the Little Beauty, of which her sisters soon grew excessively jealous.

In course of time, by some untoward event, their father lost all he possessed, but a small cottage, and a few acres of land; on which he told his children they must all now labour for a living. The two eldest daughters could not bear this sudden change, and obtained no pity from their neighbours, on account of their excessive pride; but all felt an interest for Little Beauty, in consequence of her engaging manners, and affable disposition.

The merchant and his sons busied themselves in cultivating the soil, whilst Beauty performed the domestic duties, with a readiness and talent far surpassing her years. As for her sisters, they were idle and affected, con-

sulting neither the happiness of their poor reduced father, nor their own altered conditions in life, demanding constant industry.

In this way the merchant lived some time, when, one day, he was agreeably surprised to learn, that one of his vessels, which he had concluded lost, had arrived safe. Elated with joy, the two eldest begged of their father, as he prepared to go to receive his property, to bring them, at his return, some trinkets, and other foolish finery; but Beauty, delighted at her father's unexpected good-fortune, merely requested him to bring her a ROSE.

The merchant departed, full of hope; but, on his reaching the port, a law-suit had commenced! and had nothing left but to return to his cottage, as poor as he left it. Passing, on his way home, through a thick forest, he saw a blazing light through the trees; and riding up to it, found it proceeded from an illuminated palace. Seeing no one about, he opened the door, and entered a magnificent hall, when, fatigued, he laid himself down to rest, and slept soundly till morning. When about to dress, he found a new suit of clothes instead of the old ones he had taken off, and imagined the palace must belong to some good fairy,

who perhaps commiserated his distressed condition. Having partaken of a sumptuous repast, as he was going to get his horse, he passed an arbour overgrown with roses, and gathered a bunch as a present for his daughter Beauty; when a hideous BEAST instantly appeared, exclaiming, "Ungrateful man! I sheltered and hospitably entertained you, and you, in return, steal the only things I value,---my roses! for this, you die, in a quarter of an hour!"

The trembling merchant answered, "My lord, I merely plucked a few for my youngest daughter." "I am no lord," continued the Beast; "however, I will pardon you, on condition that one of your daughters shall suffer in your stead; if they refuse, promise to return in three months. But you shall not go empty away: in the hall you will find a chest, which fill with what you choose, and it shall be conveyed to your cottage." The merchant, seeing he must die, promised; and having loaded the chest with gold, mounted his horse, with a heavy heart, and soon reached home.

As soon as he had seated himself, he gave the roses to Beauty, telling her she little knew what they had cost him; he then related all

that had happened. The eldest sisters then reviled poor Beauty, who mildly replied, that, as the Beast required a sacrifice, she would give herself up to his fury, and so prove her affection for the best of fathers. Her father, however, would not hear of it, saying he was old; but remonstrance was vain, for Beauty was determined.

The merchant, shortly after, going into his chamber, discovered the chest of gold by the bed-side: he, however, withheld the secret from his eldest daughters, imparting it only to Beauty.

When three months had elapsed, Beauty and her father set off on their journey, and reached the palace safely in a few hours, where they found a sumptuous feast ready provided, of which they partook. When supper was over, the Beast entered, and asked Beauty if she came willingly? She, trembling, replied "Y-e-s." "You are a good girl," said he; "and I think myself much indebted to you." Then, turning to her father, he added, "You may go from the palace to-morrow morning; and take care never to return to it again." He then bade them good-night, and withdrew; and Beauty and her father retired to rest, and

slept soundly till morning, when her father took his departure, sadly afflicted.

Beauty surveyed the palace, when she soon came to a door, over which was inscribed the words, BEAUTY'S APARTMENT, in which she found an extensive library, and a fine collection of music; which gave her a favourable opinion of the Beast's taste. Then, opening the bookcase, and turning over the leaves of an elegantly bound book, she found the following verse, written in letters of gold:

“Beauteous lady, dry your tears,
Here's no cause for sighs or fears;
Command as freely as you may,
Compliance still attends your way.”

“Alas!” cried she, “how much I should like to see my poor father!” when, casting her eyes on a beautiful mirror, near her, to her great astonishment, she beheld her father, in the deepest agony of mind, riding up to his cottage.

At noon, Beauty found a delicious repast prepared for her; and just as she was sitting down to supper, the Beast approached, and requested permission to see her sup. “That is

as you choose," she replied, somewhat frightened. "Do you not think me very ugly?" asked the Beast; when, scorning to tell an untruth, she replied in the affirmative. "You are right," said he; "and I am also terribly ignorant." Beauty thought otherwise, and during this conversation, her fears had subsided; but, when he asked her if she would wed him, she paused for a few seconds, fearing to incur his resentment; summoning courage, however, she faltered out, "No!" on which, the Beast, with a melancholy sigh, bade her farewell, and retired, bathed in tears.

For three months, Beauty lived happily, in elegant retirement, when one day, observing the love and dejection of the Beast increased every moment, she said to him, "You greatly distress me; but, though I cannot love you, yet you will ever possess my utmost esteem, for your attention and kindness." The Beast then asked her if there was any thing she desired; and she told him her desire to see her father was so great, that if longer denied her, she feared she should die of grief. The Beast having made her promise she would not quit him for good, but return in a week, said, "tomorrow morning you shall find yourself with

him : when you wish to return, you have only to put your ring on your table, when you go to bed." He then bade her farewell.

When she awoke in the morning, she found herself at her father's, whom she affectionately embraced. A chest of very costly clothes and jewels accompanied her, but she dressed herself in the plainest manner, saying she should present her sisters with the others : she had scarcely said so, however, when the box disappeared. Her father observed, no doubt the Beast intended she should keep the whole for herself, for her sisters' bad behaviour, to confirm which, the chest instantly returned.

Her sisters, envying her, devised means for her destruction. "Let us," said they, "keep her here beyond the time granted her by the Beast, when, perhaps, he will kill her : " they artfully kept her, therefore, till the tenth night, when she dreamt she was in the palace garden, where the Beast lay, almost expiring, and reproaching her with ingratitude.

Beauty awoke in great affright, and placing her ring on the table, went again to bed. In the morning, she found herself in the palace, and for some time sought the Beast in vain ; but, at length, found him, almost lifeless, ex-

tended on the grass-plot. She re-animated him with some water ; when, opening his eyes, he, falteringly, said, " Beauty, you forgot your promise : I had resolved to starve myself to death ; but the sight of you re-invigorates me." Overcome by this fresh proof of the Beast's affection, she instantly replied, " Oh, no, my beast, you shall not die on my account ; I will become your wife ; indeed I will !"

Scarcely had she uttered these words, when the palace became illuminated, and resounded with the most delightful music. But this extraordinary change had no effect upon Beauty, so intently were her eyes riveted upon the Beast, whose form had suddenly changed into that of the handsomest prince ever beheld, who, in the tenderest accents, thanked her for having broken his enchantment.

Beauty, scarcely able to credit her senses, asked what had become of the Beast. " You see him at your feet," replied the charming prince : " a wicked fairy had condemned me to take the form of a beast, untill a beautiful and amiable young lady had consented to become mine ; forbidding me, at the peril of my life, to exhibit any signs of reasoning powers. You, dearest Beauty, have been so generous as

to judge of me by the goodness of my heart, and, in offering you my crown, the recompense falls infinitely short of what you deserve."

Beauty, most delightfully surprised, assisted the prince to rise, when they entered the palace together. Here, her astonishment was raised to the highest pitch, on finding her father, brothers, and sisters there. A fairy now appeared, and, addressing her, said, "Beauty, receive the reward of your virtuous conduct: you have preferred worth of heart to beauty and accomplishments, and you, therefore, deserve to find them united in the object of your choice. You will now become a queen; and I hope that rank and wealth will not destroy those sentiments which have thus elevated and ennobled you." Then, turning to the eldest sisters, she continued, "For your malice and ill conduct, I condemn you to become two statues, and to be fixed at the gates of your sister's palace; nor do I think I could inflict on you any greater punishment, than that of witnessing your sister's happiness. You will not recover your natural forms, till, by contrition, you have atoned for your former errors and misconduct; so that I am fearful you will ever remain statues."

When the fairy had finished speaking, she, with a stroke of her wand, transported all who were present to the young prince's dominions, where he was received by his subjects with the most enthusiastic joy and loyalty. He was then united to Beauty, with whom he passed many years of unmixed happiness.

Beauty's father was advanced to a lucrative post, which he enjoyed for a considerable period, and he died at a good old age. Her brothers assisted the king in the administration of justice; and, by their equity and integrity, were universally beloved. Her sisters, after continuing in their degraded situation a few years, were restored to their former shapes, by the good fairy, after having fully atoned for their past misconduct.

THE END.

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