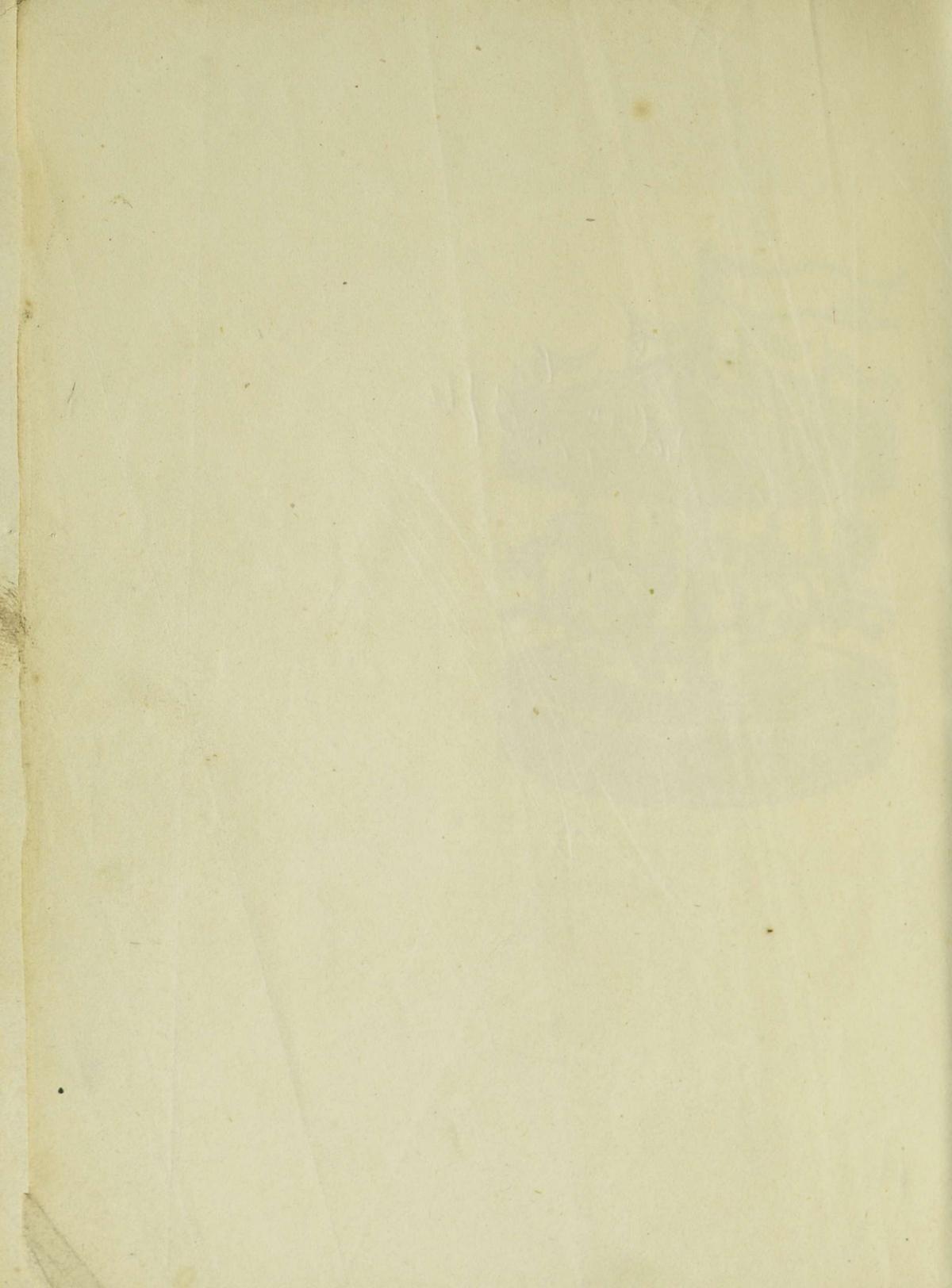


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*M. Percy Gore*

SLEEPING BEAUTY

OF THE WOOD.





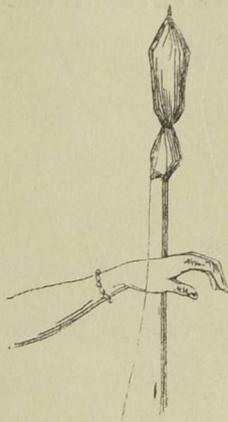


F. G. A. M. 1884

From Matilda Knox you  
To — S. J. Knox you

SLEEPING BEAUTY  
OF THE WOOD.

WITH TWENTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS.



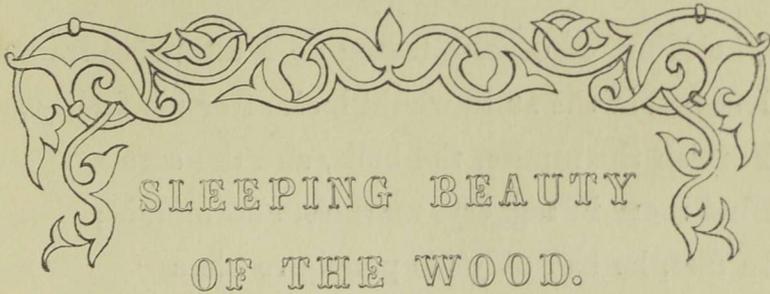
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SLEEPING BEAUTY  
OF THE WOOD.

ROYAL DIFFICULTIES.—DOCTORS DIFFER.—HYDROPATHY.—  
BENEFITS OF COLD WATER.—BIRTH OF A PRINCESS.—  
PATERNAL AND CONJUGAL AFFECTION.

---

Once on a time lived a King and a Queen,  
As loving a pair as ever was seen ;  
But one thing caused them no little chagrin,—  
    For though they had been  
    Long married, I ween,  
At least sixteen years, or perhaps seventeen,—  
    Yet, nevertheless,  
    Neither prince nor princess  
Came their majesties' conjugal union to bless ;  
The reason of which I'm unable to guess,  
But I know that it caused them a deal of distress.

The King, of course, feared no Malthusian trammel; he  
Knew that the state would look after his family;  
Furnish the nurses, the bells, and the corals,  
Find them in toggery, marbles, and morals;  
In fact, he had only his people to bless  
With a little unfurnished prince or princess;  
And thus having done all becoming his station,  
Leave everything else to the sense of the nation.

Now I may in this place  
Just remark, that the case  
Is not quite the same with the whole human race;  
For some people find, when not in the best mood for it,  
When a family's got, they have still to get food for it;  
But no more upon this,—'t is sufficient to know  
That persons of this kind are all very *low*.

But the case of the King  
Was a different thing;  
His subjects were all, from the peer to the peasant,  
Impatiently waiting the *dear* little present;  
And, in truth, his position was growing unpleasant,—  
One might say unsafe,  
For folk really did chafe;

Some sturdy republicans openly blamed him ;  
Some hinted so clear 't were as well they had named him ;  
While some said her majesty's conduct was sinister,  
And others, again, threw the blame on the minister ;  
But whoever was wrong, it was palpably shewn,  
That, somehow, an heir must be found for the throne.

The " College of Health " had boldly averred,  
That the royal physicians had grievously erred ;  
So her majesty's case to them was referred ;  
But " doctors differ,"—and certainly here  
Their unanimity does n't appear  
At all to have been remarkably clear.

Some said the Queen  
Was vastly too lean,  
And that nothing but Guinness  
Would conquer her thinness

(And, indeed, there can't be the slightest doubt,  
That if she drank Guinness, she 'd surely *get stout*) ;  
Some recommended Barclay and Perkins ;—  
Others, to swallow down oysters by firkins ;—  
Others, again, said that stout was too heady,  
Swore that the Queen lived too freely already,

That "Morrison's Pills"  
Could alone cure her ills;  
And that if she by any chance ventured on oysters,  
She might pass the rest of her life in the cloisters;—  
Some recommended new milk and potatoes,  
    (As Hibernian diet,  
    'T was natural to try it),  
And all looked as grave and sententious as Catos.

The King for a time in patience listened;  
But at length with rage his eyeballs glistened,  
And coming behind him quite unawares,  
He kicked the president down the stairs;  
When the others, not liking the state of affairs,  
Cut off in the direst consternation,  
And so ended the "College of Health's" consultation.

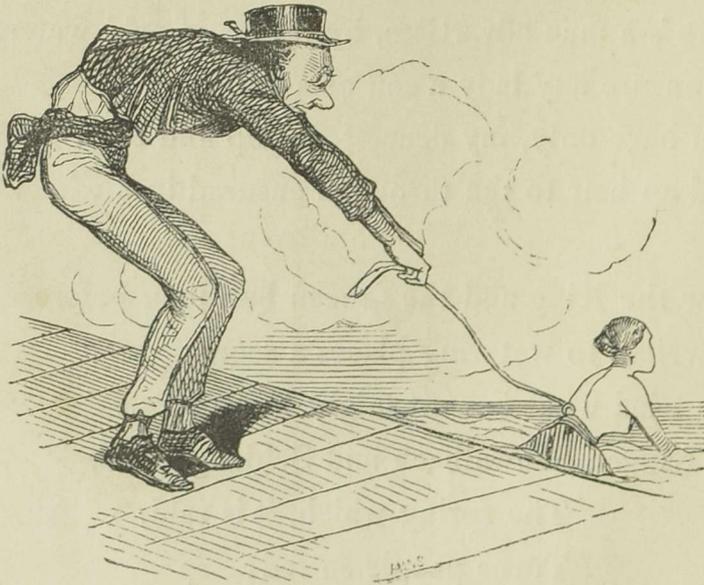
The King with the Queen at breakfast sits,  
Perplexed and puzzled out of his wits;  
And he eats his muffin in little bits,  
And pauses and talks to himself by fits;  
Till at length, as the clock of the palace chimes,  
The newsman, as usual, knocks with the "Times"

(For he wondrously liked the papers indeed,  
And every day took a "penny read."  
The economists vowed that the sum was immense ;  
But his majesty always said,—“hang the expense”);  
    And does n't he meet  
    Intelligence sweet,  
As his eye runs o'er the advertisement sheet ?  
Does n't he gaze with delight at the Queen  
Does n't she wonder what he can mean ?  
    Till at length, with a tear,  
    He exclaims,—“ Ah, my dear !

    See what a consoling announcement is here !  
Here 's a man advertises, by means of cold water,  
To ensure any lady a son or a daughter :  
You have only, my dearest, to dip and to drink,  
And an heir to the throne is ensured in a wink !”

Now the King and the Queen had long before  
Travelled to watering places a score :  
She tried what benefit might be had  
At Langen-Schwalbach and Schlangenbad,—  
    The spring which, 't is said,  
    Turns people so red ;

And in which, of course, fair ladies dread,  
In bathing, to dip either hands, neck, or head ;  
And the other, which, to their great delight,  
Changes the red to a beautiful white  
(*Vide* Sir Francis Head's book on the " Bubbles " ) ;  
But neither dispelled her majesty's troubles.  
Her skin was already as fair as a pearl ;  
And *they* could n't procure her a boy or a girl.  
She set off to Vichy, brimful of hope,  
And swam there all day at the end of a rope.







It did n't succeed,—nor did Enghien's waters,  
Much as the latter were famed for daughters.

She tried the *Eaux bonnes*,

But it could n't be done,—

She left them without either daughter or son.

But mineral springs

Are not the things,—

'T is the pure cold water which Pindar sings,

That is now to preserve a line of kings.

'T is accordingly tried,

Cold without and warm inside;

But, alas! 't is “no go,” though profusely supplied;—

Shower-baths, plunge-baths, all are in vain,

Matters in *statu quo* remain.

'Till at last the King,

As a desperate thing,

Turns the Queen out in a deluge of rain,—

Out in a court-yard, with never a shed,

And only a thin gauze-cap on her head,

To try, as the last resource in his power,

What may be done by a drenching shower,—

A notion which would not his genius disparage,

Though compared with Preissnitz, or Mr. Claridge

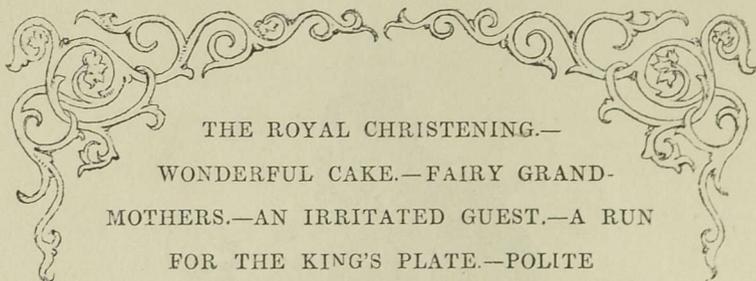
Who will deny the virtues of water?  
The Queen's put to bed,  
With a cold in her head,  
And in less than no time she gives birth to a daughter!



Great, we may guess, is the monarch's delight,  
When his dear little baby is brought in his sight,  
He could n't indeed have shewn greater joy,  
If, instead of a princess, it had been a boy.  
He holds it up by the neck in the air,



Puts his glass to his eye,  
 And exclaims, with a sigh,—  
 “ ’T is amazingly like its papa, I declare ;  
 What a dear little squall it has got,—on my life  
 I never felt so much obliged to my wife !”  
 While her majesty cries,  
 With bewildered surprise,—  
 “ Oh ! take it away,—the detestable thing !  
 What an odious resemblance it has to the King !”  
 Which was not quite affectionate,—but then the rain,  
 Perhaps, had some little effect on her brain.



THE ROYAL CHRISTENING.—  
WONDERFUL CAKE.—FAIRY GRAND-  
MOTHERS.—AN IRRITATED GUEST.—A RUN  
FOR THE KING'S PLATE.—POLITE  
DEMONSTRATIONS.

---

Three weeks are past, and with jewellery glistening,  
All the great folk are attending the christening.

Under the sun,  
There was never such fun,  
Such jolly things said, and such jolly things done ;  
Hock and champagne,  
And to make up their train,  
Jellies and ice, and punch *à la Romaine*,—  
Noyeau,  
Curaçoa,  
What an exquisite “go !”

In the drinkable way, 't is the best thing I know.  
(Though, indeed, it that night made the party uproarious ;  
For three judges got “screwed,” and one bishop was “glorious,”  
And kept singing, the presence of royalty scorning,  
In chorus, “We wo-on't go home until morning !”)

What there was to eat,  
Of viand and of sweet,  
Was far too extensive for me to repeat ;  
But there was a cake,  
And “ no mistake,”  
Which if I did n't mention  
With proper attention,  
Well, indeed, might I fall in for just reprehension ;  
For never did any confectioner bake  
So prodigious a thing as that christening cake.

The cake was a round one,—bless my eyes !  
I'm almost afraid to speak of its size,  
For fear you should think me addicted to lies.  
'T was forty feet round,  
As it lay on the ground,  
And it weighed full two tons, if it weighed half a pound,  
'T was stuck full of raisins, and currants and plums,  
And lemon and citron,—bad things for the gums,—  
'T was so rich, that you 'd fancy 't would fall into crumbs ;  
And then on the top, at a wonderful cost,  
'T was covered all over with sugar like frost,  
And groups of the very first artists' invention,  
Some of which I'll describe, if you 'll just pay attention.

First, there is a race—a comical race,  
Three parsons running a *steeple* chase ;  
The last seems sadly in want of dinner,  
And the fattest easily comes in winner !  
Three lawyers dressed in a solemn rig,  
Are climbing a pole for a chancellor's wig ;  
But two having weighty bags, can't rise,  
And the third being briefless, wins the prize.  
Two rival statesmen, looking quite nice,  
Are gliding along for a wager on ice,—  
One tries to hold by an Irish pig's tail,  
But the other gets first on a "sliding scale."

These, and a score  
Of such things,—ay, more,—  
Covered the top of that huge cake all o'er ;  
But to tell you them all would be only a bore,  
And so you must rest contented to know,  
That the feast was, indeed, quite a wonderful show,  
To peep at which, people would readily go  
From Kensington Green to St. Mary-le-Bow.

To return, you should know,  
That in days long ago,

There were certain queer beings, who used to bestow,  
    Upon mortals below,  
Gifts, sometimes for good, and at others for woe ;  
They performed some surprisingly curious vagaries,  
And the name they were known by exceedingly varies ;  
Some called them “good people,” some “kelpies,” some  
    “fairies :”

    All, indeed, mean the same,  
    But the last-mentioned name,  
As it easily fits in a rythmical frame,  
I prefer,—for “good people” might make my verse lame.

    Now, our sharp-witted King  
    Thought 't would be a good thing,  
    And no kind of mistake,  
    For his dear daughter's sake,  
With these fairies a friendly connexion to make :  
So he sends invitations to all he can find of them,  
To say, “that he'll take it exceedingly kind of them,  
More kind than, indeed, he in words can express,  
If they'll act as godmothers to the princess ;”  
Which the fairies esteem a great honour, I guess :  
And, accordingly, seven, the full number invited,  
“Promise and vow” that they feel quite delighted,—

Are very much honoured,—and that sort of thing,  
 At the flattering attention displayed by the King ;  
 And all have assembled together to-day,  
 Determined his courtesy well to repay.



The guests at the tables have taken their seats,  
 And the chaplain the grace very gravely repeats,—  
 It is n't the grace of the monks of the Screw,  
 That would n't have taken him long to get through ;  
     And I'm not very poz,  
     As to what grace it was,  
 Nor, indeed, can it matter one stiver to you.

Every one's care is  
To give to the fairies  
Whatever most rare and extravagant *there* is.  
These excellent dames, who were rather select,  
Being placed by themselves, as a mark of respect,  
At a separate board,  
Which is plenteously stored  
With all the best things that the place can afford.  
Where they sit down in state,  
With a service of plate,  
Far beyond anything heard of of late ;  
Not Rundell and Bridge, in whose gloomy old shop  
Great folk are accustomed their trinkets to pop,  
When they 've not a cop-  
Per their duns' mouths to stop,  
Could shew aught to compare  
With the plate that is there,  
Which might cause even the King of Golconda to stare,—  
The gold is so massive,—the jewels so rare.

But scarce have the group  
Commenced sipping their soup,  
When a circumstance causes their spirits to droop ;

There's a rumpus outside—  
The door opens wide,

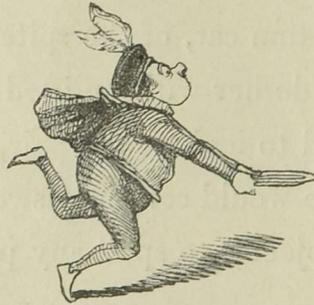


And a fairy appears with a terrible stoop,  
The bend of her body as round as a hoop;  
Her visage malignant,  
Looks fierce and indignant;

She wears on her head  
A skull-cap red,  
And she holds in her clutch  
A short little crutch,  
And her hobbling old gait shews her want of it much :  
While a horrid tom cat, of the spitefullest black,  
Is crawling beside her with uplifted back :—  
And to look at the pair,  
One would certainly swear  
That their object 's to spoil any pleasantry there.

“ Odds bobs ! ” cries the King, “ here 's a pretty mistake !  
The blockheads ! their errors will make my heart break ;  
By neglecting to fetch  
This infernal old wretch,  
They 've dished me as sure as my name aint Jack Ketch ! ”  
Then he turns to the fairy,  
And exclaims,—“ Mother Cary,  
There 's some stupid blunder,  
I really quite wonder ;  
Had I known you were coming, I 'd have made them all wait  
for you ;  
But do pray be seated, while I fetch a plate for you . ”

And in hopes to assuage  
 The old termagant's rage,  
 He runs off at once, with the speed of a page,



Though he has n't yet tasted a morsel of dinner,  
*To run for the plate, but does not come in winner !*

For, alack ! on the shelf,

The unfortunate elf

Finds there is n't one left, save of pewter or delf !

Alas ! the poor King's in a precious quandary ;

For he knows in his soul that there is n't a fairy

So hard to be pleased as this same Mother Cary ;

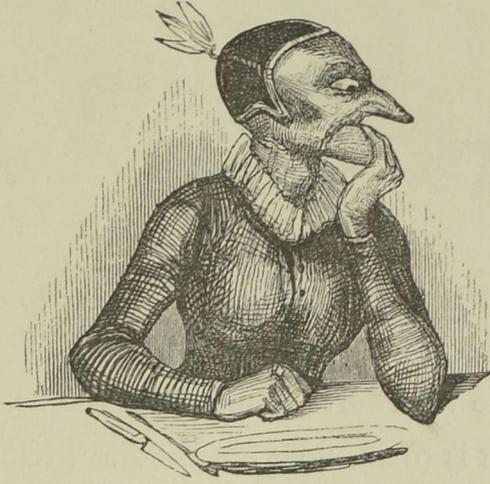
But though matters look blue,

Yet what can he do ?

Unluckily there's but one course to pursue ;

And though he knows well that it never will suit her,

Any more than black bottles would suit my Lord Cardigan ;  
 Yet even if the matter should prove twice as hard again,  
 He's forced to come back with a soup-plate of pewter ;



Which before her he places,  
 With many grimaces,  
 And apologies, such as are made in such cases, —  
 Declares that “ he's grieved more than words could express,  
 At his messenger not having found her address,  
 Which alone was the reason she was n't invited ;  
 And begs that she'll, therefore, not think herself slighted ;—  
 He's really enchanted to have her to dine with him,  
 And hopes she'll honour him by taking wine with him.”



Saying which, while he wishes the old hag to choke, he  
Pledges her health in a bumper of Tokay.

But vain are his efforts to make up the breach,  
The fairy, 't is plain, does n't mind a " King's speech."

She wears all the while

A sardonical smile,

And talks to herself in a manner most vile.

She leans on her elbow supporting her chin,  
With her shrivelled old fingers so bony and thin,

Not deigning to eat

One morsel of meat ;

And when any one says

A word in the praise

Of the baby, or wishes it fortunate days,  
She only responds with a ludicrous grin,—

Fixing one of her thumbs to the tip of her snout,  
And stretching the fingers and other thumb out ;

Which species of mocking  
Is certainly shocking,

And would get any head, but her own, a sound knocking.

But fairies were folk  
Who were licensed to joke,

And cared neither monarchs nor laws to provoke ;

For the rummest old wench  
Would her bony fist clench,

And shake in the face of the Court of Queen's Bench ;

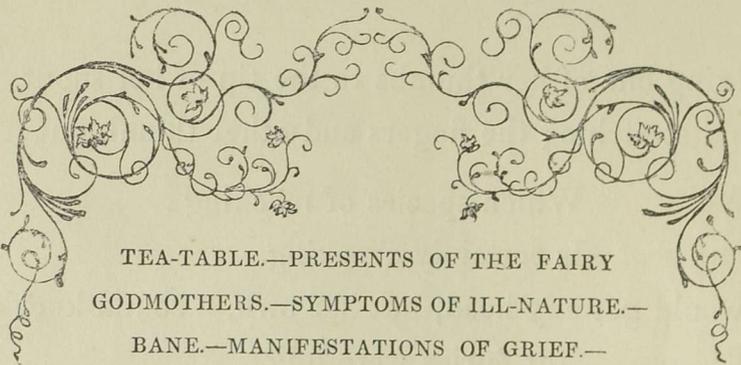
And though seemingly fitted for nothing but drivelage,

Defy the Chief Justice, and stand upon " privilege ;"

And therefore, however her impudence teazes,

This horrid old wretch is let do as she pleases.





TEA-TABLE.—PRESENTS OF THE FAIRY  
GODMOTHERS.—SYMPTOMS OF ILL-NATURE.—  
BANE.—MANIFESTATIONS OF GRIEF.—  
ANTIDOTE —A BREAK-UP.

---

Dinner is over, and now at their tea  
The fairies are sitting all brimful of glee,  
All save the old one,  
That you have been told on,  
Who was helped to a pewter plate stead of a gold one ;  
She sits in a corner,  
Like little Jack Horner,



And she sips her Souchong,  
Which is fearfully strong ;  
While 't is clear that she 's watching her time to repay  
The neglect which she fancies was shewn her all day.

The principal fairy, now merry and pleasant,  
Proposes that each make the princess a present ;  
And herself as the first,  
And by no means the worst,  
Gives her beauty divine,  
All maids else to outshine,  
To wear for her " outward and visible sign."

Cries the next, "'T were a sin  
If she had n't within  
Attractions as pleasing as those of her skin ;  
I bestow on her—wit,  
Which will make people sit  
And laugh at her jokes till they 're ready to split ;  
She shall say things as good,  
As both Lover and Hood ;  
The province of Munster  
Shan't shew such a punster ;  
And I'll give her a stock of palaver and ' blarney'  
That would coax one from Tanderagee to Killarney."

The third fairy next rises up in her place,  
And bestows as her boon on the little one—grace.

The fourth, come from France,  
Says “ The princess shall dance  
In a manner to ravish all hearts at a glance,



Not Pauline Duvernay, nor Elslar, indeed,  
Nor divine Taglioni, the charming Sylphide,  
Though her dancing, in truth, is the poetry of motion,  
Shall ever come near to her steps, I've a notion.”

The fifth says, “ To rival such gifts is not easy,  
But still I shall try ;  
In my power if it lie  
She shall sing to surpass Persiani and Grisi,

Mario, Tamburini,  
Lablache, and Rubini,  
In fact, all their tones shall together assemble,  
And add to them all, those of Adelaide Kemble.  
The sixth one, determined on "coming it strong,"  
Says, "The princess shall play,  
Whate'er comes in her way,  
From the pleasant Jew's harp to the Japanese gong;  
The fiddle, the fife,  
The pandean pipe;  
The trumpet far fuller  
Than ever Herr Müller;  
Like Delabarre the hautboy,  
Who's rivalled by no boy,  
The cornet à piston,  
Like Kœnig and Laurent,  
Who never can go wrong;  
The pianoforte which she'll rival Lizst on,  
Or Thalberg, whose superior style most insist on;  
The harp, the trombone,  
With its 'illigant tone,'  
The bag-pipe besides, with its eloquent drone,

The flute that would ‘soften the heart of a stone,’  
In fact, upon all sorts of instruments known.”

Alas! the next fairy,  
Is old Mother Cary!

Who has the whole evening done nothing but grumble,  
Find fault with the tea, and some hard biscuit mumble,  
Is resolved now the poor dear monarch to humble;

So looking as spiteful,

As one of spleen quite full,

She cries, with a voice in the last degree frightful,  
“The princess shall wound herself yet with a spindle,  
And,” here her old eyes with malignity kindle,  
“Spite of every attempt that the surgeons may try,  
From the wound of that spindle she surely shall die.”

At this terrible doom,

All those in the room,

At once an expression of horror assume.

The ladies go off in hystericks—the men  
Take snuff, and attempt to look tranquillised then;  
Till, to banish their gloom,  
A fairy comes forward, who, “smelling a rat,”  
And guessing what old Mother Cary was at,



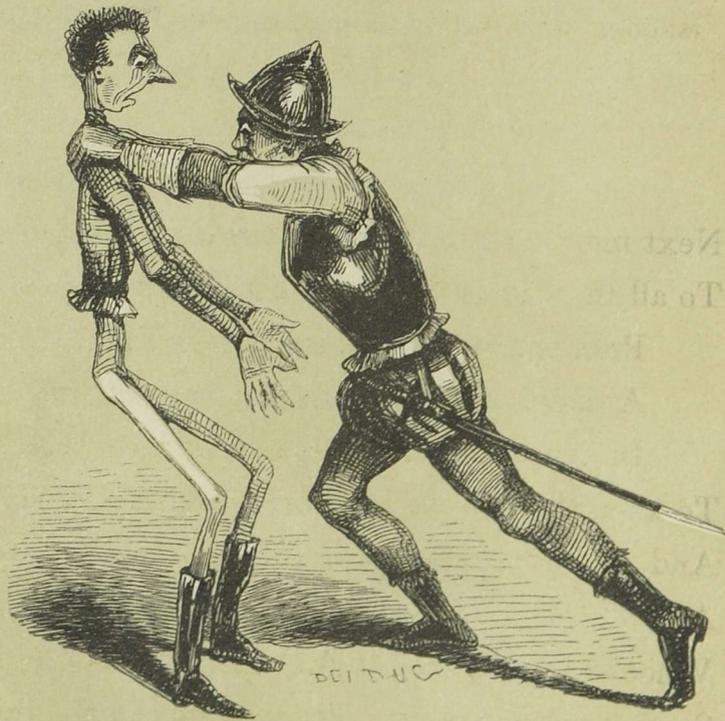
Resolved that she should n't her god-daughter harass,  
 And accordingly hid herself back of the arras ;  
     Having made the excuse,  
     That her garter was loose,  
     By means of which *ruse*,  
 She secured to herself the last place and the right,  
 To thwart the old harridan's malice and spite.  
 And so she accordingly says to the King,  
 " Great monarch, do n't heed that vindictive old thing ;  
     'T is true, I can't quite  
     Get you clear of her spite,

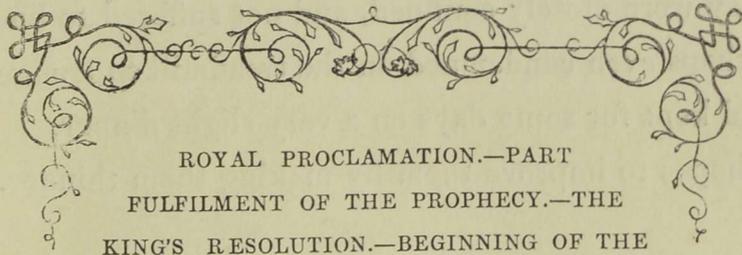
But between you and me, your dear daughter shan't die,  
She shall only asleep for a century lie ;  
And as soon as that period of time is gone by,  
A prince shall awake her,  
And for his bride take her,  
And she shall be happy as money can make her ;  
So cheer up, old boy !  
And don't let this alloy

Interfere any longer to lessen your joy.”  
And then in a tone that throughout the room thrilled,  
She loftily said—“ Let the fates be fulfilled !”  
Mother Cary gives vent to one sally of spite,  
And the company all goes away for the night.









ROYAL PROCLAMATION.—PART  
FULFILMENT OF THE PROPHECY.—THE  
KING'S RESOLUTION.—BEGINNING OF THE  
SNOOZE.—EXPRESS MESSAGE.—DOMESTIC TRANQUILLITY.

---

Next morning there issued a great proclamation,  
To all the liege subjects of that mighty nation,  
    Prohibiting spindles on any pretence ;  
    And declaring it a most grievous offence,  
    In fact, no less than treason with “malice prepense”  
To keep them,—the punishment decapitation,  
And less in no case than a life's transportation ;  
And all the police have instructions to seize on  
Whoe'er is suspected to harbour such treason,  
So that many long spindle-shank folk were arrested  
As dangerous persons, and vainly protested  
Their innocence, hoping to go unmolested ;  
    For if any judge  
    Chanced to owe them a grudge,

They were closely confined, and not suffered to budge,  
 Perhaps even condemned on the treadmill to trudge,  
 And kept for some days on a very slight dinner,  
 In hopes to improve them by making them thinner.

But in vain against fate  
 Will kings legislate,  
 Its decrees are fulfilled either early or late.

Sixteen summers and more  
 Have passed tranquilly o'er,  
 And the beautiful Princess is still "to the fore,"  
 When the Queen one fine morning proposes to go  
 On a donkey-excursion some miles off or so,  
 Where the fun was 't would seem,  
 To eat strawberries and cream;  
 And while they'r'e away,  
 Oh! lack, lack-a-day!

The Princess, who was left behind in the palace  
 In order to keep her from all kinds of malice,  
 Led astray by that feminine imp, curiosity,  
 Runs off, unperceived, with uncommon velocity;  
 Runs off, in fact, with the speed of the wind,  
 Nor stops till the palace is left far behind.





And by chance 't is her lot  
To arrive at the cot  
Of an old spinning Jenny, who never had heard  
Of the King's proclamation,  
And whose occupation  
Of spinning, it therefore in nowise deterred;  
And who, just as the beautiful Princess came in,  
With her spindle in hand was commencing to spin:  
Though not, I opine,  
A yarn such as mine:  
When the moment the Princess the instrument sees,  
She cries out, "Oh! do give me that if you please;  
Now, pray do n't deny it,  
I'd so like to try it,  
If papa gives me sixpence, I'll certainly buy it."  
But the good old dame kindly replies, "My own honey,  
Do n't think for a moment that I want your money,  
You may have it till morning, child, if you desire,  
But 't is a thing of which you'll very soon tire."  
So she hands her the spindle,  
And turns round to kindle  
Her pipe—when she suddenly hears a shrill cry  
From the beautiful girl, then a heart-rending sigh,  
As she sinks to the earth like one going to die,  
While the bloom quits her cheek, and the lustre, her eye!

And stretched on the ground,  
In a motionless swoond,  
The old woman sees her on turning around ;  
For obedient to Destiny's lofty command,  
The point of the spindle has pierced through her hand !  
Ochone ! ochone !  
Do n't the old woman groan,  
When she sees the poor Princess lie cold as a stone ?







Never before such remorse had she known,  
For she thinks "Good lack!  
When the King comes back  
Wont my poor body be torn on the rack!  
Wont I be pummelled blue, green, and black!  
They 'll not leave a single whole bone in my skin,  
All because this little gipsey *would* spin."

She might have talked on at this rate till she died,  
But their majesties having returned from their ride,  
And, missing their child,  
Grow perfectly wild,  
And send messengers seeking her out far and wide.  
Through land and through water,  
The messengers sought her,  
But could bring the King no account of his daughter;  
Till somebody passing the old woman's cot,  
And hearing her wail her unfortunate lot,  
Steps in and discovers there, stretched on the floor,  
The beautiful Princess all bathed in her gore,  
And the old woman groaning as mentioned before.  
Every method that art can contrive,  
Is tried with the Princess to make her revive;

Vinegar, smelling-salts, eau de Cologne,  
All the restoratives under the sun ;  
Useless for her is the doctor's diploma,  
Mesmer himself could n't banish her coma ;  
    And it plainly is seen,  
    By both King and Queen,  
That the fairy's prediction is come to pass clean.  
As soon as the King has resolved on this view,  
He instantly makes up his mind what to do,  
And orders his daughter at once to be placed  
In the finest apartment his palace that graced ;  
    In a beautiful bed,  
    That was hung overhead,  
With massive gold draperies gorgeously spread ;  
And, that being done, bids them, closing the door,  
    Let her quietly snore,  
    And disturb her no more,  
Till the term of her century's snooze has passed o'er,  
And the prince comes her senses again to restore ;  
And takes her away in a fine coach-and-four,  
With guards and outriders behind and before.

Now, just at the time of this fatal mishap,  
The fairy, who saved from grim death's fatal trap





The lovely Princess,  
Though she could n't be less  
Than twelve thousand miles off, was informed of the mess  
In which she had got, by "extr'ordinary express."  
A queer little dwarf, of ridiculous shape,  
Resembling, in fact, a diminutive ape,  
Who wore on each foot  
A seven-leagued boot,—  
Of whose locomotion  
We can't have a notion,  
Who take nine days crossing the Atlantic Ocean  
By the mail of Cunard,—nor  
Could famed Denny Lardner  
Believe it was possible even to do that;  
But said, plainly and stoutly, 't was "all round his hat!"  
And e'en the great Brunel,  
Who made the Thames Tunnel  
From Wapping across to the opposite shore  
(And which the directors confess is a *bore*),  
Though he'd run in an hour down from London to Bristol,—  
Yet could never, indeed,  
Think to go at this speed,  
For a man might as well be shot out of a pistol

Like Queen Anne's, which would send one quite pleasantly  
over

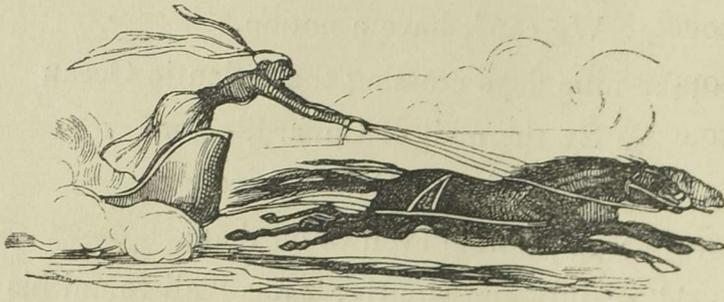
(Though I'd not like to try it) to Calais from Dover.

The fairy, on hearing the matter, *instantly*

Sets off for court at a very smart canter,

In a chariot antique,

Copied after the Greek,



Like those of which Homer and Xenophon speak,

And drawn by two horses of beautiful black,

Whose speed left the wind

Half the journey behind,

And who reach the King's palace almost in a crack ;

On arriving at which, she steps out to arrange

All things to suit this predicament strange.

With her magical wand she touches each thing  
In it, excepting the Queen and the King,

Whom it do n't appear

That she ever came near,—

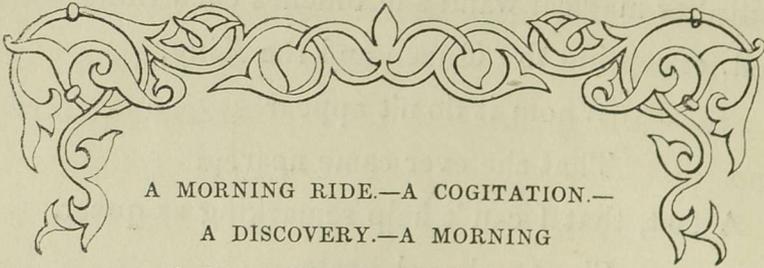
A fact, that I can 't help remarking as queer.

She touches the rats,

She touches the cats,

She touches the mice, the beetles, the gnats,  
She touches the fleas, and the bugs—fie, upon her !  
She touches the Princess's six maids of honour,  
She touches the butlers, she touches the cooks,  
She touches the barons, she touches the dukes,  
She touches the lords and the ladies in waiting ;  
To tell all she touches I 'd lose the day stating.  
She touches all there, to the little dog Towzer,—  
The Princess's pet and a capital mouser,—  
And each thing she touches "all of a heap,"  
Ere you 'd say "trapstick," is soundly asleep ;  
Soundly asleep as the folk in the gallery,  
When Hume is attacking some pension-list salary ;  
Or with whisker sublime, and diminutive *nous*,  
Colonel Sibthorpe inflicts his three hours on the House.

---



A MORNING RIDE.—A COGITATION.—  
A DISCOVERY.—A MORNING  
CALL.—WIDE AWAKE.—MARRIAGE.

---

An hundred years have glided away,  
And merry and gay,  
Upon every spray,  
The birds are chanting a roundelay,  
A natural thing in the month of May;  
And a prince of the blood is riding along,  
Humming the air of a popular song;  
'T is not "Jolly nose,"  
Nor the "Coal black Rose;"  
Of course 't is n't "Why do n't the men propose?"  
It is n't "Jim Crow,"  
Nor "Billy Barlow;"  
Nor "Beautiful Venice," nor "Long, long, ago;"  
'T is *not* "Paddy Carey," nor "Molly Carew,"  
'T is n't "Traveller's all," 't is *not* "Chickaboo;"

'T is n't any of these, but a song by Parry,  
And its name is, " Oh ! how I 'd like to marry ;"  
For the Prince on his lonely condition is musing,  
And thinking a wife he must shortly be choosing :  
When, hold ! he sees,  
O'er the tops of the trees,  
A beautiful palace appear by degrees ;  
And he meets an old dame with a comical phiz,  
And asks whose beautiful palace it is ;



And she tells him how within it there lies  
A Princess, the fairest under the skies,  
Who, to save from a cruel fairy's malice,  
Is kept asleep in that splendid palace,

Where, after she has a century lain,  
A Prince shall awaken her once again ;  
In fact, though perhaps in words more few,  
She tells him everything I've told you ;  
To all which he listens with great surprise,  
And exclaims, when she finishes,—“ Bless my eyes !”  
And being a fellow of spirit and wealth,  
Gives her a tizzey to drink his health.  
Then on to the palace pursues his ride,  
Resolved if he can to venture inside.

When he reaches the gate  
He has not long to wait ;  
For it opens at once, though the stiff hinges grate,  
For they really much wanted oiling of late ;  
He sees an old sentry asleep at his post,  
And he's startled, the fellow looks so like a ghost ;  
Onward he wanders from room to room,  
Never before did he witness such gloom ;  
Lords and ladies, and cats and dogs,  
All are as stiff and as silent as logs.  
All of them rapt in slumber deep,  
In the self-same spots where they first fell asleep,—

Nothing, in fact, could slumber deeper,—  
Nothing—not even a railway *sleeper*!

At length he sees,—can he trust his eyes?—  
The bed where the beautiful Princess lies!

The Sleeping Beauty,  
In whose pursuit he  
All this enchantment so bravely defies.

Never yet  
Have his glances met  
Woman of any kind, fair or brunette,  
Fit to hold a candle to her, I'd bet.

He falls on his knee,  
And exclaims,—“ Ah, me!  
Most exquisite Princess awake, and behold  
The Prince for your husband so long since foretold  
And who only is waiting your coming to life,  
If you're dead, that at once he may make you his wife.”

It is n't a joke,  
The words he scarce spoke,  
When the exquisite Sleeping Beauty awoke.  
Now I do n't mean the ladies at all to disparage,

But I'd not feel surprise  
If a dead one would rise,



And come back to life at an offer of marriage,—  
 At least with an opera-box, and a carriage ;  
 For I do n't see much value in any credentials  
 A man can produce without these two essentials.

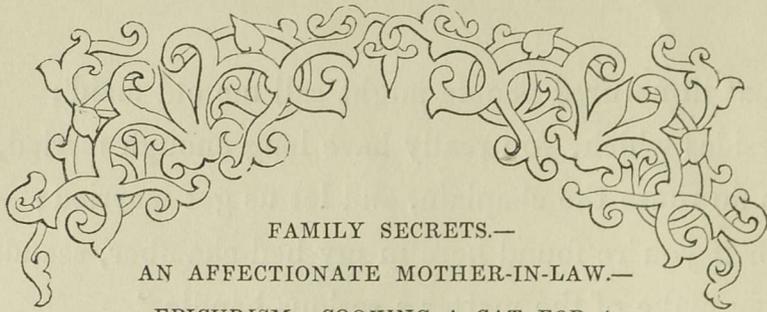
The Princess was not dead,  
 Only dozing in bed ;

And she cries,—well aware of the Fairy's prediction,  
 Which, however, till now she had fancied a fiction,—  
 “ Is it you, my own Prince, who have come to awake me ;  
 And do you, indeed, for your wife mean to take me ?  
 If so, pray do n't wait, for I'm really afraid

That ill-natured people might call me old maid ;  
Besides which, you really have long enough tarried,  
So do rouse the chaplain, and let us get married ;  
For if you 're found here in my bed-chamber, scandal  
May make of the matter a serious handle."

But the spell is broken ;  
And scarce has she spoken,  
When Towzer jumps up, and, by way of a token,  
Gives his highness a bite  
In—a reader polite  
Would n't wish me the region precisely to write.  
One should bear the brunt  
Of all foes in the front ;  
But this with the Prince ain't exactly the case,  
For the bite is in an *inexpressible* place ;  
Yet he bears well the shake  
For his mistress's sake,  
And begs they 'll give Towzer at once a rump-steak ;  
And all of the household being now " wide awake,"  
The Prince and the Princess not liking delay,  
Are buckled together on that very day.

---



FAMILY SECRETS.—  
AN AFFECTIONATE MOTHER-IN-LAW.—  
EPICURISM.—COOKING A CAT FOR A  
RABBIT.—TURNING THE TABLES.—A SURPRISE.—  
THE "BITER BIT."—VAULTING AMBITION, AND FINALE.

---

Now the Prince who the Sleeping Beauty wedded,  
The ire of his mother vastly dreaded;  
    And he thinks it as well  
    The old dame not to tell  
Of the circumstance which on his journey befel.

A year is scarce over, when, much to his joy,  
His Princess brings him a girl and a boy.  
His pleasure now seems without any alloy;  
But, alas! something threatens it all to destroy.  
He leaves the old Queen, on some pretext or other,—  
    Stays whole days with his wife,  
    And won't tell, for his life,  
To what place he goes; but one morning his mother,  
When his children and she are out, chances to meet them;  
And, being an ogress, determines to eat them!





The poor Prince himself having gone on a journey  
 To settle some law-business with his attorney.  
 So she calls up her cook, and desires him prepare  
     A fricasee rare  
     Of the nice little pair  
 And their mother for supper, and dress it with care.  
 At which horrid direction the poor fellow's hair  
 Stands on end, and he looks with a terrified stare



At the monstrous old brute,  
     But rests tongue-tied and mute ;  
 For though neither in Kitchener, Dalgairn, nor Ude,  
 Will he find any method of cooking such food ;  
 Yet to hint an objection is more than he d' dare.  
 Still being good-natured, in spite of his funk, he  
 Cooks in their stead two young pups and a monkey,

Which being well flavoured, and savoury in smell,  
Suit her majesty's appetite fully as well.

But, alack, alack !  
Ere the Prince comes back,  
Her majesty, taking a walk after snack,  
Unluckily meets,  
As she goes through the streets,  
Her daughter-in-law, with her two little sweets,  
Who had gone out to see Döbler's magical feats ;  
And, furious at thought of the horrid deceit  
Of her favourite cook,  
She swears by the book  
To make of the whole *parti-carré* minced meat,  
And to swallow the whole of them, as she's a sinner  
(And 't is perfectly true  
That she is), in a stew,  
On that very day, as a relish at dinner.  
And orders the cooking at once to take place—  
Resolved not to be done  
Again out of her fun—  
In the great palace yard, and before her own face.

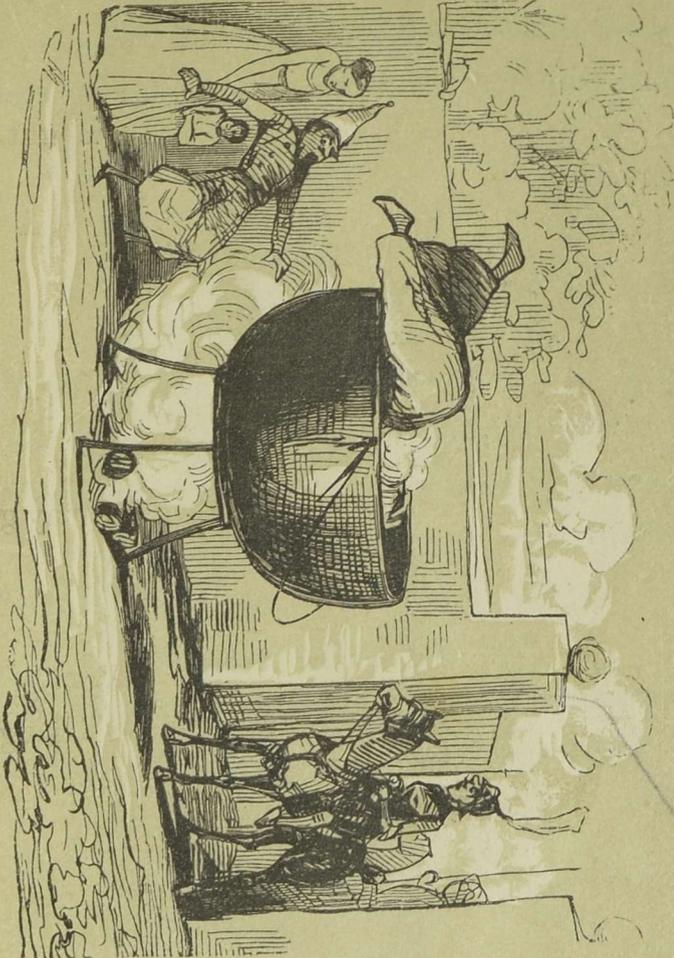
A mighty great pot  
Is brought to the spot,  
Filled up with water almost boiling hot,  
And beneath it is kindled a terrible fire,  
And everything looks in the last degree dire.  
The unfortunate group,  
That is destined for soup,  
Comes sobbing along,—well, indeed, may they droop;  
For there is n't in life a less comforting progress,  
Than going to be made into soup for an ogress.  
The sobs of the poor innocent *childer*,  
And their mother, the hardest of hearts would bewilder;



And the pitiful look  
Of that soft-hearted cook,  
No mortal of sensitive feelings could brook ;  
But it clearly is quite  
An agreeable sight  
To the ogress, who looks on with wondrous delight.

All now is ready for making the mess,—  
The luckless Princess  
Is about to undress,  
And is giving her babies the final caress,  
When somebody gallops in riding express.  
'T is the young Prince himself, whose surprise you may guess !  
For, ere he can halt,  
With one desperate vault,  
His mother goes right in the midst of the water,  
Which she destined for cooking his wife, son, and daughter !  
Being stung with remorse  
At the sight of his horse,  
And lies at the bottom a suicide corse !

The Prince and the Princess succeed to the throne,  
And never was yet greater happiness known,  
Than theirs, though the Prince  
Very frequently since



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Has let fall a tear  
Of compassion sincere,  
When he's thought on the close of the old Queen's career,  
Saying,—“ She was my mother,—and, when one reflects,  
Sure we all of us have got our little defects!”

---

Of the morals which throughout this story we find,  
These few I should like to impress on your mind,—  
Whatever your station, your wealth or estate,  
'T is a good thing at all times to have a spare plate,—  
If once you escape being done in a hash,  
To risk it again is exceedingly rash,—  
The man forgives most things, who only reflects,  
That—“ We all of us have got our little defects!”

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