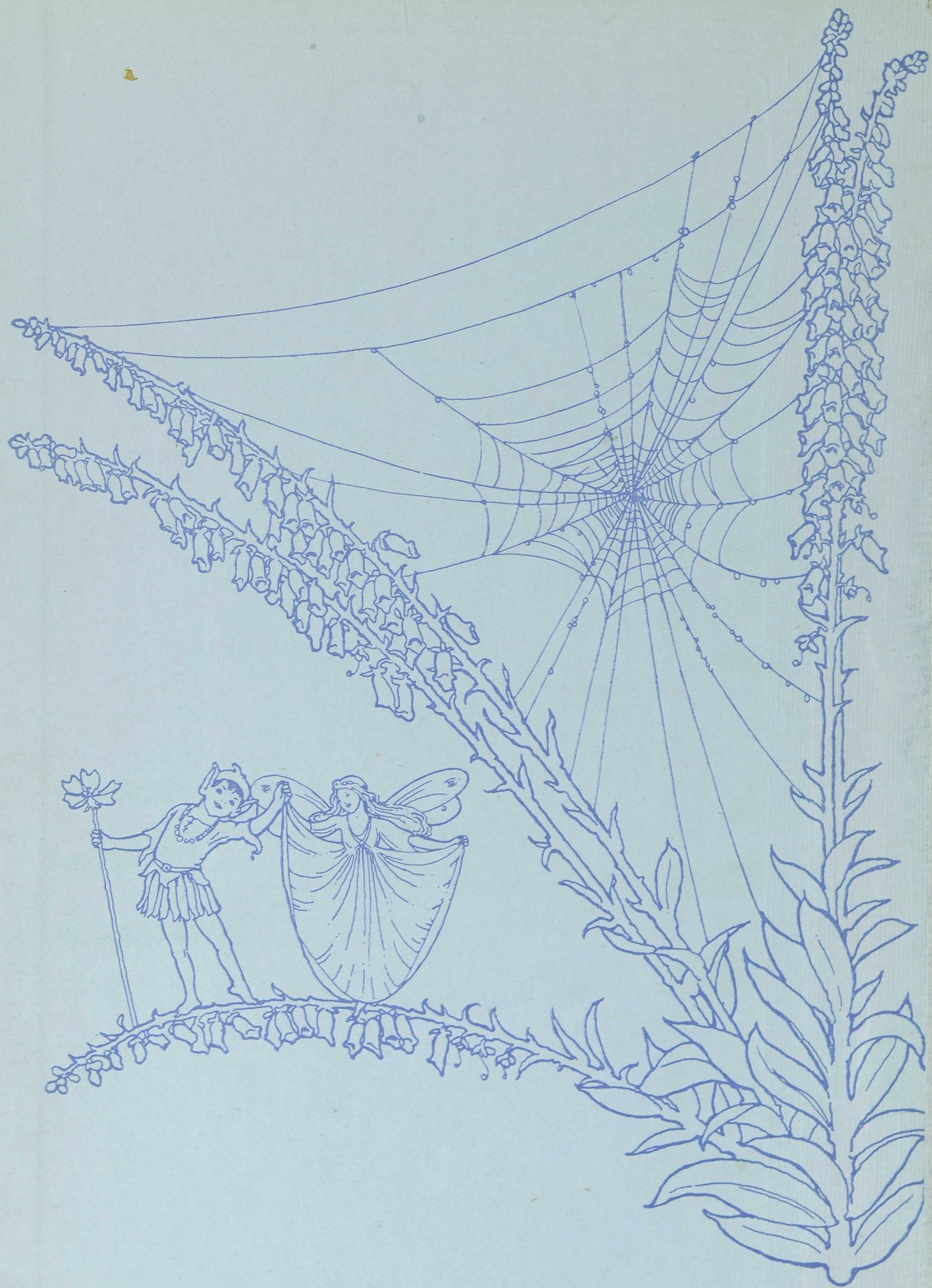
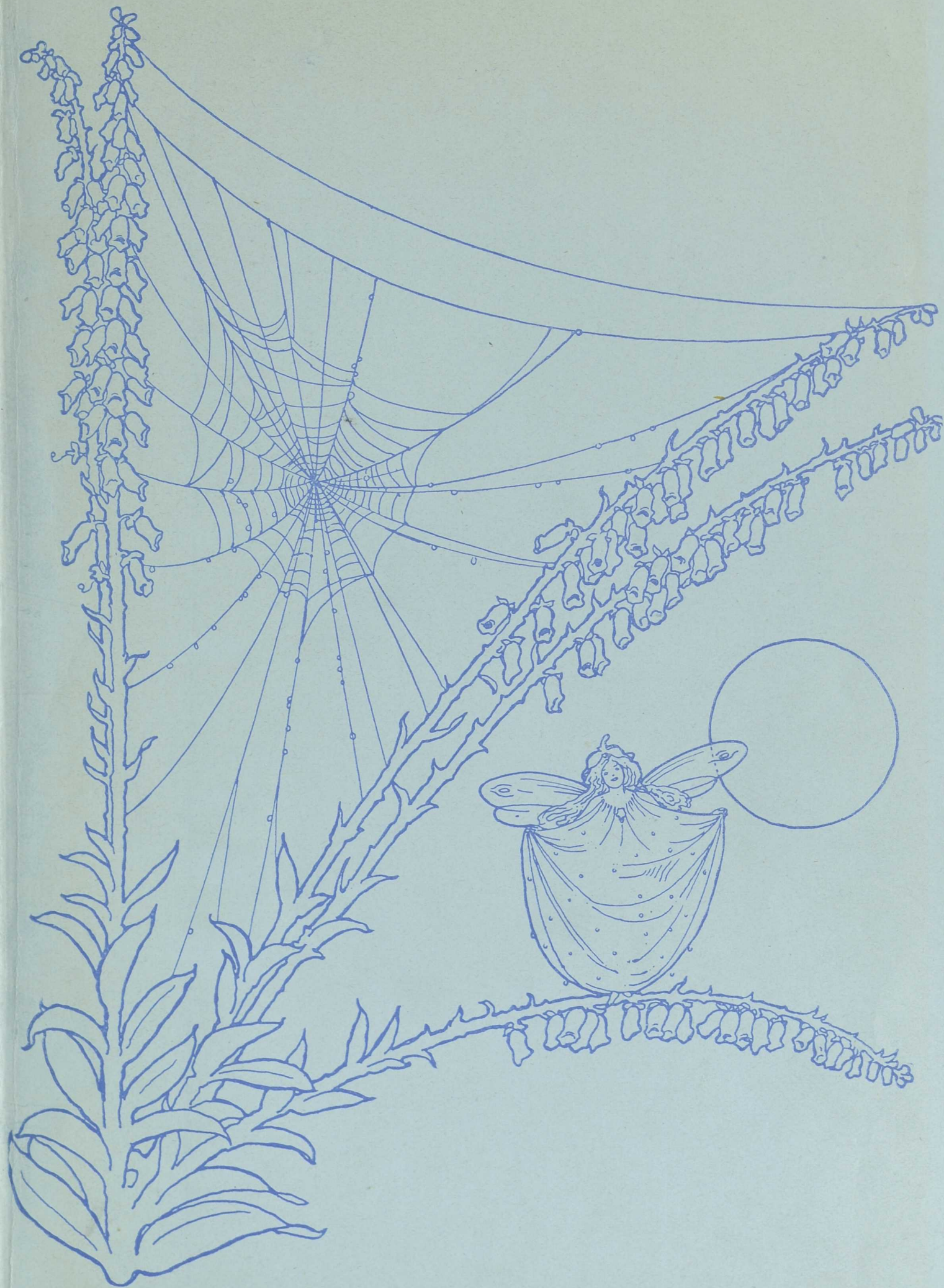


GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES

MILLCENT & GITHA
SOWERBY

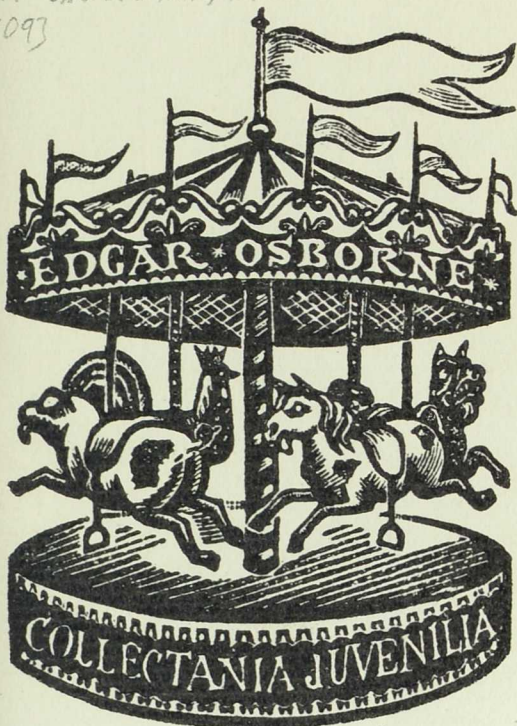






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GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES



LITTLE RED CAP

GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES

SELECTED AND RETOLD BY
GITHA SOWERBY

WITH TWELVE ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR
BY
MILLCENT SOWERBY



LONDON
GRANT RICHARDS
7 CARLTON STREET

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THE FROG PRINCE

THERE was once a handsome young Prince who had the misfortune to offend a Wicked Fairy. In order to avenge herself she turned him into an ugly frog, and put him in a well.

Now it happened that the well was in the courtyard of a King's Palace, and on the fine days, when the sun shone warmly, the King's youngest daughter sometimes came there to amuse herself by throwing a Golden Ball high into the air and catching it as it fell. The poor Frog Prince watched her running to and fro in the sunshine, and thought she was the prettiest Princess he had ever seen.

One day it happened that the Princess missed the Golden Ball, and it bounced on the stones and fell with a splash into the water. She ran to the edge of the well, and gazed down; but the Golden Ball had sunk far, far out of sight, and only a little ring of bubbles showed her where it had disappeared. She began to cry bitterly.

The Frog Prince popped his head out of the water.

"Don't cry, Princess!" he said. "What will you give me if I bring your ball from the bottom of the well?"

"Oh, I will give you anything I have," replied the Princess. "My pretty frock, my diamonds—even the crown on my head. Only bring my ball back to me!"

"I do not want your frock or your diamonds or your crown," said the Frog Prince. "But if you will promise to love me, and let me be your playmate—to eat out of your plate, and drink out of your cup, and sleep in your silken bed—I will bring your ball safely back to you."

And the Princess promised. For she said to herself: "What a silly Frog! As if he could ever get out of the well and walk all the way to the Palace! He will never find me."

The Frog Prince dived to the bottom of the well, and presently came up with the Golden Ball in his mouth.

The Princess had no sooner snatched it from him than she forgot all about her promise, and ran back to the Palace laughing with joy.

The next day, as she sat at dinner with the King and his Courtiers, something came flopping up the great staircase—flip flap, flip flap! And a voice said:

"From the deep and mossy well,
Little Playmate, where I dwell,
When you wept in grief and pain
I brought your Golden Ball again."

The Princess dropped her spoon with a clatter on her plate, for she knew that it was the Frog come to claim her promise.

"What is the matter, daughter?" asked the King. "There is someone knocking at the door, and your rosy cheeks are quite pale."

Then the Princess had to tell her father all that had happened the day before—how she had dropped her Golden Ball into the well, and how the Frog had brought



THE FROG PRINCE

it up for her, and of all the promises she had given him. And the King frowned and said: "People who make promises must perform them. Open the door, and let the Frog come in."



The Frog Prince hopped into the room

The Princess opened the door very unwillingly, and the poor Frog Prince hopped into the room, looking up into her face with his ugly little eyes.

"Lift me up beside you," he cried, "that I may eat out of your plate, and drink out of your cup." The Princess did as he asked her, and was obliged to finish

her dinner with the Frog beside her, for the King sat by to see that she fulfilled her promise. When they had finished, the Frog Prince hopped down from his chair and cried :

“I have had enough to eat, and now I am tired. Take me up and lay me on your silken pillow, that I may go to sleep.”

Then the Princess began to cry. It was so dreadful to



The Princess picked the Frog Prince up

think that an ugly Frog, all cold and damp from the well, should sleep in her pretty white bed. But her father frowned again and said :

“People who make promises must perform them. He gave you back your Golden Ball and you must do as he asks.”

So the Princess picked the Frog Prince up between her thumb and finger, not touching him more than she could help, and carried him upstairs and put him in a corner of her room. Then she jumped into bed, meaning to leave

him there all night in the cold. But he hopped up to her and said :

“Little Playmate, I am so tired, and I want to go to sleep. Lift me up and lay me on your pillow, or I will tell your father.”

Then the Princess was very angry ; and she picked him up and flung him with all her might against the wall, crying : “Sleep there, you dreadful ugly Frog !” And she looked, and there, where the Frog had fallen, was a beautiful young Prince.

And he cried : “Oh, Princess, you have broken the Wicked Fairy’s spell, and I am myself again. And now you shall be my wife, for you are the prettiest Princess in the world, and I have loved you from the first moment I saw you from the well !”

Then she took him to her father, and the ugly Frog became her handsome husband, and they lived happy ever after.

THE SOLE

LONG ago the fish grew dissatisfied because they had no laws. Everyone did as he liked, swimming to right or left as the fancy took him, and causing the greatest disorder among the waves, especially in stormy weather. At last the Sole called a meeting, and said: "Let us choose a king, and promise to obey him." They all agreed, and it was agreed that the one who could swim quickest should be made king.

They all arranged themselves in a row along the shore, with their faces turned to sea. The Pike gave the signal with a flourish of his tail, and off they set. Now, the Sole was a very conceited fish, and was quite convinced that he could swim faster than the others, and that he would be made king. But the Herring, who was very thin, darted through the waves so quickly that he was soon far ahead, and everybody began to shout, "The Herring wins! The Herring wins!"

"The Herring!" cried the Sole, who was far behind. "Who ever heard of a common fish like that winning a race?"

But the Herring won and was made king. And ever since then the Sole has his mouth on one side as a punishment.

THE PRINCESS MALEEN

THERE was once a King who had a beautiful daughter named Princess Maleen. He wished her to marry one of his noblemen, but she had fallen in love with a young Prince, and told her father that she would not marry anyone else. The King did everything in his power to make her do as he wished, but as time went on, and she still refused, he ordered a high tower to be built, with neither doors nor windows. Then he called his daughter and said: "If you do not immediately consent to marry the husband I have chosen for you, you shall be shut up in the tower for seven years."

The Princess answered: "I love the Prince, and will marry no one else." So she and her maid were put into the tower and walled up, so that it was quite dark, and they could not tell whether it was night or day. At first the Princess's lover used to come to the tower and sing to her, but no sound could penetrate through the thick walls, and after a time he ceased to come, thinking that she was dead.

As the seven years drew to a close, the Princess waited anxiously for her father to return. At last their store of food came to an end, and she said to her maid: "If we do not get out within a few days, we shall starve." And she took the bread-knife and began to scrape away the

mortar from between the stones. After working for a long time she succeeded in making a hole big enough to see out of. And what a sight met her eyes! Her father's palace lay in ruins, and all the villages and fields had been laid waste. When the opening in the wall was large enough for them to creep through, they got out and began to wander about. There was no food to be had, and they gathered nettles in a wood and ate them, so great was their hunger. At last they came to a big town where all the houses were gaily decked with flowers and cloth of gold, and they were told that it was for the Prince's wedding. They went to the castle and begged for work, and the cook said they might help her in the kitchen. So the Princess Maleen became a kitchen-maid: and when she came to wait at the Prince's table, what was her surprise to recognise her former lover.

Now the bride the old King had chosen for his son was as ugly as she was rich. When she arrived at the castle it was night, and she wore a thick veil, so that the Prince greeted her without seeing her face. She was so ashamed of her ugliness that she shut herself up in her room, saying to herself: "If the Prince sees me, he may refuse to marry me. I will pretend that I am ill until the day of the wedding, and then it will be too late for him to go back."

So the Princess Maleen was told to take food to the bride in her room. When the wedding day came, the bride was so afraid that the people in the street would mock at her ugliness that she sent for the Princess Maleen, and said: "I have sprained my foot, and cannot move from my chair. Put on my wedding dress, and go to the church instead of me. When you are married to

the Prince, you can go back to the kitchen, and no one will be any the wiser."

"I cannot deceive my master," replied the Princess Maleen.

"Then I will have your head cut off!" cried the bride in a rage, and the poor Princess was obliged to do as she was told. She put on the bride's dress, and was led into the hall where the bridegroom and all the guests were waiting. As she came in everyone exclaimed at her great beauty; and when the Prince saw her, he said to himself: "Ah, she is like my dear Princess Maleen. If I did not know that she died in the tower years ago, I should think that she was standing before me."

He took her hand and led her to the church. By the roadside was a nettle, and the Princess murmured to it: "Ah, little nettle, I do not need you now. Once, when I was dying of hunger, you saved my life."

"What are you saying to the nettle?" asked the Prince.

She replied: "I was thinking of the Princess Maleen."

They went on, and presently had to cross a stream. As she put her foot on the bridge, she said: "Little bridge, do not break, though I am not the true bride."

"What are you saying to the bridge?" asked the Prince; but she answered again: "I was thinking of the Princess Maleen."

When they got to the church, the Prince threw a gold chain round her neck and fastened it with a jewelled clasp. After they were married they drove home in a carriage, but all the way the Princess never uttered a word. Directly they arrived at the castle, she ran upstairs to the

bride's room, took off her grand dress, and went back to her work in the kitchen. But she kept the chain the Prince had given her. The bride quickly put on the wedding dress, and throwing a thick veil over her face, went to the marriage feast.

When the guests had all gone, the Prince said to her :

"What did you say to the nettle that grew on the roadside?"

"What nettle?" she replied. "I spoke to no nettle."

"If you did not," said the Prince, "you cannot be my true bride."

The bride ran to the Princess Maleen, and said : "Now, wicked girl, what did you say to the nettle?"

The Princess replied : "I only said, 'Oh, little nettle, I do not need you now. Once, when I was dying of hunger, you saved my life.'"

The bride hurried back to the Prince, and said : "I remember now what I said to the nettle," and she repeated the Princess' words.

Presently he asked her : "What was it you said to the bridge as you crossed the stream?"

"What bridge?" said she. "I spoke to no bridge."

"If you did not," said the Prince, "you are not the true bride."

Again she ran to the Princess Maleen, and cried : "Now, stupid girl, what did you say to the bridge?"

The Princess told her, and she ran back to the bridegroom and repeated the words.

Then he said : "Where is the chain I gave you?"

"What chain?" cried the Princess. "I have no chain."

"You are not my true bride!" exclaimed the Prince, and he seized her veil, and drew it from her face. Then the ugly bride was obliged to confess all she had done. The Prince sent for the Princess Maleen, and she came in her plain grey dress and stood before him. But when he saw the gold chain glittering round her neck, he cried: "This is my true bride, and I will have none but she!"

Then she told him that she was the Princess Maleen, whom he had loved long ago. And they talked of all the sorrows they had suffered, and were very happy. The ugly bride went back to her own country, and never troubled them again.

THE UGLY PRINCE

THERE was once a King and Queen who wished very much to have a child. At last a little Prince was born, but he was so ugly that when people saw him they began to laugh. He had long ears, and a furry skin like a donkey, and even his mother could scarcely bear to look at him. He grew up very lively and good-natured, and learnt to play the lute, to which he could sing with a very sweet voice. One day he was walking in the forest, and came to a well. He was thirsty, and as he bent down to drink he saw his reflection in the clear water. He was so sad when he caught sight of his great ears that he could not bear to return home, but wandered out into the world alone.

After travelling for some time he came to a country which was ruled by a King who had one beautiful daughter. The ugly Prince, who was tired with his long journey, thought he would rest for a night at the castle, and perhaps catch a glimpse of the Princess, whose beauty was famous far and wide. He knocked at the gates, but as no one came to open them, he took his lute and began to play and sing.

On hearing the music the gatekeeper looked out, and seeing the Prince with his furry skin and big ears, he ran to the King and told him that an ass was playing and singing beautifully at the gates. The King ordered him to be brought in : but directly he appeared, the King and the courtiers and all the ladies-in-waiting went into fits of laughter. Only the Princess looked gravely at him, and said : "You have a kind face, and I hear you are a good musician. Will you let me hear you play?"

The ugly Prince took his lute and struck the strings : then he began to sing ; and the song he sang was so sweet, that everybody ceased to laugh, and listened as if they could never hear enough. When it was finished the King said : "You have earned a good supper, minstrel. Go into the kitchen and ask my servants for whatever you would like to eat."

"No, indeed," replied the ugly Prince ; "I am nobly born, and do not eat with servants."

"Well, then, with my soldiers."

"No," exclaimed the Prince ; "I will sit by you." And he stepped on to the throne and took his place beside the King, who said, laughing :

"You are a proud little fellow to think you are worthy to sit on my throne. Perhaps you would like to sit beside my daughter?"

"Yes, indeed," said the Prince. "She is the most beautiful maiden I have ever seen." And he sat down by the Princess' side, and talked to her so pleasantly that she quite forgot his ugliness, and liked him very much.

He stayed at the castle for some time, making himself so agreeable, and playing and singing so sweetly, that he won the love of everybody. One day he thought: "What is the use of my staying here? I love the Princess, but it is impossible that she should love me, so I may as well go on my journey again." He went to bid the King farewell, looking very sad; but the King was so fond of him that he would not let him go.

"I will give you anything you ask for," said he, "if you will only stay. Will you have gold and silver?"

"Oh, no," said the Prince.

"If I give you half my kingdom, will you stay?"

The Prince shook his head.

"Well, then," exclaimed the King, "you shall marry my daughter, and be heir to the throne."

At this the Prince's ugly face lighted up till it became almost beautiful, and he cried: "Ah, how happy I should be if she could love me!"

The marriage was arranged, for the Princess had grown to love the ugly Prince, in spite of his big ears and furry skin. Then a strange thing happened. Every day the Prince appeared more charming, until the day of the wedding, when he appeared before them the handsomest man

they had ever seen. A wicked fairy had bewitched him at his birth, but the Princess' love had broken the spell. And this story shows how much better it is to be good than handsome.

THE DANCING SHOES

THERE was once a King who had twelve daughters, all beautiful and young. They slept together in a large hall, and in the evening, when they went to bed, the King himself locked the door to keep them safe during the night. Each of the Princesses had a pair of dancing shoes, and when the King unlocked the door in the morning he found the shoes quite worn out.

This went on for a long time, and, try as he would, the King could not find out how his daughters got out of their room or where they went to. At last he had it proclaimed that whoever could find out the secret should have one of the Princesses for his wife, and be heir to the kingdom; but that should anyone try for three nights and fail, he was to have his head cut off. Soon after a young Prince came to the castle and asked to be allowed to try. Night came, and his bed was placed opposite the door of the sleeping hall, which was left open so that he could see all that took place. He lay down, determined to watch all night, but scarcely had his head touched the pillow than a deep sleep fell upon him. In the morning the shoes were found to be worn out as usual. The second night the same thing happened; and on the morning of the

third the poor Prince was marched to the scaffold and had his head cut off.

Now there happened to be in the town a poor soldier, who had been so badly wounded in the wars that he could not serve any longer. One day, as he was walking along, he met a very old woman who asked him where he was going.

"I scarcely know," he answered. "I have no money and no home." Then he added, laughing: "Perhaps I shall go to the palace, and find out where the Princesses dance till they wear out their shoes, and be made King!"

"So you shall," said the old woman. "But be sure not to drink any wine they bring you, or you will sleep like a top, and see nothing." And she gave him a cloak, saying: "When you wear this you will be invisible, and can follow the Princesses wherever they go."

She spoke so earnestly that the soldier made up his mind to go to the castle and try his luck. The King received him, and led him to the bed opposite the door of the sleeping hall. Before he lay down, one of the Princesses brought him a goblet of wine, which he raised to his lips; but he had cleverly fastened a piece of sponge under his chin, and the wine all ran into it without his having to drink a drop. Then he lay down and began to snore loudly as if he were fast asleep.

When the Princesses heard this, they jumped out of their twelve beds and, opening their cupboards, took out the most beautiful dresses and ribbons, which they put on before the glass. They all chattered and laughed together, except the younger one, who said: "If you make so much noise the soldier will hear you."

"Nonsense!" cried the others. "The Prince did not wake, so why should this stupid soldier?" And they all ran to the bed and looked at him; but he lay so still and snored so loudly that they thought he was sound asleep, and went away laughing.

Then the eldest went to her own bed and struck it with a little wand she carried. Immediately it sank through the floor, leaving a large hole down which the Princesses disappeared one after the other. The soldier sprang up, threw on his invisible cloak, and followed. As he did so, he accidentally stepped on the dress of the youngest one.

"Oh!" she cried in a fright; "someone trod on my dress."

"Nonsense!" cried her sisters; "there is no one there. You are afraid of your own shadow to-night."

When they got to the bottom of the ladder the soldier saw before him a long avenue of silver trees, from the branches of which thousands of little lamps were hung. The soldier thought: "If I take one of these branches back with me, it will be a proof that I have really followed the Princesses." So he broke off one, but it made such a loud crack that the youngest Princess screamed again. "Oh, oh! What was that?"

"It is the Princes firing a salute from the castle," said the eldest.

They went on again, and presently came to a large lake on which lay twelve boats, and in each boat sat a handsome young Prince, waiting for the King's daughters. Each of them took one in his boat, and just as the last was leaving the shore the soldier stepped in, and seated himself beside the youngest Princess.

"The boat feels very heavy to-day," cried the Prince, who was rowing.

"It must be your imagination," said the youngest Princess. "Look! we are nearly there."

The soldier saw a beautiful castle, lighted as the avenue had been by thousands of tiny lamps. From it came sounds of beautiful music, and through the open doors and windows the soldier could see the dancers whirling round. The Princesses clapped their hands, and as soon as they were landed ran to the castle with the Princes and were soon dancing as if they could never tire. On and on they went, till the lamps began to flicker and their shoes were quite worn out.

Then they bade the Princes good-bye, promising to come again the following night, and returned as they had come. The soldier ran before them, and throwing off his invisible cloak, got into bed and began to snore loudly. The Princesses crept up to look at him, and seeing him lying so still with his eyes shut, took off their beautiful dresses, put their dancing shoes under the bed, lay down, and were soon all sound asleep.

The next morning the soldier went to the King and said: "The Princesses' dancing shoes are quite worn out."

"Yes, but how are they worn out?" asked the King.

"By dancing with twelve Princes," replied the soldier, "in a castle under the sea."

And he showed him the silver branch and told him all that had happened. The Princesses were sent for, and were obliged to confess. The soldier chose the most beautiful for his wife, and was married the same day, and lived very happily ever after.

SNOWDROP

THERE was once a Queen who had a little daughter with skin as white as snow and hair as black as ebony, and she called her Snowdrop. Very soon after the child's birth the Queen died, and the King took another wife. She was very handsome, but so proud and vain that she could not bear to think that anyone was more beautiful than herself. She possessed a magic mirror, and when she looked at it she said :

“Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is fairest of them all?”

And the mirror would reply :

“Queen, thou art so wondrous fair,
No one can with thee compare.”

But when Snowdrop was seven years old people began to praise her white skin and black hair, and to say that she would grow up more beautiful than the Queen herself. The Queen was very angry at this, and went to her mirror and repeated her question. And the mirror answered :

“Queen, thou art most fair to see,
But fairer still will Snowdrop be.”

Then the Queen turned green with jealousy, and began to plan how she could get rid of Snowdrop. At last she

sent for a hunter, and said : "Take the child into the wood and kill her."

So the hunter led Snowdrop away, but when he saw how pretty and gentle she was, he could not bear to hurt her, and let her go. She wandered far into the wood, and at last came to a pretty little cottage. She opened the door, and found herself in a small room in which



was a table ready laid for supper. On it were seven little plates, seven little mugs, seven little knives and forks, and seven little spoons. In a row by the wall stood seven little beds. Poor Snowdrop, who was dreadfully hungry and thirsty, ate a little bread from each plate and drank a little wine from each mug, for she did not wish to take all she wanted from one. Then, feeling very tired, she lay down on one of the seven little beds and fell fast asleep.

Now, the cottage belonged to seven little Dwarfs, and at night they returned home from their work among the mountains. Immediately one of them cried: "Who has been sitting in my little chair?"

"And who has been eating from my little plate?" exclaimed the second.

The third cried: "Someone has taken my bread!"

And the fourth: "Who has been eating my vegetables?"

"Someone has used my fork!" said the fifth.

"And who has been cutting with my knife?" cried the sixth.

And the seventh said: "Someone has been drinking out of my cup."

Then they went to the beds, and found Snowdrop fast asleep. When she awoke and saw all the Dwarfs she was terribly frightened, but they spoke kindly to her, and she soon lost all fear and told them who she was, and all that had happened to her. Then the little men said: "How would you like to be our housekeeper, and make the beds and cook for us? If you will stay with us, we will take care of you, and your wicked stepmother will not hurt you."

So Snowdrop stayed. She was a clever little thing, and soon learned to keep house. Every morning, when the Dwarfs went out to work, they warned her, saying: "Lock the door and do not open it till we return: and be sure not to let anyone in."

Now, all this time the wicked Queen thought Snowdrop was dead. But one day she went to her mirror, and said:

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Am I fairer than them all?"



SNOWDROP

And the mirror answered:

“Over mountains, over fells,
Happy little Snowdrop dwells.
Fairer than the day is she—
Fairer, fairer far than thee!”

Then the Queen knew that the hunter had deceived her, and that Snowdrop still lived, and once again her jealousy gave her no peace. At last she hit on a plan. She painted her face, and whitened her hair, and dressed herself in a cloak like an old woman. Then she went to the door of the Dwarfs' cottage and cried: “Goods to sell, fine goods to sell!”

Snowdrop looked out of the window, and said: “Good day! What have you in your basket?”

“Every kind of lace,” replied the old woman. “Look at this one, how fine it is!” and she held up one made of soft silk.

Snowdrop thought: “This is such a harmless old woman, it will not matter if I let her in,” and she ran down and opened the door, and bought the lace. Then the old woman said: “Come here, my dear: I will show you how to lace your stays.” And she laced poor Snowdrop up so tightly that she could not breathe, and presently sank to the ground as if dead.

“Now I shall be the most beautiful!” said the Queen, and she ran away into the forest. When she got home she went straight to her mirror, and said:

“Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Am I fairer than them all?”

And the mirror replied:

“Thou art wondrous fair to see,
But Snowdrop is more fair than thee.”

For the truth was that the Dwarfs on their return home had found poor Snowdrop lying unconscious on the



“Open the door, and I will give you this nice rosy apple”

ground, and had quickly unlaced her stays and revived her. The wicked Queen immediately set to work to find another way of killing her. She took an apple and poisoned it, and went again to the Dwarfs' cottage, disguised as a farmer's wife.

When she knocked at the door, Snowdrop looked out of the window, and said : "Go away, old woman ; the Dwarfs have forbidden me to let anyone in, for fear of my stepmother."

"But I am only a farmer's wife," replied the Queen. "Open the door, and I will give you this nice rosy apple."

Snowdrop wanted the apple very much indeed, so she opened the door, and took it from the old woman. But no sooner had she bitten a piece of it than she fell to the ground dead. Then the wicked Queen rushed home and asked her mirror the question ; and this time the mirror answered :

"Queen of beauty shalt thou be,
There is none so fair as thee !"

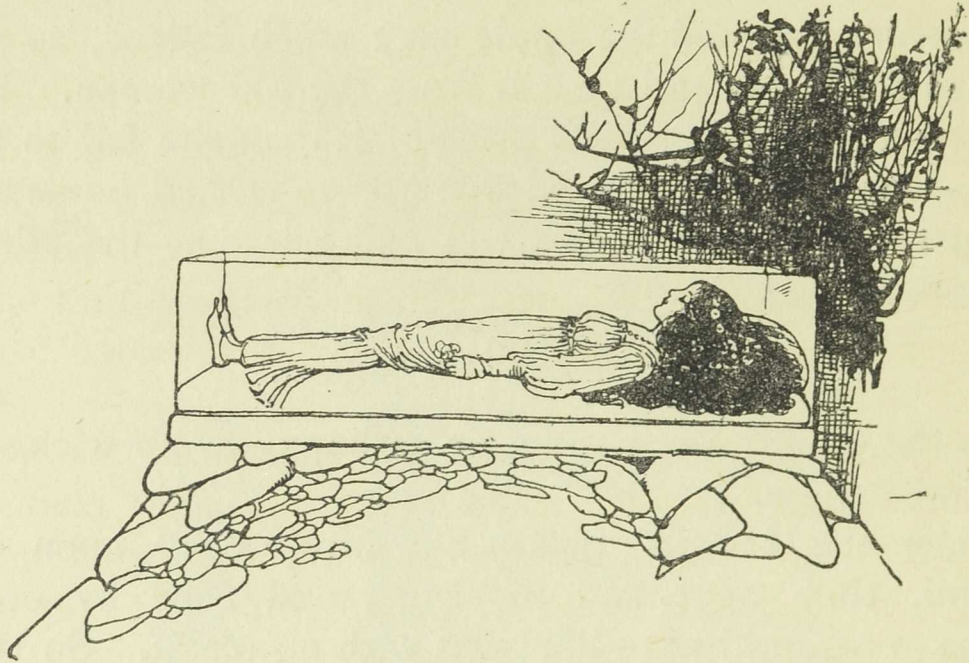
Then the Queen was happy, or as happy as so wicked a creature can be.

When the Dwarfs found Snowdrop dead upon the ground, they wept and mourned, and tried by every means to restore her to life : but with no result. So they made a beautiful glass case, and laid her in it : then they carried her up into the mountains, and left her where the birds could keep watch over her.

It happened soon after that a Prince came hunting in the wood, and saw Snowdrop lying in the glass case. She looked so beautiful that the Prince's heart was drawn to her, and he loved her very dearly. When the Dwarfs heard of this they were full of pity, and gave Snowdrop to the Prince to take home with him. So the Prince's men put the glass case on their shoulders, and set off down the mountain-side. Now it happened that one of

them stumbled over a big stone, and this so shook the glass case that it caused the piece of poisoned apple to fall out of Snowdrop's mouth. She immediately opened her eyes and sat up.

"Dear little Snowdrop," said the Prince, "I love you dearly, and want you to be my wife. Now you are alive



They made a glass case and laid her in it

and well again, come with me to my father's palace, and we will be married."

So they drove home together in the Prince's carriage, and very soon after the marriage was celebrated with great magnificence. When the wicked Queen heard of Snowdrop's happiness, she was so furious with rage and jealousy that her heart broke: and Snowdrop lived for many years, growing more beautiful each day, and everybody loved her.

THE SEA HARE

A KING's daughter once lived in a castle which had a room containing three windows. When the Princess looked through the first window she could see more clearly than anyone else; when she looked through the second, she could see her whole kingdom from end to end; and the third so increased her power that she could see the whole world, and nothing was hidden from her.

The Princess was very proud and masterful, and was determined that everyone should obey her. She made it known that she would marry any man who could hide himself so that she could not find him. If anyone attempted to do this, and failed, he would be put to death. For a long time no one dared to try his fortune. At last a tall and handsome young man came to the castle, and said :

“You are very beautiful, Princess, and I want you for my wife. Grant me three days to consider where I shall hide myself, and let me try three times. If I fail the third time I am willing to die.”

The Princess agreed to this, for she thought : “I am sure to see him when I look out of the third window. Then his head will be cut off, and I shall still be free.”

On the first day the young man took his gun and went

out into the forest to shoot. He saw a Raven sitting on a tree, and immediately took aim at her.

"Don't shoot me," said the Raven; "I shall be able to do you a kindness." So the young man lowered his gun and let the Raven fly away unhurt.

On the following day he went out again, and presently came to a lake. A big fish rose to the surface, and cried :

"Don't shoot me. If you will spare my life, I shall be able to repay you."

The young man allowed the fish to swim away in safety, and walked on.

The next thing he met was a Fox, whom he wished to kill for the sake of his beautiful skin. But the Fox pleaded so hard for his life that the young man spared him.

The third day came, and still he had hit on no place to hide himself from the Princess. He racked his brains, and at last thought of the Raven in the forest. He went to her, and said :

"I spared your life, and you promised to repay me. Tell me how I may hide myself so that the Princess cannot find me."

The Raven thought for a long time. Then she fetched an egg from her nest, broke it in half, and enclosed the young man in the shell. She then joined the two pieces together, replaced the egg in the nest, and sat upon it.

The Princess looked out of the first window and immediately discovered the young man's hiding-place. She sent for him, and said : "I let you off the first time ; but if you cannot do better than that you must die."

The next day he went to the fish, and said : "I spared your life. Help me to hide from the Princess."

"You will be quite safe inside me," said the fish, and swallowed him.

It was so dark at the bottom of the lake that at first the Princess could not find him. It was only when she looked out of the second window that she succeeded. She sent for him, and said : "You see it is useless to try and hide from me. If you fail a third time you will be put to death."

Then the young man was very sad, for he could think of no better plan. In despair he went to the Fox and implored his help.

"It is a very difficult task," said the Fox, "but I will do my best." Then he led him to a spring, and dipping himself in first, he came up in the shape of a fish-seller. He told the young man to dive also, and he was changed into a sea-hare. They went together to the market-place. Presently the Princess came along, and seeing the pretty little animal took a fancy to him, and bought him for a large sum of money.

Before parting, the fish-seller whispered to the young man : "When the Princess goes to the window to look for you, creep into the folds of her hair, and lie quite still."

In the evening the Princess went to the tower, taking the little sea-hare with her. She put him down on the floor and looked out of the first window. Presently she went to the second, but seeing nothing of the young man she began to get anxious, and hurried on to the third. Over the whole world she looked for him, while he lay

hidden in her hair. At last she flew into a rage, and struck the glass so violently that it broke into a thousand pieces.

Then the sea-hare ran to the Fox, and they dipped themselves in the spring and resumed their proper shape. The young man went to the castle, and very soon after he and the Princess were married, and lived happily together. For the Princess thought: "He is a great man, and cleverer than I."

THE WISE HUNTER

ONCE upon a time there lived a young hunter who had a wonderful air-gun: whatever he aimed at he hit, so that he was famous all over the country for his marvellous shooting. One day he went out to seek his fortune. When night came he was walking through a dense forest, and saw a light shining through the trees. He followed it, and presently came to a huge fire with an ox roasting on a spit, and three Giants sitting round it. He hid behind a tree, and heard one of the Giants say: "This meat must be enough done by now. I shall try a bit of it." He cut a piece off the ox, and was just going to eat it when the hunter shot it out of his hand.

"Dear me," said the Giant; "the wind has blown that piece away. I must try another." He cut off a second piece, but the same thing happened. When the third piece had been shot away he flew into a rage, and turned

to the Giant next him and soundly boxed his ears, crying :
“It is you who are playing these tricks on me !”

Then the hunter stepped forward, and said : “Good evening, friends. I shot your meat away with my gun, so you see I am not to be trifled with.”

They called to him to join them, promising to do him no harm, and he went and sat by the fire, and shared their dinner. Then they told him that not far away there stood a castle surrounded by water, in which dwelt a beautiful Princess whom they wished to carry off.

“We have tried again and again,” said one of them. “But the Princess has a little dog, and each time we got near the castle he barked so loudly that everyone was awakened, and we were obliged to run away. If you could shoot this dog with your wonderful gun, we could reach the Princess and carry her away without anyone being the wiser.”

“I could easily do that,” replied the hunter, and they went down to the shore, and got into a boat. As they reached the other side the little dog ran out, but before he could give a single bark the hunter shot him dead. The Giants were delighted at this, and wanted to go and look for the Princess ; but the hunter said : “No, you must wait outside while I go in, and presently I will come back and tell you what to do.”

In the first room he came to he found a sword of pure silver, with a golden crown on the hilt ; a piece of parchment was tied to it, on which was written that whoever used it would be able to kill anyone who fought against him. “This is a piece of good fortune,” thought the hunter ; “with a gun that hits everything it aims at and a

sword that kills everything it strikes, I am well armed." He went on, and presently came to the room where the Princess lay sleeping. She looked so beautiful that he could not bear to think of her falling into the hands of the Giants. He saw a pair of slippers, and put one in his pocket; and he took a knife and cut a small piece from the sleeve of the Princess' nightdress. Then he crept



The hunter raised the silver sword and cut off the giant's head

from the room, and found a big hole in the wall, like a window, which overlooked the place where the Giants were waiting.

"Open the door and let us in," they cried; "it will be daylight before long, and everybody in the castle will be awake."

"I cannot open the door," said the hunter; "but you can climb in at this hole."

The tallest Giant put his head through the hole, and began to clamber in. The hunter raised the silver sword, and cut off his head with one blow. The others followed and met the same fate; and the hunter, overjoyed at having saved the Princess, climbed out of the hole and was soon safely on the other side of the lake.

When the King came out in the morning and saw the bodies of the dead Giants, he went at once to his daughter's room and asked her if she knew who had killed them.

"No," she answered; "but my right slipper is missing, and someone has cut a piece off my sleeve during the night."

"This is very strange," said the King, and he sent for everyone in the palace and asked them if they knew who had killed the Giants. The captain of the soldiers stepped forward, and said: "I killed them after a terrible struggle. And I claim the Princess as my wife for a reward."

Now the captain was an ugly old man with only one eye, and when the Princess heard this, she said: "Dear father, rather than marry that man I will put on a peasant's dress and sell pots and pans in the market-place."

But the King was hard-hearted, and insisted that she should marry the captain. So she ran away, and put on a peasant's dress and went out into the market-place with her basket. The King ordered his soldiers to follow her, and as she sat crying her goods at the corner they rode over her basket, upsetting her pots and pans so that they were all broken and trampled under foot. She went home weeping, and the King once more ordered her to

marry the captain. She again refused, and the King took her to a cottage in the forest, and said :

“Here you shall live till you come to your senses, and if anyone passes by and wants food, you shall cook it for him like a servant. Then we shall see if you will marry the captain or not.”

For a long time the Princess lived in her cottage, cooking for everyone who passed by, but taking no money for it. At last the hunter heard of the beautiful maiden who cooked for nothing, and went to the cottage with his gun on his shoulder and the silver sword at his side. He recognised her at once, but the Princess asked him who he was, and how he came to have her father's sword.

“I am a hunter,” he answered, “and with this sword I slew the three Giants who were going to carry you off. I crept into your room and took your slipper and a piece from your sleeve, and here are the tongues of the Giants, which I cut out as a proof that what I say is true.”

They went to the castle together, and when the King saw the slipper and the piece of the Princess' sleeve and the Giants' tongues, he could not doubt that the wicked captain had deceived him, and that it was the hunter who had killed the Giants and saved the Princess from a horrible death. He ordered a wedding feast to be prepared, and everybody came to it except the captain, who had fled for his life into the forest. So the hunter became a king, and ruled a great country.

THE FIDDLER AND THE JEW

THERE was once a rich man who had a faithful servant. At the end of a year the master thought : " I ought to pay this fellow his wages, but he is a simple creature and will work just as well without, and I shall be so much the richer." The servant never complained, but worked on, happy and cheerful. At the end of the third year he went to his master and said :

" I have tried to serve you faithfully, and now I want to go out into the world to seek my fortune. Pay me what you think is right, and let me go."

" You have been a good servant," said the old man, " and I will reward you handsomely." And he gave him three pennies, one for each year.

The servant knew very little of the value of money, and thought his master had paid him well. So he put the pennies in his pocket and set out on his journey, saying to himself : " Now I am a rich man and can enjoy myself."

As he went along singing, he met a queer-looking little man with a hump on his back.

" You are a merry fellow," said the little man.

" So I ought to be, with three years' wages in my pocket," answered the young man.

" How much is that?" asked the Dwarf.

"Three whole pennies," replied the young man.

"Listen," said the Dwarf. "I have no money, and I am too old to work. Will you give me your pennies?"

"Gladly," replied the young man. "After all, I am strong and well, and can easily work and earn more."

The little man took the money, saying: "You have a kind heart, and in return for what you have done for me I will grant you three wishes. I am a magician, and can give you anything you ask."

The young man thought for a long time, and then said: "I wish for a gun that will hit anything I shoot at; for a fiddle which will oblige everybody to dance when I play on it; and that whenever I make a request it will be granted."

"Look in that bush," said the Dwarf. And the young man looked, and there lay a fiddle and a gun. At the same moment the Dwarf disappeared.

"Now I am settled for life," thought the young man; and he went on singing more cheerfully than ever. Presently he saw a Jew with a long beard like a goat's, who was watching a bird perched on the top branch of a tree.

"What a fine fat bird that is!" he cried. "If I could only sprinkle a little salt on his tail, I could catch him and sell him in the town."

"If that is all you want," said the young man, "I can help you." And he shot the bird, which fell into a clump of bushes beneath the tree. "Now go and fetch your bird," said he.

The Jew scrambled into the bushes, but the thorns caught at his clothes and his long beard and held him fast. The young man laughed.

"Aha! you old knave," he cried. "Now you shall dance to my tune," and he took his fiddle and began to play. At the first note the Jew sprang up and began to dance. Up and down he went among the thorns, until his coat was torn into shreds and he was scratched from head to foot. He shrieked and begged for mercy, but the young man only played the faster.

"You are fond enough of robbing other people," said he, "and now you shall pay for it. What will you give me if I stop playing?"

"A purse full of gold," cried the Jew. So the young man laid down his fiddle, and the Jew crawled out of the bushes more dead than alive and gave up his purse.

Directly the young man had left him, the Jew hurried to the nearest town and went before the magistrate.

"My lord," he cried, "I have been attacked by a ruffian on the highway, who kicked and beat me, and robbed me of my purse full of gold. See how I am scratched from head to foot, and my coat is torn to rags."

"He must be caught and punished," said the Judge. "What was he like?"

"He sings as he walks," replied the Jew, "and carries a gun on his shoulder, and a violin hung round his neck."

The Judge sent his servants out, and very soon they came upon the young man and took him prisoner. They searched him, and found the purse of gold; and he was brought before the Judge and accused.

"I did not touch the Jew," said the young man. "He danced about among the thorns till he was scratched and torn, and he gave me his purse to stop my playing."

This story sounded so improbable that no one believed

it, and the young man was condemned to be hanged for stealing. Only the wicked Jew knew that he had spoken the truth. As the young man was led to the scaffold, the Jew cried after him: "Now you are paid out, you wretch! You will never make anyone dance again."

The young man calmly ascended the steps. When he reached the top, he said to the Judge: "I have a last request to make before I die."

"What is it?" asked the Judge.

"It is very simple," said the young man; "it is only that I may play one more tune on my fiddle."

"Do not let him!" screamed the Jew. "He has an evil power, and we shall all be killed."

"Nonsense!" said the Judge. "Why should he not have this last pleasure?" And he ordered the fiddle to be brought: for, indeed, he had not the power to refuse.

The young man raised his bow and began to play. Then a strange thing happened. The Judge's legs began to move—first one, and then the other. Then he sprang from his chair, and seizing his robes in his hands, was soon prancing about as if he had gone mad. The Jew followed him, shrieking to the others to take the fiddle away: but nobody heeded him, for they were all capering about as if they never meant to stop. At last the Judge had only enough breath left to gasp out: "If you will stop playing, I will give you your life."

The young man immediately laid down his fiddle. The Judge sank into his chair panting, and said:

"I see now that your story is the true one. If you will promise never to make us dance again, you shall live with us here in peace to the end of your life."

But the young man thanked him, and said that he preferred to go on his journey. Then with his gun on his shoulder and his fiddle hung about his neck, he set out once more, singing as he went.

THE BLUE LIGHT

THERE once lived a soldier who was so badly wounded in fighting for his country that he was no longer fit to serve in the army. So the King called him, and said: "You are of no use to me now. You can go home, and find a living as best you can."

But the soldier had no home, and did not know any trade by which he could make money. He wandered away, not knowing where to go, until he found himself in a thick wood. It was growing dark, and he saw a blue light shining among the trees. He went towards it and found a house, in which dwelt a wicked old Witch. He went to her and begged for something to eat and a night's lodging.

"I will give you what you ask," said the Witch, "if you will do as I tell you."

"What is that?" asked the soldier.

"I want you to dig my garden," said the Witch.

"That is easy enough," said the soldier; and the following day he took a spade and dug the garden till the evening.

Then the Witch said: "You shall stay another

night if you will chop my wood for me to-morrow." The soldier agreed, for he was very tired, and glad of a place to rest in. And all the next day he chopped wood and tied it into bundles. When he had finished, the Witch said: "I can see that you are a good workman, and you shall do one more thing for me. Close to my house is an empty well. My light has fallen into it, and I cannot put it out. You shall go and fetch it for me."

She led him to the well, and looking down the soldier could see a blue light shining. The Witch put him in a basket, to which a long rope was tied, and lowered him into the well. He found the blue light at the bottom, and jerked the rope three times as a sign to the witch to draw him up. When he had got just near enough for her to reach him, she stretched out her hand and said:

"Good soldier, give me the light. Then I will draw you safely up."

"Not I," returned the soldier. "Directly I have given you the light you will drop me into the well. You shall not touch it until I have both feet safely on the ground."

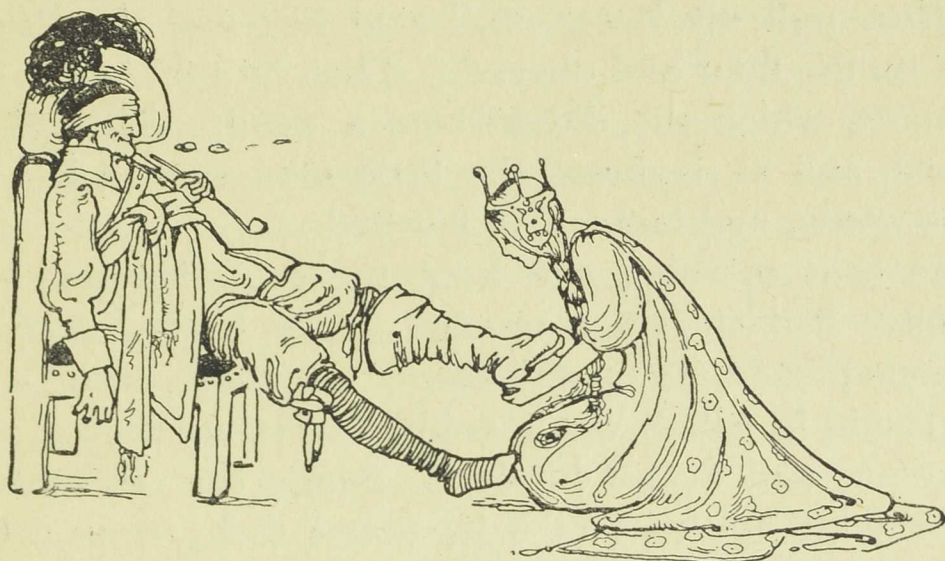
At this the Witch flew into a great rage, and dropped him back into the well. He picked himself up unhurt, and found that the blue light was still burning. "Well," thought he, "I suppose I am as good as lost, but I may as well make myself as comfortable as I can." And he sat down, filled his pipe, and lighted it at the blue flame.

No sooner had he done so than a little dark man jumped out of the smoke, and said with a bow: "Master, what can I do for you?"

"You can help me to get out of this well," replied the soldier.

"Come with me," said the little man ; and he took his hand, and opening a door in the side of the well led the soldier through an underground passage. Here he showed him bags full of gold and silver, which the Witch had stolen and buried in the earth, and the soldier took as much as he could carry.

As soon as they were above ground the little man vanished, and the soldier walked on till he came to the



"Pull my boots off," said the soldier

town from which he had started. He went to the inn, ordered a good dinner and a new suit of clothes, and proceeded to enjoy his good fortune. After dinner he lighted his pipe with the blue flame, and at the first puff the little man stood before him and said : "Master, what can I do for you?"

"Little man," he replied, "I was once a soldier, and fought for my country till I was so sorely wounded that I could fight no more, and the King sent me away to starve.

Now I want to be revenged. Go to the castle to-night, and when everyone is asleep, bring the Princess to me here. She shall work for me and be my servant."

The little man vanished. As the clock struck twelve he appeared again, carrying the King's daughter, who rubbed her eyes and cried, "Oh! where am I?"

"Do as I bid you," said the soldier. "Get the broom and sweep the floor." The Princess did as he told her.

"Now pull my boots off," said he; and the Princess knelt on the floor and obeyed. Then he told her to clean the boots, which she did without a word. All night she worked, and at daybreak the little man carried her back to the castle, and laid her in her bed.

The next morning she went to her father and said: "I have had such a a strange dream! I dreamt that someone picked me up and carried me through the streets to a room, in which was a soldier. He made me sweep the room, and do all kinds of things that servants do. And the strange part of it is, that I feel just as tired as if my dream had been true."

"It can only have been a dream," said the King. "But in case it should happen again, fill your pocket with peas and make a hole in it, so that if you are really carried through the streets we shall be able to see which way you have gone."

The little man overheard this, and before he went to the castle that night he strewed peas through every street in the town; so that when the peas fell out of the Princess' pocket they left no trace. She was obliged to wait on the soldier as before, but directly she woke the

following morning, she ran to her father and told him what had happened. He immediately sent his servants out to look for the tracks, but they found the streets full of poor people picking up peas in cans and jugs and everything they could find.

"This is very strange," said the King. "To-night, when you are carried away, take your shoe with you and leave it behind in the room where you are made to work."

The Princess did as he told her. While she was brushing the carpet in the soldier's room, she took off her shoe and hid it under the bed. At daybreak the little man carried her back to the castle as usual.

The next morning the King sent his servants to search the town for his daughter's shoe, and it was found under the soldier's bed. The soldier was seized and thrown into prison, and the cruel King ordered him to be put to death. As he was being led to the scaffold he asked if he might make a last request.

"I cannot grant you your life," said the King, "but anything else you ask is yours."

"It is this," said the soldier: "that I may be allowed to smoke one pipe before I die."

"You may smoke two if you like," said the King; and the soldier took out his pipe and lit it at the blue flame. No sooner had the smoke begun to curl than the little man appeared with a club in his hand.

"Master," he cried, "what can I do for you?"

"Knock down the Judge," said the soldier, "and beat the King well for having treated me so shamefully."

The little man sprang up, and beat about him with such

goodwill that the soldiers dropped their swords and ran away, and the King fell down begging for mercy.

"I will spare your life," said the soldier, "on one condition : and that is that you give me your kingdom, and your daughter for my wife."

The King was obliged to promise all he asked. And the soldier went back to the castle, and married the Princess, and lived in peace and happiness for the rest of his life.

THE SPIRIT OF THE POND

THERE was once a miller and his wife. For many years all went well with them, and they had money enough and to spare. Then misfortune fell upon them, and they became so poor that they had scarcely enough to eat.

One day the miller was wandering by the mill-pond, feeling very unhappy, when suddenly, from the depths of the water, a beautiful woman appeared. The miller was very much frightened, and would have run away, for he knew that she was the Spirit of the Pond ; but she called to him in a sweet voice : "Do not be afraid, I am come to help you. I will make you richer than you have ever been, on one condition—that you will give me the first living thing that is born in your house."

And the miller promised, for he thought, "It will be a kitten or a puppy." He hurried home in great joy, but he had scarcely reached the house when a maid-servant came to the door and told him that a little son had been

born to him in his absence. On hearing this the miller was very sorrowful, and went to his wife and told her of his fatal promise to the Spirit of the Pond. "What is the use of all the gold and silver in the world," said he, "if I am to lose my child?"

Years passed, and the miller prospered and grew rich; but he could not feel happy, for he could not forget his promise. He warned his little son never to go near the pond, saying: "If you touch the water, a strong hand will rise out of it and drag you in."



A beautiful woman appeared

In course of time the child grew up and became a hunter. He married a good and beautiful maiden, and they lived together in a pretty little cottage, loving each other very dearly.

One day he went out hunting and killed a deer. He had been so excited in chasing it that he had not noticed that it had led him close to the mill-pond. When he had cut it up, he went to wash his hands in the pond. No sooner had he touched it than the Spirit appeared, and twining her arms round him, dragged him down into the water.

When evening came, and the hunter did not return home, his wife was in great grief. He had often told her of his father's promise to the Water Spirit, and she ran to the mill-pond, calling his name. But there was no answer. Then she climbed up the mountain where the



She climbed up the mountain

Wise Woman lived, and told her of the dreadful thing that had happened.

"Be comforted," said the Wise Woman, "I will help you. Take this golden comb, and when the moon is at the full, go to the brink of the pond and comb your hair. Then lay the comb on the shore and see what happens."



THE SPIRIT OF THE POND

The poor wife did as she was told, and combed her long black hair in the moonlight. Then she laid the comb on the shore, and presently the water began to bubble, and a great wave arose and carried the comb away. Scarcely had it sunk to the bottom, when the wife was overjoyed to see the head of her husband rising out of the water. He did not speak, only looked sadly at her, and presently disappeared.

The poor wife returned home very sorrowful. The next day she went again to the Wise Woman, who said: "Do not despair. Take this golden flute, and when the moon is shining go to the pond and sing the sweetest song you know. Then lay the flute down on the shore and see what happens."

The wife took the flute, and when the moon was at the full, sang a sweet song beside the pond. Then she laid the flute on the shore, and no sooner had she done so than a wave rose and swept it away. Immediately afterwards the head, and then the whole body of the hunter appeared above the water, and he sprang ashore, and seizing his wife's hand, began to run like the wind.

They had not gone many steps before the whole water raised itself with a great noise and swept over the fields. The hunter and his wife would surely have been drowned, but at the last moment they were changed—the husband into a toad, the wife into a frog. When the water receded they were themselves again, but the flood had washed them apart, and though they wandered for miles they could not find each other.

Time passed on, and the two were obliged to earn their bread by tending sheep. One day the husband happened

to lead his flock to a green place in the valley where the wife's flock was also feeding. So they met, but did not recognise each other. After that they fed their flocks together.

One evening, when the moon was shining, the shepherd took a flute out of his pocket and played a sweet air upon it. When he had finished, he saw that the shepherdess was weeping bitterly.

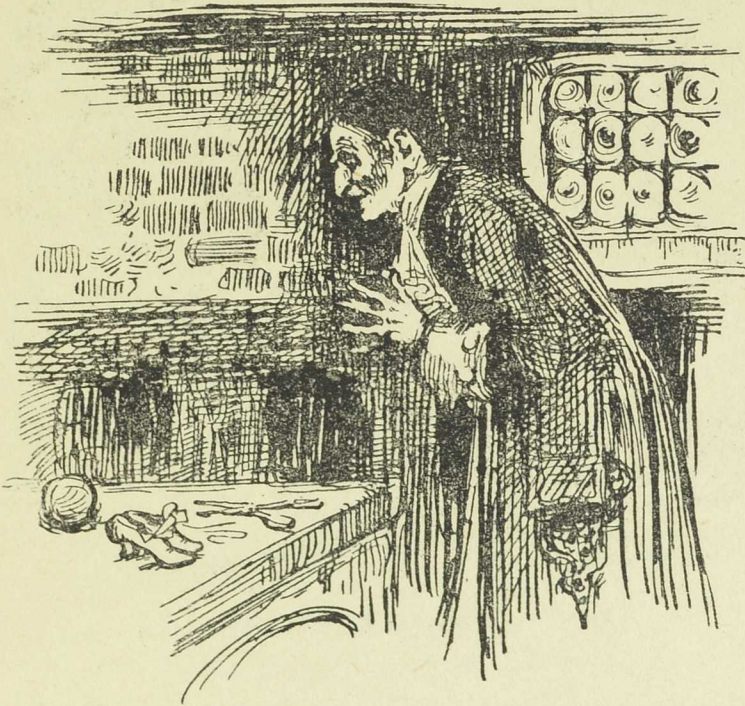
"Why do you weep?" he asked.

"Ah," she replied sadly, "the moon was shining as brightly as now the last time I played that air on my flute, and my dearest one came to me out of the water."

He looked at her: and all at once a veil seemed to fall from his eyes, and he saw that she was his dear wife. And he clasped her in his arms and kissed her; and from that moment neither of them wished any greater happiness than to be together.

THE SHOEMAKER AND THE ELVES

A SHOEMAKER was once so poor, that at last he had only enough leather to make one more pair of shoes. He cut out the leather in the evening, and left it on the table



A beautiful pair of shoes ready made

ready for him to begin work the next day. In the morning he rose early and, on going to his table, what was his surprise to find a beautiful pair of shoes ready made! He examined them carefully, and could find no fault with them. Presently a customer came to the shop,

and was so pleased with the shoes that he bought them for more than double the usual price.

The shoemaker now had enough money to buy leather sufficient to make two pairs of shoes. This he cut out in the evening and left ready for the morning. But on entering the workshop he found, not the leather, but two



Dancing and singing

pairs of shoes as beautifully made as the first. These he sold easily for twice what he usually asked, and with the money he bought enough leather to make four pairs of shoes. The same thing happened as before. Whatever work he prepared for the following morning was completed during the night, and money came in so fast that the shoemaker became quite rich.

One evening he said to his wife: "Let us try to find out who helps us in this mysterious way." So, instead of going to bed, they hid themselves in a corner of the workshop to watch. They had not waited long before the door opened and two little mannikins without clothes came in and sprang onto the table. There they set to work, stitching and hammering so skilfully, that very soon a row of shoes stood where the rough leather had been. Then they slipped off the table and disappeared.

The next day the wife said to her husband: "These little men have made us so rich and prosperous that I long to do something for them in return. They must be very cold without any clothes, so I am going to make them each a suit—coats, trousers, and all."

So she set to work with her needle, while her husband made two tiny pairs of shoes. In the evening they laid the clothes on the table, and hid themselves as before. At midnight the little men appeared. It was a cold night, and they soon dressed themselves in the warm clothes, dancing and singing:

"Here we dance at break of day,
All our tools are put away.
Safe and warmly clothed at last
'Gainst the storm and wintry blast."

Then they vanished, and never came back again.

But the shoemaker had no longer any need of them; and because he had been kind to those who helped him, he continued to prosper in everything to the end of his life.

THE DEATH OF THE LITTLE HEN

ONCE upon a time a little Cock and a little Hen went out into the wood to gather nuts. Before starting, they made a promise that whoever found a nut should share it with the other. The little Hen was the first to find one, but she was greedy, and wanted to eat it all herself, so she said nothing about it. When the little Cock's back was turned she tried to swallow it, but it was so big that it stuck in her throat. The little Cock, seeing that his wife was choking, ran to the Spring, and said : "Oh, Spring, give me water, quick ! My little Hen is choking."

"Not so fast," said the Spring. "First, go to the Bride, and ask her for a piece of red silk."

The little Cock ran to the Bride, and said : "Oh, Bride, give me a piece of red silk for the Spring, that it may give me some water for my little Hen, who has swallowed a nut and is choking !"

"Go and fetch my wreath," said the Bride ; "it is hanging on the tree over there."

The little Cock fetched the wreath, and the Bride gave him the red silk, which he took to the Spring : and at last he got some water. But he had been so long on the way, that when he got back his little Hen was lying dead on the ground with the nut stuck fast in her throat.

The poor little Cock sat down and wept ; and all the

animals came and mourned with him. Then six mice built a little carriage, and harnessed themselves to it; and they laid the little Hen inside and started for the grave. A Wolf came out of the forest, followed by a Lion and many other fierce animals, and joined the procession. When they had gone a little way, they came to a brook.

“How are we to cross it?” asked the Cock.

A straw, which happened to be lying near, answered: “I will lay myself across the stream, and you can step on me.”

But when the six mice stepped on the straw, they were so heavy that it broke under them, and they all fell in and were drowned. This was a dreadful misfortune, and the little Cock was almost in despair, when a large stone took pity on him and offered to lay himself across the stream. Over him the carriage was drawn safely to the other side. But the procession of mourners was left behind, and the carriage had to be sent back to fetch them. All would have been well if they had not all tried to get into the carriage at the same time; but it was so small, and they were so many, that the whole party was overturned and drowned in the brook.

The little Cock, seeing what had happened, dug a grave and laid the little Hen in it. Then he sat down beside it and wept.

THE BLACK BRIDE

A WITCH one day was walking in a field with her daughter and stepdaughter, and a poor man came up and asked the way to the nearest town.

“Find out the way yourself,” answered the Witch; and her daughter laughed at the poor man because his clothes were old and ragged. But the stepdaughter said kindly: “Come with me, and I will show you the way.” And she went with him till the town was in sight and the road easy to find. Then he said to her:

“You have been good to me, and you shall have your reward. Ask me for three things, and I will grant them.”

The maiden said: “I should like to be as pure and beautiful as snow, to have a purse that will never be empty, and to go to Heaven when I die.”

The poor man promised all she asked, and she went home looking more beautiful than day, with her purse in her pocket. When the stepmother and daughter saw her they were wild with jealousy, for they had both become as black as coals as a punishment for their unkindness to the poor man.

Now the stepsister had a brother whose name was Reginer, and they loved each other very dearly. He was coachman to a great King, and as the castle where he

lived was a long way off, he scarcely ever saw his little sister. So he had her portrait painted and hung it in his room, that he might see her face when she was far away.

Not long before this the Queen had died, and the King had made a vow that he would never marry again unless a maiden could be found who was more beautiful than his wife had been. His servants had seen the portrait in the coachman's room, and told the King about it. He ordered it to be brought to him, and when he saw how beautiful the maiden was he determined to make her his wife. So he gave the coachman a royal carriage and six horses and a dress embroidered in gold, and sent him to bring his sister to the castle.

When the old woman and her daughter heard of this they were more envious than ever, and set about to find means to injure the little sister. They all got into the carriage—the white maiden in her rich dress, the mother and daughter as black as coals—with Reginer on the box driving. After a time the coachman said to his sister: “Take care of your dress. You must look your very best when you are taken to the King.” But the Witch, by her power, had deadened the ears of the little sister so that she could not hear properly.

“What does my brother say?” she asked; and her stepmother answered: “He says you are to take off your fine clothes and give them to your sister.”

The little sister immediately did as she was told, and the ugly black maiden dressed herself in the royal robes and put the gold cap on her head.

Presently Reginer spoke again, and his sister said: “I cannot hear. What does my brother say?”

"He says you are to get out here," replied the wicked old woman. They were driving over a bridge which crossed a deep river. As the little sister stood up to get out of the carriage, her stepmother gave her a push, and she fell into the water and sank. At the same moment a snow-white Duck appeared on the water and swam about. The brother drove on without seeing anything that had happened, and when they arrived at the castle the black maiden was led to the King. But when he saw her dreadful black face, all the Witch's arts could not make him think her beautiful: he was very angry with Reginer for having deceived him, and ordered him to be thrown into prison. The Witch and her daughter he could not punish, for he had no power over them. He allowed them to stay at the palace, where they put on great airs and lived in luxury; and soon after the Witch wove such a powerful spell that the King began to think that he would marry the black bride after all. And the Witch ordered the wedding feast to be prepared.

On the night before the marriage a snow-white Duck walked into the kitchen, and said to the Cook: "I am very cold, and my feathers are all wet. Please let me sit by your fire for a little while."

The Cook let her come in, and she sat before the fire and preened herself. Presently she said: "How is my brother Reginer?"

"He is in prison," answered the Cook.

"And how are the Witch and her black daughter?" asked the Duck.

"They are both well, and to-morrow the King will marry the daughter."

“Ah, no, no, he will not do that!” cried the Duck; and she ran out and swam away across the lake. The Cook went to the King and told him what a marvellous bird had been to see her.

“This is very curious,” said the King; and in spite of the Witch’s entreaties he determined to watch in the kitchen in case the Duck should return. At midnight she came again, and looked timidly in at the door. The King raised his sword and cut her head off; and immediately his true bride stood before him, with a beautiful fair skin and golden hair, just like the picture. He recognised her at once, and she told him of the wicked plot that her stepmother had made against her.

The news that the real bride had been found soon travelled through the castle, and reached the Witch and her daughter. They took all the gold and grand clothes they could find, and ran away as fast as their legs could carry them. But the King released Reginer from prison, and married the little sister the very next day.

THE GOLDEN SHOWER

LONG ago there lived a little girl whose father and mother were both dead. She was so poor that she had not even a bed to lie on, and she wandered from place to place. At last she had nothing left but the clothes she wore and a crust of bread which had been given to her.

One winter day, as she was going through a wood, she met a poor man, who said to her: "I am very hungry, and I have nothing to eat. Will you give me a piece of your bread?"

She gave him the whole of her bread and went on her way. Presently she saw a little child sitting by the roadside crying.

"What is the matter, little boy?" she asked.

"My head is so cold," said the child, "and I have nothing to cover it with."

"Take my cap," said the little girl, and she gave it to him and walked on. When she had gone a little farther she met another child, who shivered as the snowflakes fell on her, so she gave her her warm jacket. Another begged for her shawl, and she gave that also. At last she saw a little peasant girl with scarcely any clothes at all, who looked nearly dead with cold. So she took off her petticoat and bodice and wrapped her in them. Then she went into the darkest part of the wood to hide herself.

She looked up at the stars which were shining brightly, and all at once a shower fell on her, as if the stars had thrown themselves from the sky. But when she looked on the ground she saw that every drop was a piece of gold, and at the same moment she felt herself dressed in thick warm clothes. She clapped her hands for joy, and picked up all the gold she could find. Then she went back to where she had left the other children, and gave them all a share; and even then she had more than enough to make her rich for the rest of her life.

THE THREE FEATHERS

THERE was once a King who was very old. When he found that his end was near, he could not make up his mind to which of his three sons he should leave his kingdom. So he sent for them and said: "Go out into the world; and he who brings me the most beautiful carpet shall be king when I am dead."

Now the two elder sons thought themselves very clever, and laughed at their younger brother because he was not as wise as they, and called him Peter Simple. They wanted to go and look for the carpet and leave Peter at home, but the father said: "No, Peter must be allowed to try as well as you. And in order that you may all have an equal chance, I will blow three feathers into the air, and you will travel in whichever direction the feathers take."

One of the feathers flew to the north, another to the south, but the one that was Peter's fell to the earth and lay there. At this the two elder brothers laughed, for they knew that Peter was obliged to remain where his feather had fallen, and they set out on their journey.

They had not gone far before they met a peasant with a heavy shawl on his shoulders. "There is no need for us to go any further," said one to the other. "Peter Simple will not find a carpet at all, and this old shawl will be quite good enough to get us the kingdom." So they bought the shawl and returned home.

In the meantime, Peter sat down where his feather had fallen, feeling very sad. Suddenly he saw, quite close to him, a trap-door. He opened it, and saw a flight of steps which went down into the earth. On descending, he found himself in a room in which sat a huge frog, surrounded by a number of little ones.

"What do you want?" asked the old Frog.

"I want the most beautiful carpet in the world," replied Peter.

"You shall have it," said the old Frog ; and she called to her little ones, who ran out of the room and presently returned carrying a carpet so rich and fine that Peter thought he had never seen anything so beautiful. The old Frog gave it to him, and he ran up the steps. Just as he closed the trap-door his brothers returned home carrying the old shawl. When they saw Peter's beautiful carpet they were very angry ; but the old King said : "He has accomplished the task, and the kingdom must be his."

"He is too stupid to rule wisely," said the elder sons. "Make one more trial of us, and if he wins that, we will

be satisfied and own him king." So the father consented, and said that whoever should bring him the most beautiful ring should be heir to the kingdom. Then he blew the three feathers into the air and, as before, one flew to the north, another to the south, and the third fell on the ground. Once more the elder brothers set out on their journey, leaving Peter sitting sadly where his feather had fallen.

"I shall never find the ring," thought he; and he was beginning to cry when he caught sight of the trap-door. He went down the steps and found the old Frog and her family. He told her what he wanted, and begged her to help him. She gave him the most beautiful ring in the world, set with sparkling jewels. Full of joy, he hurried up to the earth again, and was just in time to meet his brothers. They had not troubled to go far, feeling sure that Peter would not find a ring, and had taken a plaited straw one off a horse's harness, not worth a shilling. When the King saw Peter's ring he said: "Well, you call him stupid, but he has done better than either of you." But still the elder brothers pleaded with their father to make yet another trial of them. Then he said: "This is the last condition, and you must abide by it. Whoever brings home the most beautiful maiden shall have my kingdom."

Off set the two eldest sons, feeling quite sure that they would succeed this time, for Peter's feather had fallen to the ground as before.

"We need not go very far," said one to the other. "It is certain that Peter Simple will not find a maiden, fair or ugly, so we need not trouble ourselves." So they

took home two of a band of peasant girls they met, without even troubling to pick out the prettiest ones.

When Peter went to the old Frog and told her that he wanted the most beautiful woman in the world, she said : "I have not got her here at present, but I will help you nevertheless." She then gave him a carrot, which her children had hollowed out to the shape of a carriage, with six mice harnessed to it.

"But how will this help me?" said Peter.

"Put one of my little ones in it," said the old Frog, "then you will see."

Peter did as she told him, and no sooner was the little Frog seated in the carrot than she was changed into a beautiful lady. At the same moment the carrot was changed into a glass coach, and the mice into six milk-white horses. Peter drove home in state, and after helping the lady to alight, led her to his father. His brothers had already arrived with the peasant girls, but when the old King saw the beautiful lady with her golden hair and rich dress, he cried :

"This is the most beautiful maiden in the world, and Peter shall marry her and be king when I am dead."

He then ordered his two eldest sons to marry the peasant girls, and sent them to live in cottages at the palace gates. But Peter lived in the palace with his beautiful bride, and was as happy as the day was long.

THE FOX AND THE CAT

A CAT once met a Fox in a wood.

“Good-morning, Mr. Fox,” she said, pleasantly. “How are you getting on in these hard times?”

The Fox looked the Cat up and down from head to foot. “You poor little mouse-catcher,” said he, contemptuously. “I like your impudence, asking me how I am getting on, when everybody knows you can barely scrape a living. What have you been doing, and how many tricks have you learnt?”

“I only know one trick,” said the Cat, meekly.

“And what is that?” asked the Fox.

“I can jump up a tree when the hounds follow me, and be safely out of their reach in two seconds.”

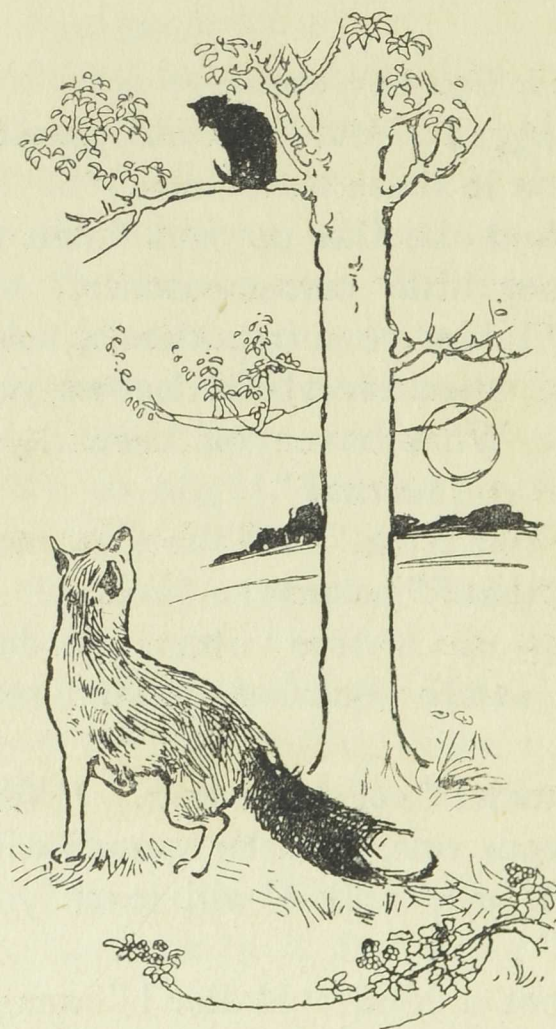
“That isn’t much!” cried the Fox. “Why, I know a dozen tricks to your one, and the hounds will never catch me. Come with me, and I will teach you something worth knowing.”

At that moment a loud “Halloa!” was heard, and a huntsman and four hounds sprang out of the bushes. The Cat jumped into a tree, and was quickly hidden among the leaves.

“Save yourself, Mr. Fox!” she cried; but the hounds

had already seized the Fox, and his struggles were in vain.

“Ah!” said the Cat, “I am only a poor little mouse-catcher, but my one trick was better than your dozen.”



“Good morning, Mr. Fox,” said the Cat

CINDERELLA

ONCE upon a time there was a maiden whose mother died. Very soon afterwards the father took another wife, and the maiden was very unhappy; for this wife had two daughters of her own, fair and beautiful in face, but wicked and



The birds loved her, and helped her with her work

spiteful at heart. They treated the maiden very cruelly, making her wash and cook and work all day long. They dressed her in an old ragged gown, and gave her no bed to sleep on; so at night she was obliged to lie among the ashes on the hearth, and grew so black and smutty that

people gave her the name of Cinderella. But the birds loved her, and helped her with her work.

Every day she visited her mother's grave.

It happened that the father was going to a fair, and he asked his two stepdaughters what he should bring home for them.

"Handsome dresses," said the elder. "Pearls and diamonds," said the sister.

"And, Cinderella," asked her father, "what would you like?"

"Father," she said, "bring me the first branch that strikes your hat as you come home."

So the father did as they wished, and came home bringing beautiful dresses and jewels, and the branch of a hazel-bush for Cinderella. She thanked him, and went out to her mother's grave and planted the branch there. Soon it grew into a beautiful tree; and whenever Cinderella visited the grave, a little white bird would perch among the leaves; and if she expressed a wish, he would throw down whatever she wished for.

It happened soon after that the King gave a grand ball, to which he invited all the beautiful young ladies in the land, that the Prince might choose a bride from among them. The two stepsisters were overjoyed at receiving an invitation.

"Make haste!" they cried to Cinderella. "Come and dress our hair and sew gold buckles on our shoes, for we must look our best at the King's palace."

"May I not go to the ball, too?" asked Cinderella.

"You, Cinderella?" cried her stepmother. "You are all covered with smuts, and have no fine dress, and



CINDERELLA

you have never learnt to dance. You cannot go to the ball ! ”

And she hurried off to the palace with her proud daughters. Cinderella went to her mother's grave, and stood under the hazel-tree and cried :

“ Little bird upon the bough,
Send me what I long for now.”

Immediately the bird threw down a beautiful silk dress and a pair of glittering golden slippers. In great haste Cinderella dressed herself in the lovely clothes, and went to the palace. She looked so beautiful when she entered the ball-room that her stepmother and sisters did not recognise her. But the King's son sprang forward to meet her, and took her hand, saying : “ This is my partner.”

So they danced together the whole evening, till at last it was time to go home. The Prince offered to accompany her, for he wished to find out where she lived. But she ran away from him, and sprang into the pigeon-house. The Prince saw her disappear, and went and told his father what had happened. The stepmother thought, “ Can it be Cinderella ? ” And she advised the Prince to have the pigeon-house pulled down. This was soon done, but they found no one inside ; for the truth was that Cinderella had slipped out at the back of the pigeon-house while they were talking, and had run to the hazel-tree. Here she took off her grand dress and put on her everyday one ; and when her stepmother and sisters returned home they found her fast asleep among the ashes as usual.

On the second night of the feast the same thing

happened. The White Bird brought Cinderella a more beautiful dress than before, and she danced with the Prince all the evening. When the time came to go home the Prince once more tried to follow her; but she climbed quickly up a pear tree which grew in the palace garden. And though he had the tree cut down, Cinderella was



She put on the golden slipper

nowhere to be found; she had slipped through the branches and run home as before.

The Prince thought: "I love this beautiful maiden, and am determined to find out where she lives." So he ordered the steps of the castle to be covered with pitch, so that, as Cinderella was hurrying away after the ball, one of her slippers stuck on the step, and she was obliged to leave it

behind: and the Prince picked it up. The next morning he sent for one of his servants, and said: "The lady whom this shoe fits shall be my bride."

The servant hurried away with the shoe to the elder stepsister, who tried it on; but her big toe was so large that it was impossible for her to get the shoe on. Then the second sister tried it on, but she could not get it over her heel.

Then the Prince came to the house, and said to the father: "Hast thou no other daughter whom the shoe might fit?"

And the father answered: "I have no other, except the daughter of my first wife—a poor little Cinderella, not fit to be your bride."

But the Prince insisted that she should be sent for. After washing her hands and face, Cinderella came in and was presented to the Prince in her ragged dress. She seated herself on a footstool, took off her wooden shoe, and put on the golden slipper, which was found to fit her exactly. Then she raised her head and looked at the Prince, who at once recognised the beautiful maiden with whom he had danced at the ball, and exclaimed: "This is my bride!"

So they were married, to the rage and despair of the proud stepsisters, and lived in peace and happiness ever after.

THE GOLDEN KEY

A POOR little boy was gathering wood. It was winter time, and the ground was covered with snow, and at last his hands became so cold that he could scarcely feel the sticks as he touched them.

“Ah,” he thought, “if only I had a little fire, I might warm myself before starting for home.”

He stooped down to scrape the snow from the ground to make a place where he might light a fire. As he did so, he found a little golden key. “This is a strange thing to find in the forest,” thought he. “If there is a key, there must be a lock for it to open.” So he dug a little into the earth, and presently found an iron chest, which he opened. I cannot tell you what he found in it, but I know he became rich and happy, and never had to gather wood again.

KING THRUSHBEARD

THERE was once a Princess who was exceedingly beautiful, but so proud that she considered no man good enough for her. Of all her suitors only one pleased her; but she laughed at him just as she did at the others, for he had a rough beard, and his chin was the least bit crooked.

“Look!” she cried, “what a chin he has—just like a thrush’s beak! I shall call him King Thrushbeard.” And she sent him away, though in her heart she liked him best of all.

When the King heard that she had insulted all her lovers he was very angry, and vowed that he would wed his daughter to the first wayfarer who came to the castle. The next day the Princess heard the sound of music under her window. The King also heard it, and ordered his servants to bring the musician in.

He was dressed in soiled and ragged clothes, and had his chin tied up as though he had the toothache. And the King said to the Princess: “This is your husband. I took an oath that you should marry the first wayfarer that came to my castle, as a punishment for your pride.”

So the poor Princess was married to the minstrel, and he took her hand and led her away weeping and lamenting. When they had journeyed a long way on foot they

came to a great castle, which the Princess knew belonged to King Thrushbeard.

"Ah!" she sighed, "if only I had not been so foolish and proud, I should be Queen of that castle now, instead of a wandering minstrel's wife!"



She sat down in a corner of the market-place

When they had gone a little farther, her husband stopped before a mean little house on the edge of the forest.

"What are you stopping here for?" asked the Princess.

"This is your home," replied the minstrel; and he led her in.

"But where are the servants?" asked the Princess.

"There are no servants," replied her husband.

"But I do not know how to cook and sew," said the Princess.

"You will have to learn," said the minstrel.

The Princess was indeed being punished for her pride. All day long she had to work, and every morning her husband woke her up early that she might light the fire and cook the breakfast. But she did it all so badly, that at last her husband said: "I can see that you are not fit for the simplest work. I will buy you a basket of wares, and you shall sell them in the market-place."

The Princess thought: "When the people see me, how they will mock! And I might have been a great Queen if I had not been so proud!"

She took her basket and sat down in a corner of the market-place. By and by a soldier came past and, not seeing the basket, rode right into it, breaking the wares into a hundred pieces. The Princess went home and told her husband what had happened.

"It is very plain that you are no good at selling wares," said he. "They are in need of a kitchen-maid at the palace, and have said they will take you."

So the Princess became a kitchen-maid in the palace of King Thrushbeard. She had to work very hard, and do all the cook told her. One day she overheard the other servants talking of a great feast that was going to take place, and she learnt that King Thrushbeard was going to be married.

Then she was very sad, thinking how happy she might have been but for her pride and haughtiness. On the day of the feast she crept into the big dining-hall with a

basket, to pick up the pieces that were left on the plates, for she and her husband were in great poverty.

Suddenly she looked up, and saw a noble-looking Prince coming towards her. He was dressed in velvet and satin, and wore a gold chain round his neck. The Princess tried to hide herself, for she knew that it was King Thrushbeard, who had been her lover, and whom she had treated with contempt. But he took her hand and led her into the ball-room, saying that she must dance with him. All the people laughed at her ragged dress, and to complete her shame, as she struggled to free her hand, her basket fell to the ground, and all the pieces she had taken from the plates were scattered on the ground.

But King Thrushbeard took her in his arms, and said, "Do not fear, beautiful Princess, I and the wandering minstrel are the same person. I heard of your father's oath, and came disguised to the palace that I might win your love. I was the soldier who upset your basket in the market-place. I have done it all to prove that you really loved King Thrushbeard, whom you despised and mocked."

Then the Princess wept, and said: "I have been wicked and proud, and am not worthy to be your wife."

But he comforted her, and said: "All our unhappiness is past, and this is a feast to celebrate our wedding."

Then he took her to a beautiful room, and the ladies of the Court dressed her in royal robes. And when she came into the great hall, and took her seat on the throne beside her husband, no one had ever seen so beautiful a Queen.

THE MILLER'S BOY AND THE CAT

THERE was once a miller who had three apprentices. When they had been with him a long time, he sent for them, and said: "I am getting old, and shall soon have to give up work. Whichever of you brings me the best horse shall have the mill."



He met a small tabby cat

Now, the youngest of the apprentices was the drudge, and did nearly all the work, while the others idled. As they were setting out on their journey, the two elder ones said: "Silly Hans, you had better stay at home. You are much too foolish to find a horse, if you tried for a

year." But Hans insisted on accompanying them. When night came they crept into a cave, and lay down to rest. No sooner was Hans asleep, than the other two rose and ran away without disturbing him. When Hans woke the next morning he found himself alone in the middle of the forest, without food or water.

He wandered on for a long time, feeling very sad and lonely, until he met a small tabby cat, who said: "Good day, Hans. What can I do for you?"

"Why, Puss," said he, "how do you know my name?"

"I know you very well," replied the tabby, "and I also know what you are longing for. You want a beautiful horse, and if you will come home with me and serve me faithfully for seven years, I will give you the most beautiful one in the world."

Then she led him to her castle. All the servants were cats, and they waited on Hans as if he been a prince instead of a poor apprentice. They played to him on violins as he sat at supper, and when he went to bed, one took off his coat, another his stockings, a third his shoes, till Hans thought he had never been so well off in his life.

The next morning the tabby said to him: "Come now, you must begin your seven years' service. Take this silver chopper and this golden saw and chop my wood for me."

Hans did as he was told, and chopped the wood into nice little pieces. Then the tabby said: "Now go and cut my grass, and make it into hay." And she gave him a silver scythe and a golden rake, and sent him into the meadow.

When he had stacked the hay, she said : "There is one thing more you must do for me. Take this bag of carpenter's tools and build me a house."

Hans set to work with a will, and soon finished the house. Then he took his silver tools to the tabby and said : "I have chopped your wood, and made your hay, and built your house : and now the seven years are past."

"Come with me," said the tabby ; and she led him to a stable and opened the door, and there were twelve beautiful horses, with shining coats and long flowing tails. The tabby said : "Now go home, and in three days I will bring you what you long for."

So Hans went back to the mill. He found that the two other lads had returned, and brought their horses with them : but one was blind and the other lame. When they saw Hans they began to laugh and jeer, for the tabby cat had given him no new clothes during the seven years, and his coat was torn and ragged like a beggar's.

"Hulloh, silly Hans !" they cried. "Where is your horse?"

"You shall see it in three days," he answered. At this they laughed the more : and the Miller said : "I cannot have you sit at the table with us in such ragged clothes. I should be ashamed to let anyone see you."

So they gave him some bread, and sent him out into the hen-house to eat it. When night came, the other apprentices refused to let him sleep in their room, and he was obliged to creep into a barn and lie on a heap of straw.

When three days had passed, a carriage, drawn by six magnificent horses, drove up to the Miller's door. A

beautiful Princess alighted, and asked for the youngest apprentice.

"He is in the barn," replied the Miller. "He is so torn and ragged that we cannot have him in the house."

"I will go and fetch him myself," said the Princess. She bade her servants follow her, carrying new and handsome clothes. And Hans put off his rags, and was soon dressed in silk and velvet like a prince. Then the Princess said to him: "I am the tabby cat, whom you have released from a wicked spell by serving me for seven years." To the Miller she said: "These horses belong to your youngest apprentice."

"Then," said the Miller, "the mill also belongs to him."

"No," said the Princess. "He has no longer any need of it, for I am going to make him rich and great."

So the Miller kept his mill, and Hans and the Princess drove away together. When they arrived at the house that he had built, they found it had been turned into a beautiful palace, full of gold and silver. Very soon afterwards they were married, and lived happily for the rest of their lives.

LITTLE THUMB

THERE was once a peasant and his wife who had a son so small that they called him Little Thumb. He was very clever and merry, but though his parents gave him the most nourishing food, he never grew an inch.

One day, when his father was going out to gather wood, he begged to be allowed to drive the cart.

“You!” cried his father. “Why, you are no bigger than my thumb!”

“Put me on the horse’s ear,” said Little Thumb. “Then go on ahead and gather the wood, and I will follow.”

He pleaded so hard, that at last the father consented, and put him on the horse’s ear.

“Gee up!” shouted the little man into the ear, and the horse started immediately. As he went along the road he met two strange men. They were so astonished at seeing a cart and horse without a driver, that they turned round and followed it into the forest.

When Little Thumb came to where his father was, he cried: “Look, father, how well I have driven! Now please lift me down off the horse’s ear.”

The father set him safely on the ground, where he sat very comfortably on a thistle. The two men gazed at him in great astonishment, and one of them whispered:

“What a lot of money we could make, if we had that funny little chap to exhibit in the great towns!” So they went to the father, and said: “We would like to buy this funny little creature, if you are willing to sell him.”

But the father replied: “He is my son, and I would not sell him for any gold you could give me.”



He sat on a thistle

Then Little Thumb crept up on to his father's shoulder, and whispered in his ear: “Sell me to these men. I am sure they will treat me well, and I will come back to you very soon.” So the strangers gave the peasant a large sum of money, and took Little Thumb away with them. One of the men put him on the brim of his hat, where he travelled very comfortably. When evening came, he

asked the man to lift him down ; and no sooner was he on the ground, than he sprang through the hedge, and ran away as fast as his little legs would carry him. He had not gone far when he found an empty snail-shell, into which he crept. He heard the men shouting and looking for him everywhere, but they were soon obliged to give up the search, and went home, having spent all their money and got nothing for it.

Little Thumb had not been asleep very long before he was awakened by the sound of voices.

“There is plenty of gold in the Rector’s house,” said one, “if only we were small enough to climb through the window.”

“I will help you,” shouted Little Thumb from the shell. The thieves were much astonished at hearing a voice at their feet, and still more so when they discovered Little Thumb amongst the grass.

“You help us, you little mite !” they cried. “You are not big enough to be of any use.”

“Take me with you and see,” cried Little Thumb. “I will creep between the bars of the window, and hand out whatever you want.”

“That is a good idea,” said the thieves, and they picked up Little Thumb and set off for the Rectory. They soon put him through the bars of the window, and when he found himself safely in the room, he called out in a loud voice : “What do you want me to steal first ?”

“Don’t speak so loud,” said the thieves, in a great fright, “you will rouse the whole house.”

Little Thumb, pretending that he did not understand, shouted louder than ever : “Shall I hand you the gold

and silver?" And he went on making such a noise that the thieves ran away in terror. One of the servants, who had been awakened by his shouting, ran into the room to see what it was all about. But Little Thumb slipped out of the window so quickly that she did not even see him. He crept into a barn, where he found a comfortable bed in a heap of hay, and was soon sound asleep.

Early the next morning the servant came out to feed the cow, and took an armful of the hay in which poor Little Thumb was sleeping. He was so tired out with his adventures that he never woke till he found himself in the cow's mouth. He had to jump so quickly from side to side to avoid her teeth, that he was quite thankful when she swallowed him.

"Now I am really done for," thought Little Thumb. It was dreadfully dark inside the cow, and she kept swallowing such quantities of hay that at last there was scarcely room to move. Little Thumb began to jump about and make a dreadful noise, crying, "No more hay, please—no more hay!"

When the servant heard his voice, she was so frightened that she upset the milk-pail and ran in to tell her master that the cow had spoken.

"Nonsense!" said the Rector. But he came out to the stable and listened. Very soon Little Thumb cried, louder than ever: "No more hay! Please don't give me any more hay!"

"This cow is possessed of an evil spirit," said the Rector; and he ordered it to be killed at once. No sooner was the animal cut up than Little Thumb popped out, and ran away as fast as his legs would carry him,

and never stopped till he reached home. His father and mother were so overjoyed to see him safe and sound that they kissed him a hundred times, vowing that they would not sell him again for all the gold in the world.

LITTLE RED CAP

THERE was once a sweet little girl who was loved by everyone. Her grandmother sent her a red velvet cap, and she looked so nice in it that she was given the name of Little Red Cap.

One day her mother said to her: "Little Red Cap, I want you to take a piece of cake and a bottle of wine to your grandmother, for she is weak and ill. Go quickly, and do not leave the path, for the wood is thick and you might get lost."

Red Cap promised to do as her mother told her, and set out for her grandmother's cottage. Before she had gone far into the wood she met the Wolf.

"Good morning, Red Cap," he said. "Where are you going?"

"I am going to my grandmother's, to take her this cake and wine," replied Red Cap.

"Where does your grandmother live, Red Cap?" asked the Wolf.

"In her cottage in the wood," replied Red Cap.

The Wolf thought to himself: "This is a dainty morsel for me, and would taste nicer than the old grandmother.

I must be very cunning, so as to catch them both." To Red Cap he said: "See what lovely flowers are growing further in the wood! How pleased your grandmother would be if you took her a fresh nosegay! It is early yet, and you have plenty of time."



She gave her a red velvet cap

Then Red Cap forgot all her mother had told her and ran into the wood to gather the flowers. Meanwhile the Wolf went as fast as he could to the grandmother's cottage and knocked at the door.

"Who is there?" cried the grandmother.

"Little Red Cap," replied the Wolf, imitating the voice of the child. "I have brought you cake and wine."

"Lift up the latch and come in," cried the grandmother. "I am too weak to get up."

The Wolf lifted the latch, and directly he was in the room, he sprang upon the poor old grandmother and ate her up. Then he put on her nightgown and nightcap, and got into the bed to wait for Red Cap.

Presently she came running along the path with the flowers in her hand. She was surprised to find the door open, but when she saw her grandmother, as she thought, lying in bed, she went up to her and cried: "Good morning, grandmother!" But there was no answer. Then she got onto the bed, and cried: "Oh, grandmother, what great ears you have got!"

"The better to hear with, my dear," said the Wolf.

"And what great eyes you have got!"

"The better to see with, my dear."

"And, grandmother, what large hands you have got!"

"The better to hold you with, my dear."

"But, grandmother, what great teeth you have got!" cried Red Cap.

"The better to eat you with," cried the Wolf. And he sprang on poor Red Cap and swallowed her up.

Then he got back into bed and fell asleep, and snored so loudly that he could be heard outside. A hunter who happened to be passing with his gun, thought to himself: "How the old woman snores! I must go in and see if there is anything the matter." And he went in and found the Wolf fast asleep in the bed. He raised his gun and was just going to shoot him, when he suddenly thought: "What if he should have swallowed the old woman! If

"I kill him, I may kill her too." So he seized a pair of scissors and cut open the wolf as he lay asleep.

What was his surprise to see the face of Little Red Cap peep out at the first snip! Presently she sprang out, exclaiming: "Oh, I have been so frightened! It was so dark inside the Wolf."

Then they helped out the old grandmother, who was also alive: and the hunter took the Wolf's skin, which he afterwards sold for a good sum. Then they all sat down very happily, and ate the cake and drank the wine which Red Cap had brought.

And she said to herself: "If I had done as my mother told me, none of these dreadful things would have happened. I will never disobey her again."

THE GOLD CHILDREN

ONCE upon a time there lived a fisherman and his wife in a little hut by the seaside. They were so poor that they often had nothing but fish to eat. One day the fisherman threw his net and caught a golden fish. He was very pleased, and was going to put it in his basket, when the fish said: "Stop! If you will throw me back into the water, I will change your hut into a beautiful palace, and give you everything you like to eat."

"Willingly," replied the fisherman.

"I will do this on one condition," said the fish, "and that is, that you never tell a living soul how it came

about. If you do, your palace and everything in it will vanish."

The fisherman threw the fish into the water, and went home. Instead of his poor little hut he found a beautiful palace. His wife came to meet him dressed like a princess, and showed him a table ready spread with everything to eat and drink that he could wish for. As they sat at dinner, his wife said: "This is good for-



"Oh, dear fish," he cried, "give me back the beautiful palace"

tune such as I had never dreamed of. How has it happened?"

"That is my business," replied the husband; but she was so curious that she could not rest, and asked him again and again. At last he lost patience, and said:

"If you must know, I caught a golden fish, who promised that if I threw him back into the water he would change my hut into a palace, and give me plenty to eat and drink." At the same moment the palace and

everything in it vanished, and they found themselves once more in the hut by the seashore.

"There now!" cried the husband; "we are just as poor as we were before, and it is all your fault. I shall have to go out and catch something for our breakfast."

He went to the lake and threw his net, and to his great joy once more caught the golden fish.

"Oh, dear fish," he cried, "give me back the beautiful palace, and I will never tell anyone again!"

"I cannot do that," said the fish; "but I can give you one more chance of making your fortune. Take me home and cut me into three pieces. Give one piece to your wife, one to your horse, and bury one in the ground outside your door."

The fisherman did as he was told, and in a short time two beautiful golden lilies sprang up from the place where he had buried the piece of fish. Then his horse had two golden foals, and his wife had two little boys who were golden from head to foot.

Years passed, and the children grew quite big, and the foals and the lilies with them. One day they said to their father: "We are grown up now, and want to see the world. Let us mount our golden horses and seek our fortunes."

The father was very sad when he heard this. "What shall we do when you are gone?" he said. "We shall not know where you are, or what has happened to you."

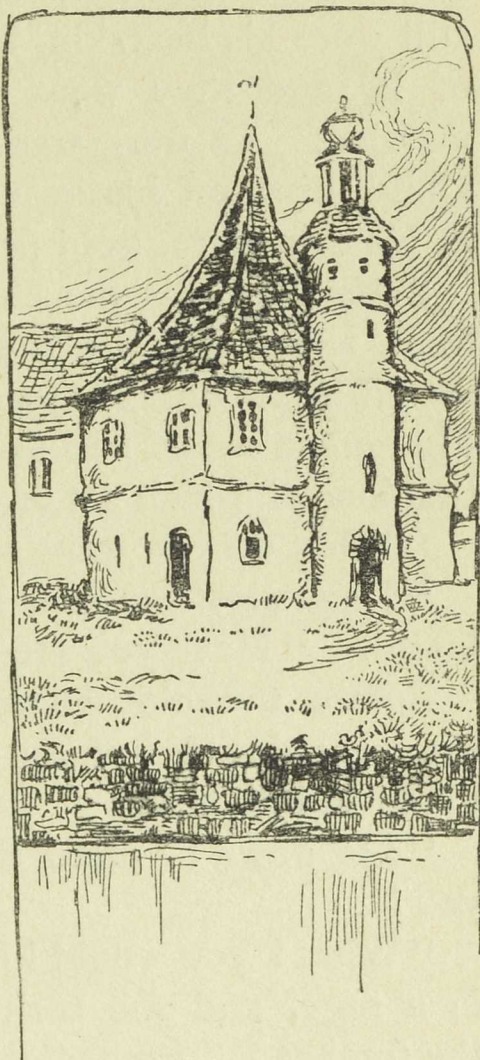
"Oh, yes, you will," said the children; "the golden lilies will tell you. If they are fresh, we are well; if they are faded and drooping, we are ill, or some mis-

fortune has happened to us. And when they die, you will know that we are dead also."

So they rode away, and presently came to a big town. As they went through the streets the people came out of their houses and began to laugh and mock them. As soon as one of them heard this, he turned round and rode back to his father, for he could not bear to be laughed at. But his brother said: "I have come out to seek my fortune, and I am not going to turn back because silly people laugh at me."

So he rode on till he came to a forest. Just as he was about to enter it, he met some travellers, who said: "It is not safe for you to ride through the wood. It is full of robbers, and when they see that you and your horse are pure gold, they will certainly kill you."

But the Gold Child would not be frightened. He got a bearskin, and wrapped himself and his horse in it from head to foot, so that all the gold was covered, and rode into the forest. When the robbers saw him, they thought he was a poor hunter, and did not attack him.



They went to her father's castle

One day he met a beautiful maiden : she had blue eyes, and was dressed in a blue dress, and the Gold Child thought he had never seen anyone so pretty. He soon fell in love with her, and asked her to be his wife. He still wore his bearskin, but the maiden loved him in spite of it, and they went to her father's castle and were married. As they were at the wedding-feast, the Gold Child threw off his bearskin and stood before the guests in his own form, gold from head to foot.

Soon after this the Gold Child went into the forest to hunt, and saw in the distance a beautiful white stag. He set off in pursuit, but just as he came up to it, it vanished. He looked round and found himself close to a cottage, at the door of which sat an old woman.

"What do you want here?" she asked.

"I have lost the stag I was hunting," replied the Gold Child. "Have you seen him pass this way?"

Before the old woman could answer, her little dog came running out of the cottage, and sprang at the Gold Child to bite him.

"Lie down!" cried the Gold Child, "or I will shoot you!"

"What! you would kill my dog!" cried the old Witch in a rage, and she rushed forward and touched him on the forehead. Immediately he fell to the ground, turned to stone. At the same moment the golden lilies in his father's garden far away faded and drooped. The other Gold Child, who happened to be standing near them, ran to his father, and said: "Some dreadful misfortune has happened to my brother. I must go at once and help him."

He mounted his golden horse, and rode on till he came to where his brother lay turned to stone. The Witch came out of her cottage and tried to deceive him, saying that his brother had gone safely home. But the Gold Child raised his gun and aimed at her, saying: "If you do not at once bring my brother back to life, I will shoot you where you stand." She was obliged to obey him, and the instant she had touched the stone, the Gold Child sprang up and embraced his brother. They mounted their horses and rode together to the edge of the forest, where they parted. One hurried back to his bride, who had begun to fear that she would never see him again. The other went home to his father and mother, who met him at the door, and told him that the lilies had revived and were fresh and blooming again. After this the Gold Children lived in peace and happiness for the rest of their lives.

SWEET PORRIDGE

THERE was once a little girl who lived with her mother. They were so poor, that they often had to go to bed without any supper. One day, the little daughter was walking in the forest when she met an old woman, who asked : " Little girl, why do you look so sad ? "

" My mother and I are hungry," replied the little girl, " and there is nothing in the cupboard."

" I will help you," said the old woman. " Take this pot, and when you want sweet porridge, say to it, ' Little pot, boil,' and you will have as much as you like. When you have had enough, say, ' Little pot, stop,' and it will stop boiling."

The little girl thanked the old woman and ran home with the pot. After that they were never hungry, but ate sweet porridge whenever they wanted to. But once, when the little girl was out, the mother said to the pot, " Little pot, boil," and it did boil, and she sat down and ate porridge till she was satisfied. But when she wanted the pot to stop boiling, she did not know what to say, and the porridge boiled over on to the hearth and soon covered the floor ; then it overflowed into the street, and the people ran out of their houses, crying out that the sea had turned to porridge and was flooding the world, but no one knew what to do. At last the little girl came

home, and said to the pot, "Little pot, stop." Immediately it stopped boiling, and peace was restored. But for days after, when anyone wanted to get to the other side of the street, he had to eat his way across.



The porridge boiled over

SNOW-WHITE AND ROSE-RED

ONCE upon a time there lived a poor widow who had two rose-trees in her garden, one of which bore white roses, the other red. She had also two daughters, who were so like the rose-trees that she gave them the names of Snow-white and Rose-red.

They were very good little girls, and shared everything with each other. They kept their mother's cottage so clean that it was a pleasure to see it. On winter evenings, when their work was done, they would sit with their mother round the fire, knitting busily, while she read to them out of their favourite book.

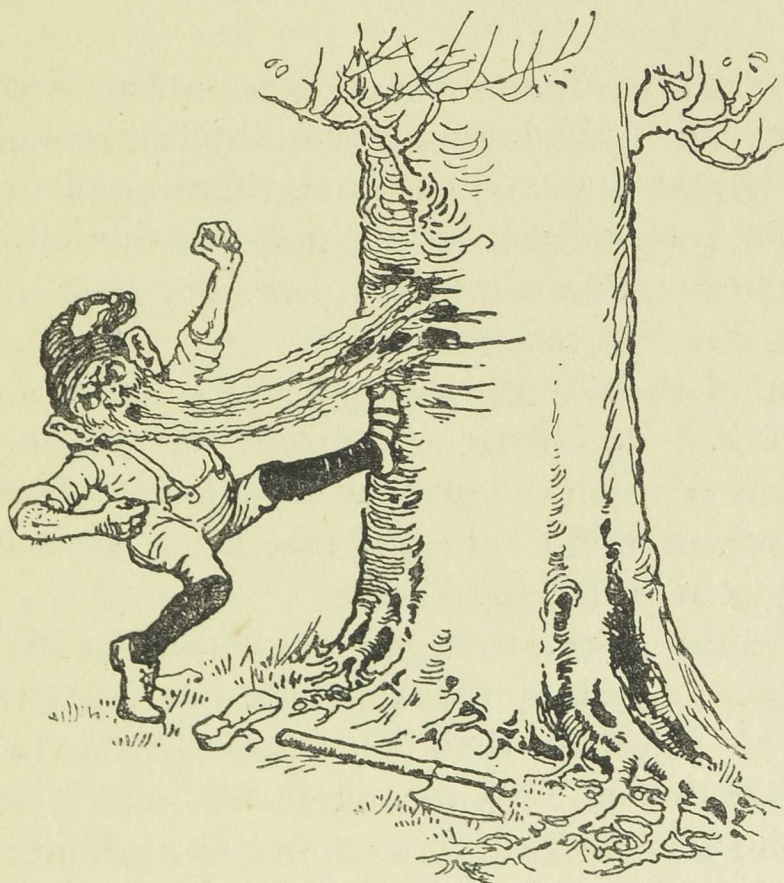
One night they were amusing themselves in this way, when a loud knock was heard at the door. Rose-red, thinking it was some wanderer needing shelter, ran to open it. No sooner had she done so, than a big black bear pushed his head into the room. Rose-red screamed with terror, and Snow-white hid her face in her mother's dress.

"Do not be afraid," said the Bear, very gently, "I will do you no harm. I only want to warm myself at the fire, for I am half frozen in this bitter cold."

"Come in, poor Bear," said the mother. "Lie down by the fire if you want to."

The Bear said : "Dear children, will you not brush the

snow from my fur?" So they fetched a broom, and brushed the Bear's skin until it was quite smooth. Then, finding that he was good and gentle, they soon lost all fear and began to play with him, riding on his back and pulling his shaggy ears. When they went to bed they



A tiny dwarf had been caught by his beard

left him sleeping beside the fire, for the mother would not think of turning him out into the snow. In the morning the children opened the door and he trotted away into the wood.

After that he came each evening and played with the children by the fire. Once, as she let him out in the

morning, Snow-white said to him: "Where are you going, dear Bear?" And he answered: "To find my lost treasure." As he passed out of the door, the latch caught a piece of his fur and tore it. Snow-white thought she saw something gleaming like gold beneath the skin, but he ran away so quickly that she had not time to question him.

Soon after this, Rose-red and Snow-white were looking for brushwood in the forest, when they came upon a fallen tree. When they got close to it, they found that a tiny Dwarf had been caught by his long beard in a cleft. He was jumping up and down like a puppet on a string, but could not free himself.

"I wanted to split up the tree and get some wood for our cooking," he cried. "I drove my wedge into the tree, and it slipped and caught me by the beard. Can't you do something to help me, instead of standing there staring, you silly things?"

The children began to tug at his beard, for they wished to help him in spite of his rudeness, but the tree held it fast. Then Rose-red took her scissors from her pocket and cut the beard close to the trunk of the tree. The moment he was free, the Dwarf began scolding them for cutting off his lovely beard, of which he was exceedingly proud. Presently he took up a bag of gold from among the roots, swung it over his shoulder, and went off into the forest without even saying "Thank you."

The next day, Snow-white and Rose-red went out to catch fish, and the first thing they saw on the river-bank was the Dwarf. He had been fishing, but the wind had entangled his long beard in the line, so that when a large

fish swallowed the bait he had not time to get his beard free, and was being dragged into the water. The children were just in time to save him. Finding that they could not disentangle the beard, they again cut off a piece of it with a pair of scissors.

Directly he was free, the Dwarf flew into a great rage. "How dare you cut my beard?" he cried. "A nice fright I look with only a bit of stubble on my chin! I wish you were both dead for your trouble." And with these ungrateful words he picked up a bag of pearls which he had hidden among the rushes and disappeared.

The third time the children met the Dwarf, he was in a worse plight than ever. A great eagle had swooped down and caught him in its talons, and would have carried him off if the two children had not rushed to his assistance. They caught hold of the Dwarf and held on until the eagle was obliged to let go its hold. No sooner did he find himself safe than the Dwarf again became very angry, crying that they had torn his coat nearly off his back. But by this time the children were used to his ingratitude, and paid no attention.

On their way home in the evening, they met him again. He thought himself alone, and was busy emptying his bags of gold and precious stones in a quiet corner. The treasure looked so beautiful, glittering in the sun, that the children could not help stopping to gaze at it.

"What are you staring at, you stupid things?" cried the Dwarf angrily. "I suppose you want to take my treasure as well as my beard!"

At that moment a terrible growl was heard, and a large black bear rushed out from behind the rocks.

"Oh, spare me!" cried the Dwarf. "Dear Mr. Bear, don't eat me up! Here are two fat little girls who will taste ever so much nicer than I shall."

The Bear paid no attention to his cries, but with one blow of his paw struck the little wretch dead. Snow-white and Rose-red were very frightened, and were running away, when the Bear said, in a gentle voice: "Do not be afraid, dear children." They at once recognised him, and as they looked, what was their astonishment to see the bearskin fall off and a handsome young Prince appear before them!

"I am a King's son," he said. "That wicked Dwarf, after changing me into a bear, stole my treasure, and all this time I have been trying to catch him, but have never succeeded till now."

They all went home together, feeling very happy. And not long after Snow-white was married to the Prince, and Rose-red to his brother. And they lived together in great happiness for the rest of their lives.

THE THREE LITTLE MEN IN THE WOOD

THERE was once a man and a woman who had each a daughter. The woman said to the man's daughter: "Go and tell your father I will marry him, and then I will give you the best of everything and my own child nothing."

So the maiden went home and told her father, and presently the wedding took place. Now, the maiden was very beautiful, and the wife hated her, for her own daughter was ugly and disagreeable; and she treated the maiden with great cruelty.

One day in the winter, when the ground was frozen hard, she dressed her stepdaughter in a paper dress, and sent her into the wood to gather strawberries. The maiden took a basket and went out shivering, for she dared not disobey, though she knew that no strawberries grew in winter. Her stepmother gave her a dry crust of bread to take with her, saying to herself: "If the cold does not kill her in her paper dress, she will surely die of starvation, and then I shall be troubled with her no more."

All through the wood there was nothing to be seen but snow, but the maiden walked on, until she came to a small cottage in which there lived three strange little Dwarfs. She went and knocked at the door. "Come

in!" they cried; and she walked in and seated herself on a stool by the fire, for she wished to get warm and eat her breakfast.

Presently one of the Dwarfs said: "Give us some of your bread, maiden."

"Willingly," she replied. And she broke her piece of



"I have not enough for myself"

bread and gave them half. Then she told them how her stepmother had dressed her in a paper dress, and sent her out to gather strawberries. And they gave her a broom and said: "Go and sweep the snow away from the back door."

The maiden took the broom and began to sweep, and before long there appeared under the thick snow a quantity of ripe strawberries, with which she quickly

filled her basket. While she was doing this, one of the little men said: "She has given us half her bread and swept the door for us. What shall we give her for a reward?" "She shall grow more beautiful every day," said the first. "Every time she opens her mouth a piece of gold shall fall from it," said the second. "She shall be a King's wife," added the third.

After thanking the little men for their kindness, the maiden ran home. As she entered the house she said: "Good evening!" and immediately a piece of gold fell from her lips. Then she told her stepmother all that had happened, and at every word a gold piece fell on the floor, until the room was nearly full. At this the ugly daughter was more jealous than ever, and begged her mother to let her go and gather strawberries in the wood. So the next day her mother dressed her in a warm fur jacket, and gave her bread and butter and cake to eat on the way, and she set out to find the Dwarfs' cottage.

When she got there she walked straight in without knocking, and seating herself on a stool by the fire, began to eat her bread and butter and cake. Presently one of the little men asked her to give him a piece.

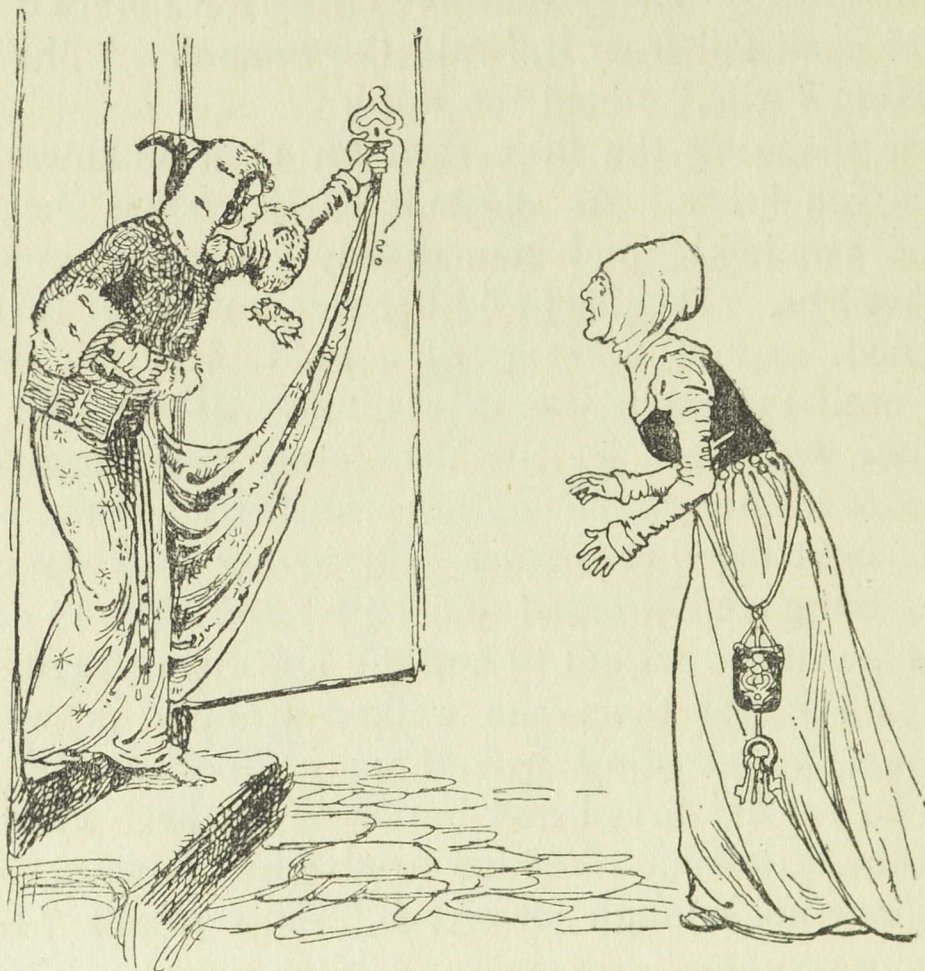
"I have not enough for myself," she replied; "I cannot spare you any."

When she had finished, they said: "Take this broom and sweep away the snow from the back door."

"Go and do it yourself!" she cried. "Do you think I am your servant?" And, seeing that they were not going to give her anything, she walked out of the cottage.

When she had gone, one of the Dwarfs said: "She has a proud and envious heart. I ordain that she shall

grow uglier every day." "And I," said the second, "that at every word she speaks a toad shall fall from her lips to the ground." And the third said: "She shall meet with an unlucky death."



A huge toad fell from her lips

The ugly daughter searched in vain for strawberries, and returned home with an empty basket, and in a very bad temper. As she opened her lips to relate what had happened, a huge toad fell from them to the ground. As she talked, the room became full of them, and everybody shrank away from her in disgust.

After this the stepmother became more and more spiteful against her husband's daughter, and thought only of how she could injure her and make her unhappy. At last she took some yarn and, putting it on the maiden's shoulders, bade her go to the frozen river, break a hole in the ice, and wash it. For she thought: "This time she will perish of cold or fall into the river and be drowned; and I shall be troubled with her no more."

The maiden got an axe and went to break the ice. But as she struck it, a beautiful carriage passed by, in which sat a young King with a crown on his head. When he saw the maiden, he stopped and said: "My child, why are you out here in the cold?" And she answered: "I am a poor maiden, and I am washing my stepmother's yarn."

Then the King pitied her, and, seeing her beauty, he said: "Will you ride with me?"

"With all my heart!" replied the maiden, for she was overjoyed to think she need not go home to her stepmother. So the King drove her to his castle, and very soon afterwards their marriage was celebrated with great splendour. But when the King heard how cruelly his bride had been treated, he sent for the stepmother and her daughter, and condemned them to death.

So everything that the little Dwarfs had foretold came true, and the maiden lived happily ever after.

THE CLEVER COOK

THERE was once a cook named Margaret. She was very greedy, and used to eat up all the good things, for she said, "A cook should taste everything before it goes to table." She had red heels to her shoes, and thought herself very fine.

One day her master said to her: "I have invited a friend to supper. Cook me two chickens."

Margaret hung the chickens on the spit, and they turned and frizzled till supper time, when they were ready to eat. Then it was found that the guest had not come.

"The chickens will spoil if they are kept waiting," said the master. "I will go and fetch my friend."

He started off, and Margaret went back to the kitchen and stood looking at the fowls. Presently she said to herself: "Cooking has made me thirsty. My master is sure to be away some time, so I may as well run down to the cellar and get some beer." She filled the jug, and drank till it was empty. Then she looked again at the fowls, and thought: "What a pity that wing has got so burnt! It is not fit to send to table." So she cut it off and ate it. "Ah, what have I done!" she exclaimed, "the chicken is quite lop-sided!" And she cut off the other wing to make it even, and ate that too.

By this time she had grown quite thirsty again, so

she went down into the cellar and drank a glass of wine. Then she returned, and ate the rest of the chicken. She went to the window to see if her master was in sight, but seeing no sign of him, she exclaimed: "It is a sin and a shame that there is no one here to eat such a supper!" And the second chicken followed the first.

Just as she was finishing the last bit, her master came home.

"Be quick, Margaret!" he cried. "The guest will be here in a moment."

"Yes, yes, master," said Margaret; "it is all ready." And she began to make a great bustle as if she were dishing up. Meanwhile the master took the carving-knife and went out to sharpen it on the stones in the yard. At the same moment, the guest knocked at the door. Margaret ran out with her finger on her lips, and cried: "Do not come in! My master has asked you here this evening to cut off your ears. Listen, you can hear him sharpening the knife on the stones. Run quickly, and do not let him catch you."

The guest heard the dreadful sound, and ran off as fast as his legs could carry him. Then Margaret went to her master, and cried: "Oh, oh! A pretty guest you have asked to your house. He has run away with both the chickens, and there is nothing left for supper!"

"What do I hear?" exclaimed the master, and he set off in pursuit. But when the guest saw him coming with the carving-knife in his hand, he thought he really meant to cut off his ears, and ran harder than ever. The master was obliged to return home, and ate a piece of bread for his supper.

IRON HANS

THERE was once a King who sent his hunters into the wood which surrounded his castle to look for game. Evening came, and they did not return, and thinking that they had met with an accident, the King sent other hunters to look for them ; but not one of them came back to the castle. After this, no one dared venture into the wood.

Many years had passed, when a foreign hunter came to the King, and said : “I have heard that your wood is enchanted, and that none dare go into it. Let me be your huntsman, and I will search it from end to end, and break the spell.”

The King said : “If you venture in, you will surely not return.” But the huntsman set out with his hound. Before they had gone far they came to a dark pool ; and no sooner had the dog approached it, than a long arm was stretched out of the water and dragged him in. On seeing this, the huntsman hurried back to the castle and presently returned with three men carrying large pails. With these they proceeded to drain the pool, and found at the bottom a wild-looking man, whose skin was brown, like iron, while his long hair hung about his face and down to his knees. They bound him with cords and took him to the castle, and the King had him locked up in a



IRON HANS

strong iron cage, of which the Queen kept the key ; and everyone was forbidden to open the cage on pain of death. After this, the wood was quite safe to walk in.

Now, the King had a little son, eight years old. One day he was playing with his golden ball, and threw it by



The Prince watched beside the well

mistake into the wild man's cage. He went up to the bars, and said : "Iron Hans, please give me my ball."

And the wild man answered : "Go and fetch the key from under your mother's pillow, and unlock my cage ; then I will give you your ball."

The little Prince wanted his golden ball so much that he quite forgot all that his father had said to him, and ran to his mother's room, and presently returned with the key. No sooner was the door open than Iron Hans jumped out, and placing the little Prince on his shoulder, ran away with him into the wood.

When they had gone a long way, Iron Hans set the Prince down, and said : "If you are good and obey me in everything, I will make you rich and happy." He then led him to a well, which was filled with water as bright and clear as crystal, with golden fishes swimming in it. "Sit down here," said he, "and see that nothing falls into the water. In the evening I will return and see if you have obeyed me."

The Prince did as he was told ; but before he had watched very long his little finger began to ache so much that he could not resist putting it into the water to cool it. When he drew it out he found that it was covered with gold, and, try as he would, he could not rub it clean. When Iron Hans returned, the Prince put his hand behind his back to hide his golden finger, but Iron Hans said :

"You have disobeyed me, and dipped your finger in the water. This time I will forgive you, but see that it does not happen again."

The next day the Prince watched beside the well as before. Very soon he got tired, and tried to pass the time by looking at the reflection of his face in the water. But as he stooped over the well, his long hair fell over his face and into the water, and when he raised his head he found that his hair had turned to bright gold, and shone in

the sun. He was so frightened that he took his handkerchief and bound it about his head. But when Iron Hans returned in the evening, he said : "You have let your hair fall into the well. Take off that handkerchief !" The Prince did so, and his golden hair fell onto his shoulders.

"You cannot obey me," said the wild man, "so I cannot keep you here. You must go out into the world and live like a poor person ; but because you have a good heart, I will do something for you. If ever you are in need of anything, come into the wood and cry, 'Iron Hans !' and I will help you."

So the Prince set out on his travels, and presently came to a big castle, where he asked for employment. The cook was in need of a kitchen-boy, and took him in. He had to work very hard, cutting wood, drawing water, and sweeping up the ashes.

One day the cook told him to go and lay the cloth for the King's dinner. He went to the dining-hall, but, wishing to hide his golden hair, he kept his cap on. The King noticed this, and said to him : "How dare you keep your hat on in my presence ?"

"If you please, my lord the King," replied the Prince, "I have a sore head."

When the King heard this he was very angry, and said : "You are not fit to wait on me. Go out into the garden and help the gardener."

So the Prince became the gardener's boy, and had to work out of doors all day, whether it was wet or fine. One day it was very hot, and in order to cool his head he took off his cap. The Princess happened to be looking out of her window, and saw his golden hair shining in

the sun, and she called to him : "Bring me a bunch of flowers."

The Prince put on his hat as quickly as he could, and ran to gather some flowers. When he came into the Princess' room, she said to him :

"You have forgotten to take your hat off. You do not seem to know how to behave in my presence." And she seized his hat and pulled it off, and his golden hair fell down on his shoulders. "This is no common gardener's boy," thought the Princess.

Very soon after this the King gave a great festival, to which he invited all the brave knights and warriors in his kingdom. The night before it began the Prince went into the wood and called "Iron Hans!" three times. Immediately the wild man appeared.

"Well, what do you want?" said he.

"There is a great festival to-morrow," replied the Prince, "and the Princess is going to throw a golden apple among the knights, and whoever catches it will be her husband. Give me a suit of armour and a black horse, and help me to catch the apple. For I love the Princess with all my heart."

"I will help you," said Iron Hans.

The next day the Prince appeared among the knights on his black horse, with his golden hair covered by his helmet. The Princess threw the apple high in the air, and before the other knights could move, the Prince had sprung forward and caught it.

He would have ridden away, but everyone cried to him to stop and tell his name. And as they rode after him shouting, his horse gave such a start that his helmet fell

off, showing his golden hair. And the Princess thought :
“It is the gardener’s boy, who brought me the flowers !”

The next day the King sent for him, and said :

“Take your hat off, and let me see your hair.”

The Prince was obliged to do as he was told, and his golden hair fell about his shoulders, shining like the sun. And the Princess said : “It is you who caught the apple, for no one has hair like yours.”

Then the Prince told them who he was, and all that had happened to him, and claimed the Princess for his wife. Soon afterwards the marriage was celebrated with great splendour. While they sat at the wedding-feast the door suddenly opened, and a noble-looking king came in. He went to the bridegroom and embraced him, and said : “I am Iron Hans. A wicked Sorcerer changed me into a wild man and chained me at the bottom of the well. But you have broken the spell, and all the gold I have shall now be yours.”

BIRDIE

A MOTHER once sat down under a tree and fell asleep with her child in her lap. An eagle who happened to be passing over saw the child, and, seizing her in his beak, carried her up into a high tree. Some time after a forester heard the child crying, and, looking up, saw the little one perched on a branch. He climbed up the tree and brought the child down, and took her home. He called her Birdie, because she had been stolen by a bird; and she grew up with his own daughter, whose name was Lena. The two little girls loved each other so dearly that they were never happy unless they were together.

Now the forester had an old cook, who was really a Witch, and very cruel. One day Lena saw her drawing such a quantity of water from the well, that she asked her what she wanted it for.

"I am going to put it in a big kettle to boil," replied the cook; "and to-morrow morning, when it is quite hot, I am going to throw Birdie in and cook her for breakfast."

Lena ran to Birdie and told her what the cook had said.

"Oh, what shall I do?" cried poor Birdie.

"If you stay with me I can help you," said Lena.

“Father is out hunting, and we must run away into the forest till he comes home.”

The next morning, when the kettle boiled, the old Witch went into the children’s room to fetch Birdie, and found both beds empty. She was very much alarmed, for



Lena saw her drawing water from the well

she knew that the forester would be angry with her if he returned home and found the children gone, and she ran quickly downstairs and sent messengers into the forest to follow Birdie and Lena, and bring them back. The children, who were sitting under a tree, saw the messengers coming in the distance.

“Do not be afraid, Birdie,” said Lena; “I will turn

you into a rose-bush, and myself into a rose, and they will never find us."

When the messengers came to the place where they had seen the children, all they found was a pretty little rose-bush and a rose. So they went back and told the Witch that they could see no sign of the children.

"You stupid things!" she cried; "you should have cut the rose and brought it home as quickly as you could. Go and look again, and this time do not fail to bring the children home."

This time, when Lena saw the servants coming, she changed Birdie into a church and herself into the steeple. So once more the messengers had to return home after a fruitless search; and the Witch cried:

"There is no end to your stupidity! You should have pulled the church down and brought me the steeple. This time I will go myself."

So she started out, with the three servants following her. But by the time they got to the place where the children had been, they found nothing but a pond and a duck swimming on it.

"Lena has done this!" cried the Witch, in a rage. "She has changed herself into a duck and Birdie into a pond." And she knelt down by the water, intending to drink it all up. But the duck flew at her, seized her hair in its beak, and held her under water till she was drowned. And that was the end of the wicked old creature.

As for Lena and Birdie, they went home very happily, and told the forester of the escape they had had. After that they lived together in peace and contentment for the rest of their lives.

THE STRAW, THE COAL, AND THE BEAN

AN old woman once put some beans into a pot to boil. The fire was not very good, so she threw on a handful of straw to make it burn more brightly. As she did so, a red-hot coal bounced out and fell on the hearth, close to where a bean and a wisp of straw were lying.

"Please don't come too near!" cried the Bean. "I have just escaped being boiled, and don't wish to be burnt."

"The old woman wanted to throw me into the fire with my brothers," said the Straw, "but I slipped through her fingers and fell onto this nice cool stone."

"It seems that we have all narrowly escaped death," said the Coal. "If I had not had strength to jump out of the fire, I should have been burnt to a cinder in no time. Let us be comrades, and go and seek our fortunes together."

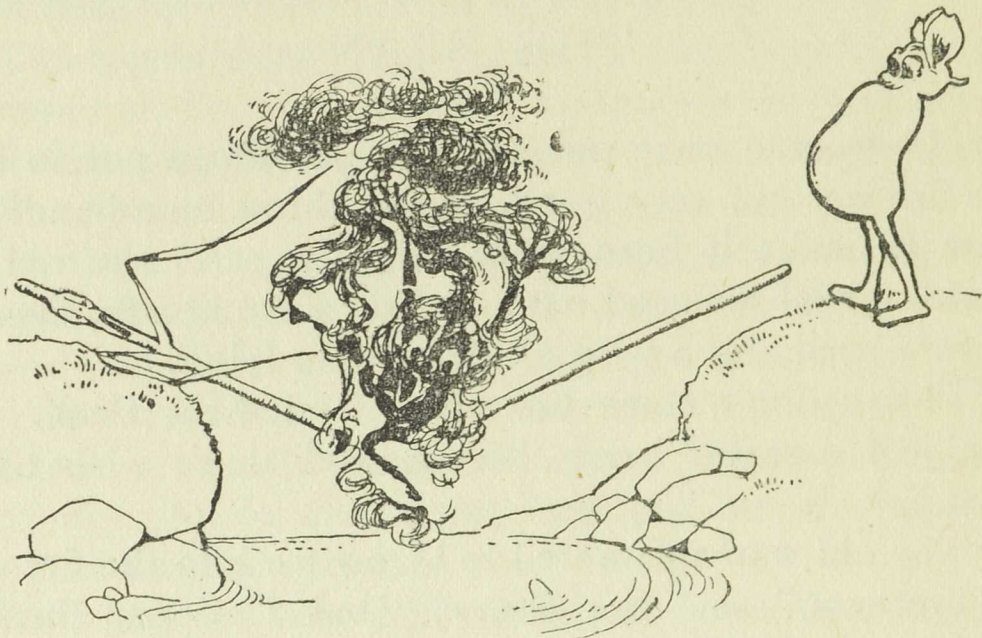
So they set out into the world, and presently came to a stream, over which there was no bridge.

"Never mind," said the Straw; "I will lay myself across the water, and you can walk along my back."

So the Straw stretched himself out as if he were a bridge, and the Coal stepped boldly on to him. But when he got to the middle of the stream, he became so

frightened that he stopped dead, and could move neither backwards nor forwards. His heat soon burnt the Straw in half, and they both fell into the stream and were swept away.

The Bean, when she saw what had happened, laughed



The Bean laughed

so heartily that she burst her jacket. Presently a tailor came by, and seeing her plight, took a needle and thread and sewed her up. Unfortunately, he had only black thread in his bag: and that is why all beans now have a row of black stitches down the middle of their backs.

OPEN, SESAME!

THERE were once two brothers, one rich, the other poor. The rich one never gave anything to the poor one, who had to work hard to get a living for himself and his children.

One day he was driving his cart full of the pieces of wood he had picked up, when he came to a high, bare hill, which he did not remember to have seen before. As he was looking at it, twelve fierce-looking men came along the road with sacks on their backs. Thinking they were robbers, he left his cart to take care of itself, and climbed up a tree. The twelve men did not even look at the cart, but went to the foot of the hill, and cried, "Open, Sesame!" Immediately the hill parted in two, and the men went in; as they disappeared, the sides closed again.

The poor man remained where he was, and presently the hill opened again, and the twelve men came out. As soon as they had all passed through the opening, they cried, "Close, Sesame!" And immediately it closed, leaving no trace on the smooth grass.

As soon as they were out of sight the poor man came down from the tree. He was very curious to find out what was in the hill, and he went to it, and said boldly, "Open, Sesame!" The sides flew open, and he found himself in an immense cave, which was covered from

floor to ceiling with gold and silver and sparkling jewels. He lost no time in filling his pockets, and when he had taken as much as he could carry, he came out of the cave and said to the hill, "Close, Sesame!" Immediately it closed, and he went home as happy as a king.

After this things were very different in the poor man's house. Everybody had enough to eat and drink and warm clothes to wear. The poor man did not forget to help his neighbours, and the whole village rejoiced in his good fortune—all except the rich brother, who was wicked and jealous, and could not rest till he had found out how his brother had got such wealth.

When the poor man had spent all the gold he had brought from the cave, he went there a second time, and brought a fresh load home in his cart. There was so much of it that it was impossible to count it; so he sent and borrowed his brother's bushel, which was used for measuring wheat and corn. The rich brother could not imagine what he wanted the bushel for, and when the poor man sent to borrow it a second time, he hit upon a plan. He smeared pitch on the bottom of the bushel, and when the poor man returned it, there was a lump of gold sticking to it!

Then he went to his brother and threatened him with a dreadful punishment if he did not tell him where he got his wealth. The poor man was obliged to tell him all about the cave, and the twelve men, and the words that opened and closed the hillside.

Off set the rich man with a huge sack, which he quickly filled with the treasure. But he was so excited at all he saw, that when the time came to get out of the cave he

found he had completely forgotten the words that were to reopen the doors. He cried "Open, Silami!" and all the names he could remember, but not one was the right one. He began to tremble and shake with fear: and the more frightened he became, the less he could remember what his brother had told him. Night came, and with it the twelve robbers. When they saw the rich man, they gave a shout of joy.

"Here you are, old greedy-bones!" they cried. "We knew somebody was stealing our treasure, and now we have caught you."

And they seized him, and cut his head off. But his brother continued to live in peace and happiness, giving money to the poor, and doing all the good that came his way.

THE GOLDEN GOOSE

THERE was once a man who had three sons. He was very proud of the two elder ones, who were considered clever, but the youngest was so simple that his brothers laughed at everything he did. One day the eldest son wanted to go and cut wood in the forest, and before he set out his mother gave him some beautiful pancakes and a bottle of wine. He had not gone very far before he met a little grey man, who said:

"Good morning, friend! I see you have plenty of food and wine, and I am hungry and thirsty. Will you not spare me a little?"

"Not I," replied the clever son. "I might not have enough for myself." And he went on, leaving the little man by the roadside. Soon after he began his work, but at the first stroke his axe turned and cut his arm so badly that he was obliged to go home.

The next day the second son set out, and the mother gave him a nice cake and a bottle of wine to take with him. In the forest he met the little grey man, who wished him good day, and begged for a piece of cake and a drop of wine.

"Be off with you!" cried the second son. "If I give to you, I shall not have enough for myself." And he turned away from the little man and began to chop at a tree. The next moment he hit his leg such a heavy blow that he shouted with pain. It was impossible for him to work any more, so he limped home and went to bed.

In the morning the youngest son went to his father and said: "There is no wood for our fire, and both my brothers are too ill to go out. Let me take an axe and see what I can do."

"You!" said the father. "You are nothing but a simpleton, and do not understand wood-cutting."

"Let me try," said the boy; and he pleaded so hard that at last his father let him go. His mother made him a nasty little cake without any sugar in it, and filled a bottle with water, and off he set. The same little man met him, and said: "I am hungry and thirsty, and have nothing to eat or drink. Give me a morsel of cake and a drop of water."

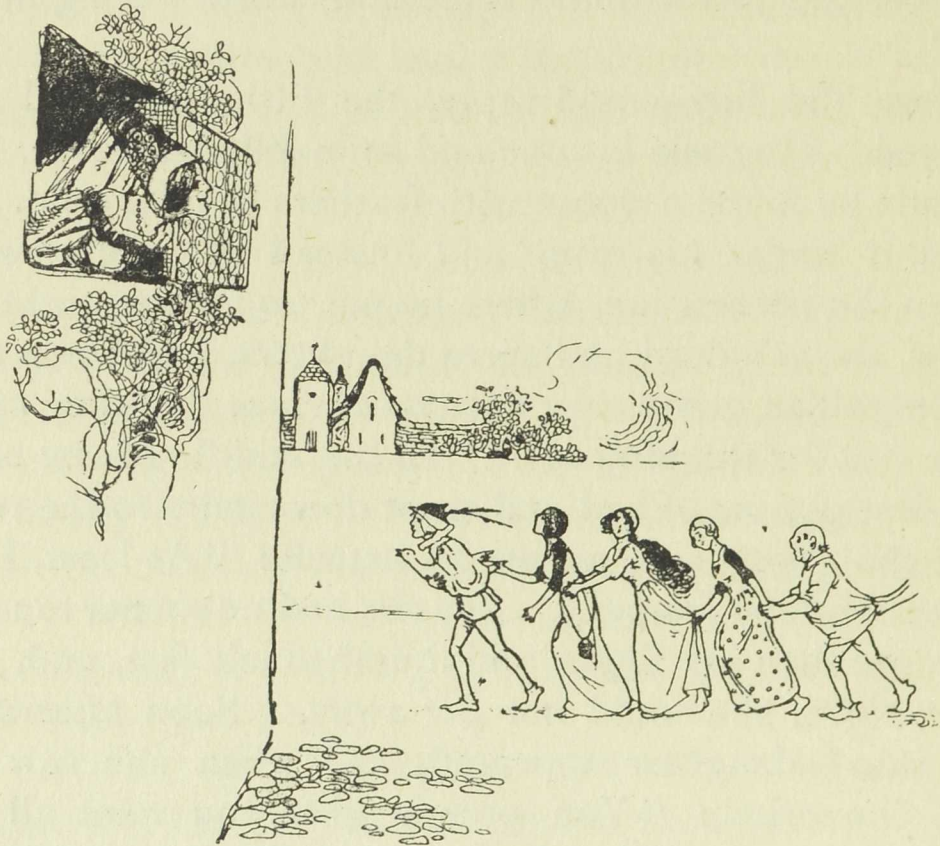
"Willingly," replied the boy. "The cake is only a plain one, but you are welcome to a share of it."

They sat down together, and what was the boy's surprise, on opening the basket, to find a rich cake and a bottle of good wine. When they had eaten and drunk till they were satisfied, the little man said: "You are good and kind-hearted, and shall have your reward. Cut down that tree, and you will find something worth having at the roots."

Before the boy could reply, the little man had disappeared. He took his axe and soon felled the tree. At the roots he found a goose with feathers of pure gold. He tucked it under his arm, and instead of going home, went to the nearest inn, where he put up for the night.

Now, the landlord had three daughters, and when they saw the golden goose they were so envious that they could get no rest for thinking of it. In the middle of the night the eldest got out of bed and crept downstairs to the room where the goose was, saying to herself: "At least, I will have one golden feather." But she had no sooner touched the goose than her finger and thumb stuck fast, and, pull as she might, she could not get away. Soon afterwards the second daughter appeared, and when she saw her sister, she cried: "You greedy girl, you want all the feathers for yourself," and she took hold of her and tried to pull her away; but her fingers stuck fast, and she could not get them off. Then the third sister came in, and saw the other two, as she thought, clinging to the golden goose. This made her very angry, for she, too, had intended plucking out some feathers, and she seized her second sister, and immediately found herself a prisoner; and in this position they were obliged to remain for the rest of the night.

In the morning the young man came, put the goose under his arm, and set out on his journey. The three daughters were obliged to follow, but he took no notice of their cries, and went on at a good pace. Presently they met two peasants, who called to him to stop and let



The Princess burst out laughing

the girls go. As he made no answer, they ran after him and took hold of the sisters to pull them away. Immediately their hands stuck, and they were also obliged to follow. To every passer-by they called for help, and everyone ran to their aid, only to find himself obliged to join the procession. At last there were nearly twenty persons following the golden goose, all stuck together as

if they had been glued, and in this way they entered a large town.

In this town there lived a King whose daughter was of such a sad disposition that no one had ever been able to make her laugh. All day long she sat at her window, gazing out with the most melancholy expression, and her father at last became so anxious about her that he sent out a proclamation, saying that whoever succeeded in making the Princess laugh should have her for his wife and be heir to the kingdom. Now, the Princess happened to be at her window when the boy entered the town, and when she saw him coming along the street with his golden goose under his arm and all the people trotting after him, the sight was so ridiculous that she burst out laughing. Her maid rushed to tell the news to the King, who immediately sent out his servants to find the boy and bring him in. He came, with his precious goose under his arm, and the wedding was celebrated soon afterwards. Thus the wood-cutter's son became a great Prince, and lived in wealth and happiness for the rest of his life.

THE GRIFFIN

THERE was once a King who had an only daughter. She was very beautiful ; but one day she fell ill, and no doctor could cure her. A Witch prophesied to the King that his daughter would be cured by eating a certain apple ; and he immediately had it proclaimed that whoever would bring the right apple to the castle should marry the Princess and be heir to the kingdom. This came to the ears of a poor peasant who had three sons. He said to the eldest : " Go into the garden and gather a basketful of our best apples, and take them to the castle. Who knows but that the right one may be among them ? "

The eldest son took the apples and set out for the castle. On the way he met a little brown man, who asked him what he had got in his basket.

" Frogs' legs," answered the young man rudely.

" Frogs' legs they shall be," said the little man, and vanished. Uele (for that was his name) walked on, well pleased with his joke. When he got to the castle he sent a message to the King saying that he had brought apples to cure the Princess. But when the basket was opened it was found to be full of frogs' legs, which jumped about all over the floor. The King was so angry that he bade his servants drive Uele out of the castle.

When the peasant heard what had happened, he sent his second son, whose name was Seame. As Seame went along, he met the little brown man, who asked him what he had in his basket. "Hogs' bristles," answered the young man.

"Hogs' bristles they shall be," cried the little man, and disappeared. When Seame came before the King and opened his basket to present his apples, what was his dismay to find it full of hogs' bristles! The King, thinking a trick had been played upon him, ordered Seame to be soundly flogged all the way home.

Now, the third brother had always been considered a silly fellow, who would never do anything in the world. When he came to his father and begged to be allowed to take apples to the castle, they all laughed at him.

"You succeed where we have failed!" exclaimed his brothers. "You stupid Hans, the King will have you hanged, and then there will be no one to do our work for us."

But Hans pleaded so hard, that at last his father was obliged to let him go. He set out with his basket as his brothers had done, and presently saw the little brown man sitting on a stone by the roadside.

"What have you got in your basket?" he asked.

"Apples to cure the Princess," answered Hans pleasantly.

"So they shall be," said the little man, and vanished into the air, leaving Hans staring. When he came to the castle gates, the gatekeeper would not let him in.

"We have had two rogues here already," said he—"one with a basket of frogs' legs, and another with hogs'

bristles; and the King has sworn that if anyone else plays such a trick, he shall die."

Hans still begged to be let in, and presently found himself before the King. He opened his basket, and showed the beautiful yellow apples. The King ordered some to be taken to his daughter, and no sooner had she eaten one than she jumped out of bed feeling perfectly well, and ran to her father.

Now, when the King found that Hans was only a poor peasant's son, he did not want to give his daughter to him. So he said: "You have certainly cured the Princess, but there is one more thing you must do before she becomes your wife. You must build a boat that will sail as well on the land as on the sea."

Hans' face fell when he heard this, but he had fallen in love with the Princess, and was determined to win her. He went home, and told all that had happened. His two brothers immediately got their tools and set to work, saying: "You will never be able to build such a boat, Hans, you are much too stupid. You had better not try."

As Uele was sawing and hammering, the little brown man appeared, and asked: "What are you making?"

"Wooden plates," replied Uele.

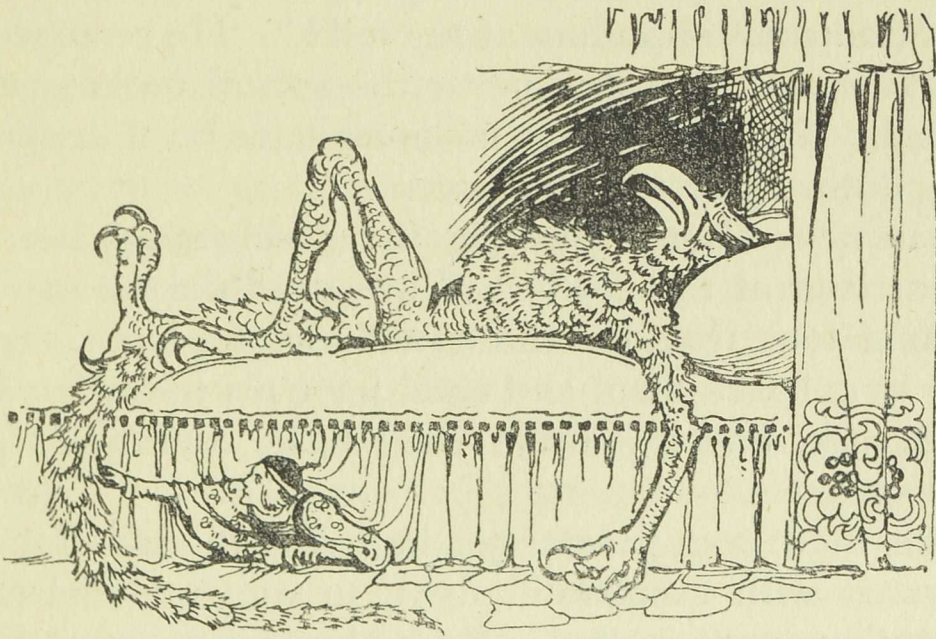
"Wooden plates they shall be," returned the little man.

Uele worked all day, and when evening came he went to his father, and said: "Come and see my boat." They went out, but all they found was a pile of wooden plates. The same thing had happened to Seame. Seeing that his brothers had failed, Hans thought he would try his hand, and set to work with a will. Before long the little man appeared, and asked him what he was making, and Hans

replied : "A boat that will sail as well on the land as on the sea."

"So it shall be," said the little man, and vanished as before.

When evening came, Hans jumped into his boat and sailed to the palace. When the King saw him, he cried : "I cannot give you my daughter until you have done one



He pulled a feather out of the Griffin's tail

more thing. In the forest lives a dreadful Griffin, and you must go and pull a feather out of his tail and bring it to me. Then you shall marry the Princess."

Nothing daunted, Hans set out on his journey. After many days he came to the house where the Griffin lived. Only the Griffin's wife was in, and she received him so kindly that he presently told her what he had come for.

"The Griffin cannot bear a Christian," said she, "and will certainly kill you if he finds you. Creep under his

bed, and to-night, when he is fast asleep, pluck a feather from his tail."

Hans did as she told him, and soon after the Griffin came home. He had been hunting and was very tired, so directly he had finished his supper he lay down and fell fast asleep. Very soon he was snoring loudly, and Hans put forth his hand and pulled a feather out of his tail. The Griffin immediately jumped out of bed, roaring, "Someone is pulling at my tail!" He searched the room high and low, but never thought of looking under the bed. Then, thinking he must have been dreaming, he lay down again and fell asleep.

Away went Hans, grasping the precious feather, and soon arrived at the castle. When the Princess saw him she came down from her throne and took his hand, crying: "He is a brave man, and shall have his reward. I will be his wife, and my father shall make him heir to the kingdom."

Then there was great rejoicing, and the wedding was celebrated with a splendid feast, to which Hans' father and brothers were invited. So he became a great King, and ruled well and wisely all his days.

THE GOOSE GIRL

THERE was once a beautiful Princess who was betrothed to a King's son. When the time came for her to be married, it was necessary for her to travel to the country where her future husband lived, many miles away. For this purpose her mother provided her with a waiting-maid to escort her, and two horses for them to ride. The bride's horse was named Falada, and could speak.

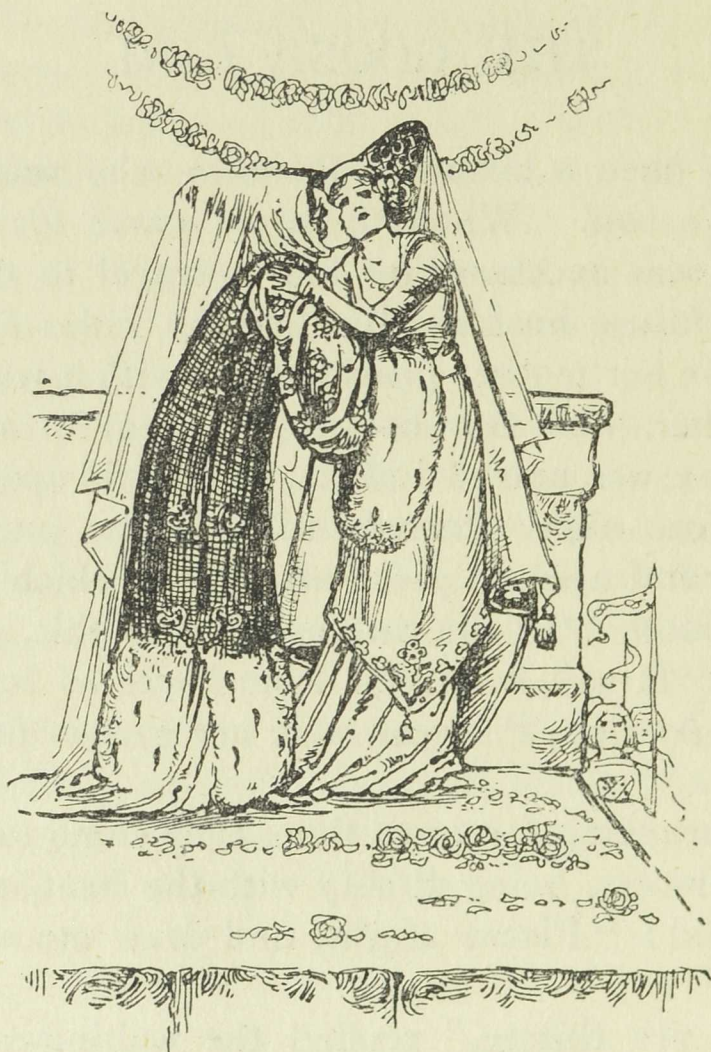
Just before they started, the Queen put into the Princess' hand a small piece of rag on which were three drops of blood. "Take care not to lose this, my child," she said. "It will keep you from harm as long as you wear it." And the Princess bade her mother farewell and rode away.

After journeying for some time, they came to a stream; and the Princess, being thirsty with the heat, said to her waiting-maid: "Please alight, and draw me some water in a cup."

"If you are thirsty," replied the waiting-maid, "get off your horse and draw water for yourself. I am not going to be your servant!"

So the Princess got off her horse, and, lying down, she drank from the stream, holding the water in her hands. And as she did so, she heard the rag in her bosom say: "If your mother knew of this, she would break her heart."

They resumed their journey, and presently the Princess grew thirsty again and longed to drink. So when they came to a stream she asked her maid to bring her some



The Princess bade her mother farewell

water, but the maid refused as before, telling her to fetch the water herself. The Princess wept, but was obliged to get off her horse in order to quench her thirst. Again she heard the voice in her bosom say: "Ah, if

your mother knew of this, it would break her heart!" But as she stooped to drink, the piece of rag fell from her bosom into the water, and floated away without her noticing it.

The waiting-maid, however, saw it, and rejoiced that now the bride had become weak and powerless. She said to the Princess: "Falada belongs to me, you must ride on my horse." And she made the Princess take off her royal dress, and put on her own common one. Then she made her swear that she would never reveal to anyone that she was the Princess and not the servant she appeared. The Princess was so frightened that she promised anything the waiting-maid commanded her. And Falada saw and heard all that happened, and took care to remember it.

They set out once more, the waiting-maid mounted on Falada. And when they arrived at the castle the Prince hastened forward to receive her, thinking she was his bride: and the real Princess was left standing in the court-yard.

Presently the old King looked out of a window, and seeing how delicate and beautiful she looked in her common dress, came out and asked her who she was, and where she came from.

She replied: "I came all this way as a companion, and now I must find work to do or I shall starve."

"I know a little boy who has a number of geese," said the King. "He is called Conrad: you might help him." So the real bride went away to take care of the geese.

Soon afterwards the false bride asked the Prince to

destroy Falada, for she knew that the horse could speak, and was afraid that he would tell the Prince that she was not his real bride. So poor Falada was killed, and his head cut off and nailed on a gate in the town.

Now it happened that Conrad's geese were driven through the gate every morning and evening. And when the Princess saw the head, she cried: "Falada, dost thou know me?" And the head replied: "Ah, yes—you are the young Princess, and if your mother knew she would break her heart."

Now little Conrad overheard this, and went and told the King. And the King said: "This is very strange. To-morrow I will stand beside the gate and hear for myself."

And when he had heard the Princess speak to the head, and Falada's strange reply, he sent for her and asked her the meaning of all he had heard and seen.

"I cannot tell you," she replied. "I have sworn that I will say nothing, and I must not even speak of my trouble to anyone."

"Then the King said: "If you must not tell me, go and speak to that iron chest."

The Princess crept into the iron chest, and began to weep, saying: "I am a King's daughter, and not a goose-girl as I appear to be. A wicked waiting-maid got me into her power and took my royal dress and my crown, and now she is the Prince's bride, and I must tend geese; and if my mother knew of it, she would break her heart."

The King, who had been standing close to the iron chest, heard all she said. And he called her out and



THE GOOSEGIRL

ordered her to be dressed in royal robes. Then he went to his son, and told him all that had happened.

So the false bride was sent away, and the true bride sat on the throne by the Prince's side, looking more beautiful than day. And very soon after they were married, and ruled the kingdom together in peace and happiness.

THE TWELVE HUNTSMEN

THERE was once a Prince who was betrothed to a maiden. He loved her very dearly, and they were just about to be married when news reached him that his father was dying. He set out at once to go to him, but before he went he gave his bride a ring, saying: "Wear this ring always, and it will be a pledge that I will return to you when I am King, and make you my wife."

He got to the castle just in time to hear his father's last words. "My son," said the King, "I am dying, and you cannot refuse to do as I ask. There is a Princess whom I wish you to marry, and you must promise me to make her your wife."

The Prince thought of his own bride whom he loved so dearly, but the King pleaded so hard that he could not refuse, and promised what he asked. Soon after the old King died, and his son sent for the Princess and they were betrothed.

The true bride heard of what he had done, and thought, "He has forgotten me." And she grieved so at her

lover's unfaithfulness that everyone thought she would die. At last she said to her father : "There is one thing that I wish for, and you can do it for me. I want eleven maidens exactly like myself in face and size, to be my companions."

Then her father (who was also a King) sent messengers all through the country to find the eleven maidens. When they were brought to the Princess, she ordered twelve brown suits to be made, such as hunters wore, and they each put one on. Then the Princess mounted her horse, bidding the others do the same, and they all rode together to her lover's castle. He saw them coming, but did not recognise his former bride in her man's clothes. She came up to him, and asked if he would engage her and her companions as his huntsmen, and he was so pleased with their appearance that he did so at once.

Now the King had a wonderful Lion, who was as wise as a witch, and knew everything that was going on. He came to the King, and said : "The huntsmen you have engaged are not men, but maidens."

"That cannot be true," said the King. "They ride as swiftly as men, and wear men's clothes. You cannot prove what you say."

The Lion said : "If you will strew peas in the hall, you will soon see whether I am right or not. A man has a firm step, and will crush the peas as he treads on them ; but a maiden slides her feet along the floor, or takes little steps, and will set the peas rolling."

The King took the Lion's advice, and had peas strewn in the hall. But it happened that one of the servants had overheard the Lion's words, and being a kind-

hearted man, he went to the maiden, and said: "My master believes you are not men but women, and is going to put you to the proof." And he told her what the King had done.

She went to her maidens, and said: "Step firmly on the peas, and crush them; but on no account slide your feet along the floor, and set them rolling." And that evening, when they returned from hunting, they marched through the hall with such a firm tread that every pea was crushed flat.

The King said to the Lion: "See what nonsense you have been talking. They are certainly men. To-morrow I go to meet my bride, and I shall take my huntsmen with me as escort."

The following day the King set out in state, followed by his twelve huntsmen.

Presently they met the Princess coming from her own country; but when the true bride saw her, all her strength left her, and she fell from her horse to the ground. The King, thinking his huntsman had been hurt, ran to raise him up; but in doing so the true bride's glove fell off, showing her little hand with the ring upon it. Then the King knew her, and took her in his arms. As she opened her eyes, he said: "You are mine, and I am yours, and nothing in the world shall part us."

He sent a message to the Princess, asking her to return home, as he had found his true bride; and the Princess, who did not love him at all, went back to her own country quite happily. Soon after the wedding was celebrated, and you may be sure that the Lion was one of the guests.

MOTHER GOOSE

ONCE upon a time there lived a widow who had two daughters. One was beautiful and industrious, the other ugly and idle ; but the widow loved the ugly one, because she was her own child. The other was her stepdaughter, and she was very unkind to her, making her spin all day long. Once the maiden worked so hard that her fingers began to bleed, and the spindle was covered with blood. She took it to the well to wash it, and while she was doing so she dropped it into the water, and it immediately sank out of sight. Trembling with fear, she went to her stepmother and told her what had happened.

“You are a very wicked girl,” cried the stepmother, in a rage. “As you have let the spindle fall into the well, you can go in and fetch it out.”

The maiden ran back to the well, and hardly knowing what she did, threw herself into the water. For a time she knew nothing. When she woke she was in a beautiful green meadow covered with flowers. She walked across it, and presently came to a baker’s oven. It was full of new bread, and the loaves cried : “Oh, let us out ! Please let us out ! We have been baking so long !” So she took a shovel, and helped them out. Then she went on, and presently came to an apple-tree, and the apples cried : “Oh, shake us down, please shake

us down. We are so tired of hanging here!" The maiden shook the tree till all the apples lay on the ground, and went on her way again.

She had not gone far before she came to a cottage, in which lived an old woman with such large teeth that the maiden was frightened, and turned to run away. But the old woman said: "Do not be afraid, little girl, I will not hurt you. Come and live with me, and help me to keep my house clean and tidy. You will have to be careful about one thing: when you make my bed, shake it well, so that the feathers fly, and in the world they will say it is snowing. For I am Mother Goose."

The old woman spoke so kindly that the maiden soon forgot her fear. For a long time she lived happily in the cottage, doing all she could to please Mother Goose. At last she grew so homesick that she could stay no longer.

"You have been very kind to me," she said, "and I have never heard you say a cross word. But I long to go back to the world."

"You have been a good girl," said Mother Goose, "and you shall have your reward." She led her to a wide gateway, and as the maiden passed through a shower of gold came down and covered her, so that she was gold from head to foot. Mother Goose then gave her the spindle, and they bade each other good-bye.

When the maiden arrived at her stepmother's cottage, the Cock flapped his wings, and cried: "Cock-a-doodle-doo! Our golden lady has come home!" This brought the stepmother and her daughter to the door, who, seeing

the gold that clung to the maiden's dress, ran out to welcome her home. She told them all that had happened, and when the stepmother heard how she had earned her wealth, she said to her own daughter :

“Come, my child, you must try your fortune too. Go



A shower of soot came down on her

and spin by the well till the spindle is covered with blood, then drop it into the well and jump in after it.”

The ugly daughter ran out to do as her mother said. Everything happened to her as it had done to her sister, till she came to the baker's

oven and heard the loaves crying to be taken out. “No, indeed!” she answered; “I am not going to soil my hands with your dirty oven.” She went on, and presently came to the apple-tree. “Shake us down, shake us down!” cried the apples. But she answered: “Not I. Some of you might fall on my head.” And she strolled

on again. When she arrived at the cottage, Mother Goose popped her head out.

"I would like to be your servant," said the ugly daughter.

"Very well," said Mother Goose. "But be careful to shake my bed till the feathers come out."

For a few days the maiden was very industrious, thinking of the gold that would be her reward. Then she began to lie in bed in the morning, instead of getting up to cook the breakfast. At last she quite forgot to make Mother Goose's bed, and was so lazy and disagreeable that the old woman told her she must go away.

The idle girl was very pleased at this. "Now I shall have my reward," she thought, "and I shall be able to go home and do nothing for the rest of my life." But as she passed through the gateway, instead of gold, a shower of soot came down on her, covering her from head to foot. She hurried home, and as she came to the door the Cock flapped his wings, and cried: "Cock-a-doodle-doo! Our sooty lady has come home!"

"I will wash it all off," said she; but, scrub as she might, no water would take the soot away. And black she remained for the rest of her life, as a punishment for her idleness.

THE FORTUNE-SEEKERS

A FATHER once sent for his three sons, and said: "I am very old, and cannot live much longer. I have no money to leave you, and you will have to make your own way in the world; but all I have is yours." He then gave his eldest son a cock, his second a scythe, and his third a cat. Soon after he died, and they determined to go out to seek their fortunes.

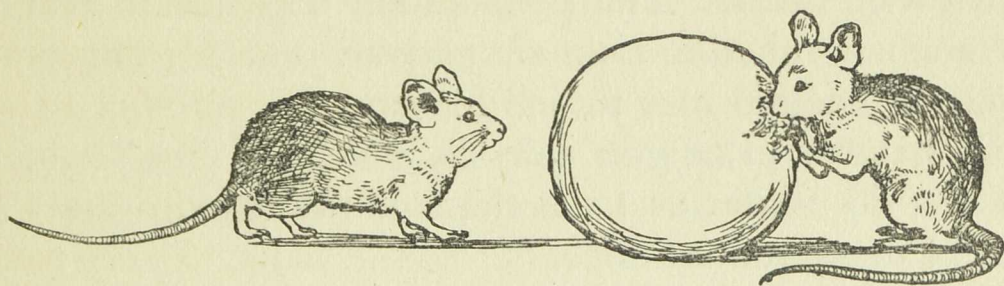
The eldest went first, carrying his cock with him; but there were so many cocks in the villages he passed through that nobody thought anything of his having one. He soon saw that nothing was to be made by a cock so near home, and journeyed on till he came to an island where the bird was unknown, and the people had no clocks by which to tell the time. "Here is my chance," thought the young man; and he told the people how his cock crowed every morning at sunrise, and during the day when the weather was going to change. The people were so excited that they lay awake all night waiting for the cock to crow in the morning: and when the sun rose and he cried "Cock-a-doodle-doo!" as loud as he could, they all jumped out of bed, crying: "This is wonderful! If we had such a bird as this, we should never oversleep ourselves, and always know when it was going to rain!"

They went to the young man, and asked if the cock was for sale, and how much he would take for it.

"Well," he answered, "I am not anxious to part with such a valuable bird, but I will do so for as much gold as an ass can carry."

"That is very cheap," they said, and they gave him the money, and he returned home with his fortune made.

The second brother then set out, carrying his scythe. But all the farmers in that country had scythes of their own, and no one offered to buy his. At last he reached an island where the people had never heard of a scythe:



Devouring whatever food they came across

when it was reaping-time, they brought out guns and shot down the corn, but this took so long that winter came before they had finished, and half the corn was wasted. The young man went into a field, and began to use his scythe with long swift strokes. When the people saw it, they were so delighted that they offered him anything he wanted if he would sell the scythe. He said that he would take as much gold as a horse could carry, and went home very well pleased with his bargain.

Seeing that his brothers had made their fortunes with so little trouble, the youngest one took his cat under his arm and set out. He soon found that there was no

chance for him in his own country : cats sat on the door-steps in every town, and ran about the streets. At last he came to the seashore, and crossed to an island where no one had ever seen a cat, and where the mice had become so numerous that they were afraid of nothing, and ran all over the tables and chairs, devouring whatever food they came across. Even in the palace they had become such a plague that the King could scarcely call his country his own. The young man set his cat down in the first house he came to, and in a short time she had killed so many of the little creatures that the floor was strewn with them. The people then begged the King to buy such a valuable animal, and he sent for the young man, and begged him to sell his cat.

“Whatever price you ask we will give you,” said he. “If you do not let us have the cat, the whole island will soon be devoured by mice.”

“That is a fair offer,” replied the young man. “I will let you keep the cat if you will give me as much gold as a mule can carry.”

The King readily agreed ; and the young man hastened home to his brothers, and they all lived happily together on the fortunes they had made.

THE OWL

AN Owl once came out of a wood and flew by mistake into a barn. When daylight came and he saw where he was, he said to himself: "Now, how in the world am I to get out of this? If I fly to the wood, all the birds will make such an outcry that the farmer will run for his gun and shoot me. I must just stay where I am till night comes." So he flew up on to a beam and waited.

Presently one of the farm servants came in to fetch some straw. When he saw the Owl's round eyes looking at him, he was so frightened that he ran to his master and told him that there was a monster in the barn.

"Nonsense!" said the farmer. "You are a silly fellow, and would run away from your own shadow." And he went to the barn as brave as a lion and looked in. But when he saw the Owl sitting on the beam, with his horns up and his great eyes rolling, he rushed out and banged the door.

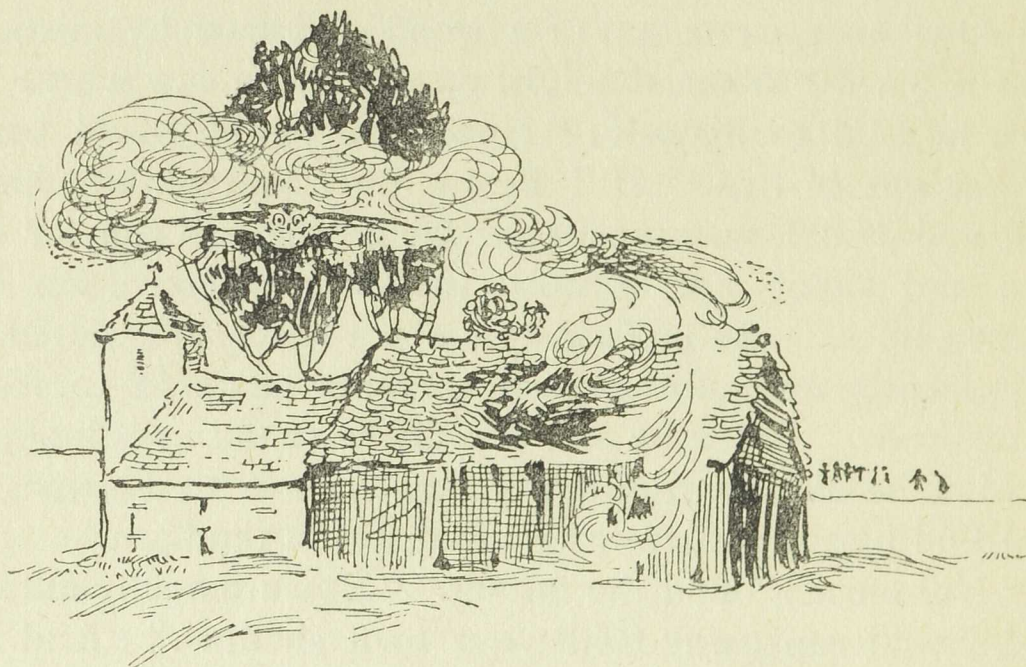
"This is some strange and fearful animal," he cried. "Run and tell the neighbours to come and help, or we may all be devoured."

The neighbours came, armed with sticks and hoes, and surrounded the barn, crying that the whole town was in danger, and that the monster must be slain at once. But

no one seemed to be in a hurry to go into the barn. At last the biggest man of all stepped forward, sword in hand, and opened the door a very little way.

"The monster is too high up for me to reach him," said he. "Bring me a ladder, and I will cut him in two with my sword."

A ladder was brought and set up against the beam



They burnt the barn to the ground

where the Owl was sitting. The big man grasped his sword and began to mount. Just as he reached the top, the Owl sprang up, fluttering his feathers and snapping his beak, and shrieked "Tuwhit-tuwhoo!" so loudly, that the big man dropped his sword and fell off the ladder as if he had been shot.

"See what has happened!" cried the neighbours. "The monster has killed him by merely breathing on

him! Something must be done, or we shall all perish together."

At that moment the burgomaster arrived on the scene, followed by the town councillors. Then everybody talked at once for some time. At last the burgomaster said: "There is no doubt that we are in great danger, and that this is no ordinary monster. The only thing to be done is to burn down the barn. Then no more lives need be lost."

So they burnt the barn to the ground, and the farmer's wheat and corn with it, and went home to tell the story. As for the Owl, I hope he flew away in the smoke and got safely back to the wood.

RAPUNZEL

THERE was once a man and a woman who wished very much to have a child. Near their cottage was a beautiful garden, which belonged to a Witch. One day the wife looked over the garden wall and saw a bed full of the finest lettuces, and she longed so to have some to eat, that she gave her husband no peace till he climbed over the wall and brought her some. She made a salad, and ate it with great enjoyment.

In a few days she began to long for more lettuces, and she again made her husband climb over the wall to fetch her some. He had no sooner seized a handful than he saw the Witch standing beside him.

"How dare you come into my garden?" she exclaimed

fiercely. "You have stolen my lettuces, and now you must pay for them. Promise that, if you have a child, you will give it to me."

The husband, in great fear, gave his promise. Soon after a little daughter was born, and the Witch came and took her away. She named her Rapunzel, and put her



The Witch took her away

in a high tower in the forest. This tower had no stairs, and no door, and only one small window. When the Witch visited Rapunzel, she stood beneath the window, and cried :

"Rapunzel, let down your golden hair
That I may climb it like a stair."

Rapunzel had the most beautiful long hair, and when she heard the voice of the Witch, she let it hang over the

window-sill right down to the ground, to such a length that the Witch could draw herself up as if it had been a ladder.

When Rapunzel was grown into a beautiful maiden, it happened one day that the King's son was passing the tower and heard her singing. Her voice was so sweet that he longed to see her. The next day he came again to listen, and the next. Then he heard the Witch call to Rapunzel beneath the window, and saw her climb up by the maiden's long hair. The following night, when it was dark, he placed himself beneath the window, and said :

“Rapunzel, let down your golden hair
That I may climb it like a stair.”

Immediately the hair fell down, and he quickly climbed up and entered the tower.

Rapunzel was dreadfully frightened when she saw the Prince, for she had never seen a man before ; but she soon lost all fear. After a time he asked her if she would marry him, and she consented, for he was a tall and handsome Prince, and she thought, “He will love me better than the old Witch.”

“I will bring you a strong silk cord,” said the Prince, “and you shall weave a ladder by which you will be able to descend from the tower. Then I will carry you to my father's castle, and we will be married.”

Now the Witch had watched very carefully over Rapunzel, and she soon found out about the Prince's visits. She was very angry, and seized poor Rapunzel's golden hair and cut it off. Then she dragged her to

a lonely place in the depths of the forest, and left her there.

At sunset the Prince came to the tower, and cried :

“Rapunzel, let down your golden hair
And I will climb it like a stair.”

The Witch let the hair down, and the Prince climbed up to the window. What was his horror to see, instead of Rapunzel, a hideous old Witch !

“Ah !” she cried, with a sneer, “you have come to carry off your bride ! Rapunzel has gone away, and you will never see her again.”

On hearing this, the Prince was so overcome with grief that he sprang out of the window and fell among the thorn-trees beneath. The thorns stuck into his eyes and blinded him, and he wandered away into the wood, lamenting and calling the name of his lost bride.

For a whole year he wandered so, till at last he came to the lonely place where the Witch had left Rapunzel. He heard her singing, and followed the sound until, on coming near, he was clasped in her arms. When she saw that he was blind she began to weep bitterly, and two of her tears fell on his eyes and healed them. Then they travelled back to his father's kingdom, and soon afterwards they were married, and lived in peace and happiness for the rest of their lives.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

ONCE upon a time there lived a King and Queen who were very sad because they had no child. At last a little daughter was born to them, and the King was so pleased that he made a great feast at her christening, to which he invited not only his friends and relations, but also the wise women who would endow the child with fairy gifts. There were thirteen of them: but only twelve were invited, as he had only twelve golden plates. The first gave her virtue, the second beauty, the third wealth, and so on to the eleventh.

Just as the twelfth was about to speak, in walked the thirteenth. She was very angry because she had not been invited to the feast, and had come to be revenged. Without noticing anyone, she cried in a loud voice: "When she is fifteen, the King's daughter shall prick herself with a spindle and fall down dead."

Everyone was frightened at this: but the twelfth, who had not yet spoken, came forward and said: "The King's daughter shall not die, but a deep sleep will fall upon her, and she will not wake for a hundred years."

Time passed, and the Princess grew up as the wise women had prophesied, clever and good and beautiful. It happened that on the day she was fifteen years old she took a fancy to explore the castle. She wandered from

room to room, and presently came to a little door, in which was a rusty key. As she turned it the door sprang open, and she found herself in a small room where an old woman sat, spinning flax.

"Good morning!" said the Princess. "What are you doing?"

"I am spinning," the old woman replied.



A deep sleep fell upon her

"And what is this funny thing that spins about?" the Princess asked: and she took the spindle in her hand and tried to spin. Scarcely had she given the wheel one turn before the wicked fairy's prophecy was fulfilled, and the spindle stuck into her finger. At the same moment she sank back on a bed which stood near, and a deep sleep fell upon her: and not only on her, but on everybody in the castle—the King and Queen, and all their household with them. In a few hours there sprang up round the



THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

castle a thick and thorny hedge, which grew so high that no one could pass it. At last nothing could be seen of the castle, not even the flag on the tower.

A hundred years went by. Then it happened that a young Prince came to the neighbourhood, and heard the story of the enchanted castle and how the poor Princess and all the household slept under the spell of the wicked fairy. And he cried: "The hedge is not too high for me. I will find this Sleeping Beauty, and wake her from her sleep." And he set out for the castle.

When he arrived there, he was surprised to see, instead of the high hedge he had heard of, nothing but a row of beautiful flowers, through which he passed without difficulty. Inside the castle, in the great state-room, the King and Queen sat on their thrones, with their ladies and courtiers about them, all slumbering peacefully.

The Prince went on from room to room till he came to the tower where the Princess was sleeping. She looked so beautiful that the Prince fell in love with her on the spot, and stooped and kissed her. At his touch the Princess opened her eyes and smiled at him. Then they went down together to the King and Queen, and woke them up, with the whole Court. And everybody began to move and talk, just as they had been doing when the enchantment fell upon them.

The marriage of the Prince and Princess was celebrated soon after with great splendour, and they lived happily ever after.

THE BOTTLE SPIRIT

THERE was once a poor wood-cutter who had an only son. He called the boy to him, and said: "I have worked very hard and saved some money, which I am going to spend on your education. If you learn your lessons and become a wise man, you will be able to keep me in my old age."

So the boy went to the High School, and was so diligent that his teachers begged his father to let him stay on for another year. But the father said: "I have spent all my savings, and have scarcely enough to buy our daily bread. The boy must come and live with me."

One day, when the boy had been at home some time, the wood-cutter went out into the forest to cut wood.

"I will go too," said the son, "and help you with your work."

"No, no," said the father; "you have not been accustomed to chopping wood, and it would be too rough for you. Besides, I have only one axe."

The son borrowed an axe from a neighbour, and they went out together. The father was surprised to find how well his son worked. When dinner-time came, the boy took his share of bread and went off to look for birds'-nests. Presently he came to a huge oak, which looked

many hundred years old. As he drew near it, he thought he heard a voice coming from the trunk of the tree, crying in muffled tones, "Let me out, let me out!"

"Where are you?" cried the boy.

The voice answered: "Under the roots of the tree. Oh, let me out!"

The boy began to search carefully, and presently found a small glass bottle. Holding it against the light, he thought he saw something like a tiny frog jumping up and down inside. Thinking no harm, he uncorked the bottle, and immediately there came out a Spirit, which grew to such a size that in a very few moments it became half as tall as the tree. It was, indeed, a frightful-looking creature, but the boy was not afraid.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"I am Mercury," replied the Spirit; "and I am going to break your neck."

"If I had known that," said the boy, "I would have left you in the bottle. I don't believe you are the same little spirit I saw shut up. If you can make yourself small enough to go into the bottle I will believe you."

"That is very easy," replied the Spirit; and he immediately made himself thin and small again, and crept back into the bottle. No sooner had he done so than the boy popped in the cork, and put the bottle back in its place among the roots. The Spirit jumped up and down harder than ever, crying, "Let me out! Let me out!"

"No, no," said the boy; "not until you have promised to do me no harm."

"I promise," said the Spirit. "Only let me out again, and I will give you all the gold and silver you want."

So the boy uncorked the bottle once more, and let him out.

"Now you shall have your reward," said the Spirit; and he gave him a small piece of linen, like a plaster. "If you spread this on a wound, it will heal directly. And if you spread it on iron or steel, they will turn into gold and silver."

The boy took the rag and went back to his father.

"Where have you been?" asked the father angrily. "Idling won't get you on in the world."

"Have patience, father," replied the boy. "Look, I will crack this tree with one blow."

As he spoke, he spread the plaster over the axe, which was immediately turned into silver; and as it struck the tree the edge was turned at once.

"See what a bad axe they have given me!" exclaimed the boy.

"Oh! what have you done?" cried the father. "You have broken the axe, and now I shall have to pay for it."

"I will pay for it myself," said the son. "Come home with me, and you will see what I shall do."

When they got home, the father said: "Now go and sell the axe, and get what you can for it: and remember that our neighbour must be paid, whatever happens."

The boy took the axe to a goldsmith in the town, who weighed it, and said: "This is a wonderful axe, and is worth four hundred dollars."

The boy took the money and went home, and said:

“Father, I have plenty of money now. How much does our neighbour want for the broken axe?”

“One dollar and six groschens,” replied the father.

“Give him two dollars and twelve groschens,” said the boy. “That is just twice as much as he asks.”

Then he showed the wood-cutter his bag of gold and silver, and said: “We shall have enough to live on for the rest of our lives, and you need never cut any more wood, but live at your ease.”

“But where has it all come from?” cried the father.

Then the boy told him all that had happened in the wood. They were now so rich that the boy was able to go back to school and finish his education. He was so clever and diligent that he soon learnt all that his teachers knew; and as he had in his possession the wonderful plaster the Bottle Spirit had given him, which could heal all wounds, he became a great and famous doctor.

BEARSKIN

THERE was once a young soldier who was very brave, and fought well for his country. When the war was ended, his captain told him that he was not wanted any more, and discharged him. He now found himself homeless, with no means of earning a living. He wandered from place to place, trying to find work, and at last came to a lonely heath. Here he sat down to rest, feeling very tired and heavy-hearted. "Ah," he thought, "I have fought for my country, and now that peace is proclaimed I am left to starve."

At that moment he looked up and saw a tall man standing before him. He was dressed in green, and had an ugly cloven foot.

"I know your trouble," said he, "and I am come to help you. I will give you all the money you want, but first you must prove to me that you are not a coward. Look behind you!"

The soldier sprang up, and just in time. For there, close behind him, stood a huge bear, growling horribly.

"Oho!" cried the soldier; "I'm not for your dinner, my friend." And he raised his gun and shot him exactly between the eyes, so that he fell without a struggle.

"That was a good shot," said the stranger. "And I

can see that you have courage. I will give you all you want, on one condition."

"What is that?" asked the soldier.

"That you neither wash your face, nor comb your hair, nor cut your beard, for seven years. If you die during that time, you will belong to me; but if you live, you will have everything good in the world."

After thinking it over for a time, the soldier agreed. Then the stranger gave him a coat, which he promised to wear for the seven years; he also gave him the skin of the bear, saying: "This is to be your bed, and you must never sleep on any other." He then vanished as suddenly as he had come.

The soldier put on the coat, and finding some money in the pockets, went on his journey feeling quite happy. For a time his long hair and unwashed face did not attract much attention; but when a year had passed and his beard had grown all over his face, people began to laugh at him, and gave him the name of "Bearskin." As time went on, he grew so ugly that the children ran away when they saw him coming, thinking he was some terrible monster.

In the fourth year he came to an inn, and asked if he might rest there for the night. At first the landlord refused, saying: "What will my other guests say to such a monster as you?" But when he found that the soldier had plenty of money, and would pay him well, he changed his mind, and gave him a room in the worst part of the house. In the evening, as the soldier sat alone, he heard the voice of someone in great trouble. He opened his door, and saw an old man weeping and lamenting bitterly.

"What is your trouble, friend?" asked the soldier.

The old man raised his head, and was so frightened at seeing such a hairy monster that he was going to run away. But the soldier spoke so kindly that he soon forgot his fear, and said: "I have lost all my money, and I and my daughters must starve. I am an old man, and cannot work for my bread, and there is nothing left for me but to die."

"If that is all," said the soldier, "I can soon put that right." And he gave him a purse full of gold. The old man could scarcely believe his eyes.

"How can I thank you?" he exclaimed. "Come home with me. My daughters are very beautiful, and you shall choose which you will have for your wife. You certainly are not handsome, but when they hear how kind you have been, they will not refuse you."

Bearskin went with the old man. Directly the eldest daughter caught sight of him she gave a scream and ran away to hide herself, for Bearskin was indeed a terrible sight, with his hairy face and rough coat. The second daughter gazed at him from head to foot, and burst out laughing. "I marry such a creature?" she cried. "I would as soon take a grizzly bear for my husband!" But the youngest said: "Poor creature, he cannot help being ugly, and he must be very good to have given my father his purse." To Bearskin she said: "My father has promised you a bride, so I will marry you."

Then Bearskin took a ring from his finger, broke it in two, and gave one half to her and kept the other for himself. "I must leave you now," said he. "But in three years I will return, and make you my wife."

He set out again on his journey with a heavy heart, for he loved his bride, and three years seemed a long time. He wandered from place to place, giving money to poor people, and doing good wherever he could. At last the seven years were over, and he found himself once more on the heath.

With a rush of wind the Demon stood before him.

"Well, my friend," said Bearskin, "I have served you seven long years, and now you must give me my reward."

The Demon looked at him with a very ill-tempered face. "I suppose I shall have to keep my promise," said he; and he threw down the soldier's coat which he had changed for the bear's skin seven years before.

"Dress me in it," said Bearskin; "and shave me and comb my hair. Then I shall be ready to claim my bride."

The Demon was obliged to do as he was told.

"And now," said Bearskin, "where are the riches you promised me?"

"Put your hand in your pocket, and see," replied the Demon, sulkily.

Bearskin felt in his pocket, and found it was full of gold. The Demon vanished, and Bearskin hurried to the town, where he bought a handsome suit of clothes. When he had dressed himself, he looked exactly as he used to, only handsomer. Then he ordered a carriage drawn by six white horses, and drove to the house of his bride.

Directly the two eldest daughters saw Bearskin in his carriage, they rushed away to put on their best clothes, thinking he was some great prince. The youngest stayed with her father to receive the stranger. And she looked

so beautiful in the simple black dress, that Bearskin loved her more than ever.

As they all sat at supper, Bearskin said to the father :
“I love your youngest daughter, and want her for my wife.”

“I would gladly give her to you,” replied her father,
“but she already has a lover. Three years ago he set out on a long journey and has not returned, and we are afraid some misfortune has happened to him.”

Then Bearskin took the half-ring from his pocket and put it in a glass of wine, which he handed to the bride. She drank the wine, and found the half-ring at the bottom of the glass. With a cry she took it out, and placed it with the other half, which hung on a ribbon round her neck. They fitted exactly.

Then Bearskin cried : “I am your bridegroom, and I am come to claim you.” And he told them all that had happened. When the elder sisters heard that their sister was to marry a rich and handsome man instead of a monster, they were wild with rage and jealousy. But the bride was too happy to heed the bitter things they said to her. Very soon after the wedding took place, and there were no happier people in the world than Bearskin and his bride.

THE QUEEN BEE

A MAN once had three sons. The two elder ones thought themselves very clever, and laughed at their brother, whom they called Silly Hans. When the father was old, he called the two elder ones to him and said : "You must now go out into the world and seek your fortunes. You are clever boys, not foolish like your brother Hans, and should do well."

So he gave them each a sum of money, and they set out together. They soon spent all they had on rich food and fine clothes, and never came home again. After a time the father sent his youngest son to find out what had become of them ; but when they saw Hans they laughed at him more than ever, saying : "Fancy you coming out to seek your fortune when we have failed. You are much too stupid, and had better go home."

But Hans stayed, and they went on together. Presently they came to an ant-hill. The two elder brothers wanted to kick it over, for the fun of seeing the little creatures running hither and thither in their fright, carrying their eggs to a place of safety. But Hans said : "No, no, leave them alone. They have worked hard to make their home, and they shall not be disturbed."

After a time they saw a bees'-nest in a tree. The two brothers wanted to light a fire under it, and smoke the

bees till they were obliged to fly away. But Hans would not let them. "Leave the little creatures in peace," said he; "I cannot bear to see you kill them."

They went on again, and at last came to a castle in which everything was made of stone. Stone horses stood in the stables, stone dogs lay before the fire in the hall, even the tables and chairs were of stone and could not be moved. The three brothers went through room after room, until they came to one in which a little grey man was sitting at dinner. He seemed very pleased to see them, and told them that a wicked fairy had changed everything in the castle to stone.

"There is only one way in which the spell can be broken," said he. "Amongst the moss in the wood are scattered the pearls of the King's daughter. There are a thousand of them, and if anyone is clever enough to find them all in one day, the castle will be released from the enchantment. But if anyone tries to do this and fails, he will be turned into stone."

The eldest brother, who thought himself clever enough to do anything, went into the wood and searched all day, but at sunset he had only found a hundred pearls, and he was turned into stone. Then the second brother went out, but when evening came he had only gathered two hundred pearls, and he shared the same fate as his brother. Then it was Hans' turn. He went out singing, and set to work with a will; and he had not found a dozen pearls when he saw the ant-king coming towards him with thousands of his ants.

"Hallo!" said Hans; "what are you doing here?"

"We have come to help you," replied the ant-king.

"You saved our lives, and one good turn deserves another." And he gave orders to his subjects to gather the pearls, which they did so quickly that long before sunset they were all lying in a heap on the moss. Hans gathered them up and took them to the castle.

"So far, so good," said the grey man. "But there is one thing more you must do. In the tower-room the three Princesses are lying asleep. You must wake the



The youngest Princess

youngest one, but be sure you do not rouse either of her sisters by mistake. Just before they were turned into stone they had supper: the eldest ate barley-sugar, the second an apple, and the youngest a spoonful of honey."

Hans went up to the tower and found the three Princesses as the grey man had described. And then came a harder task than the last, for the sisters were so exactly alike that it was impossible tell one from another. He was gazing at them in despair, when suddenly he

heard a buzzing sound outside the window, and the Queen Bee flew in and settled on the lips of one of the Princesses. Then Hans remembered what the grey man had told him, and cried: "This must be the youngest Princess, who ate honey before she went to sleep!" And he knew that the Queen Bee had come to help him, because he had prevented his brothers from destroying her nest. He woke the Princess, and no sooner had she opened her eyes than a stir and bustle was heard all over the castle. Dogs barked, horses neighed, and the little grey man danced for joy in the dining-room. Even the two brothers were released from the spell, and you may be sure that they never laughed at Hans again.

FLORINDA AND YORINGAL

THERE was once an old Witch who lived in a castle in the midst of a dense forest. She was a very ugly old woman, with great red eyes and a hooked nose exactly like an owl's beak. If anyone came within a hundred steps of her castle, there he was obliged to remain unable to move until she set him free. If a young maiden came near, she changed her into a bird and put her in a cage. She had more than seven thousand of these birds shut up in a room in the castle.

Now, there were once two lovers named Florinda and Yoringal. Florinda was more beautiful than all the



JORINDA AND YORINGAL

other maidens, and Yoringal was a very handsome young man. When they went out for a walk together, they said to one another: "We must be careful not to go too near the Witch's castle."

But one fine evening as they wandered in the forest, they were so busy talking that they forgot all about the Witch, and Florinda looked up suddenly to see the castle close by. Before either of them could run away, a dreadful thing happened. Florinda was turned into a Nightingale, and began to sing "Jug-jug-jug" with the sweetest voice. Then Yoringal found that he could not move. He could neither speak nor cry, but stood there like a stone. Then the Witch came and caught Florinda, and put her in a basket. She freed Yoringal, but when he begged her to restore his dear Florinda, she paid no heed, and carried the Nightingale away to the castle.

Yoringal went home in great grief. He could think of no way to get Florinda back. At length he dreamed one night that he found a blood-red flower, in the middle of which was a beautiful pearl. In the morning, when he awoke, he hurried out into the valley to look for such a flower as he had seen in his dream, and presently, to his joy, he found one on the hillside—a blood-red blossom with a dew-drop in the centre just like a pearl.

In great haste he went to the castle. When he came to it, he found to his joy that he was free to walk up to the gate. As he went on he heard the twittering of the poor birds, and presently came to the room where the wicked old Witch had imprisoned them in the seven thousand cages. When she saw him she was very angry, and

screamed at him ; but he held the fairy flower in his hand, and she could not harm him. There were several hundred nightingales, and poor Yoringal found it quite impossible to tell which was Florinda.

As he stood wondering, he saw that the Witch had taken one of the cages from the wall and was moving stealthily to the door. He sprang at her and seized the cage, and as the flower touched it the Witch's spell was broken, and she had no more power. In a moment Florinda stood before him as beautiful as ever, and was clasped in his arms.

Then Yoringal touched all the other cages with the flower, and set all the maidens free. And he and Florinda went home and were soon afterwards married, and lived happily for the rest of their lives.

THE MUSICIANS

AN Ass, who had worked hard for many years, suddenly found that he had grown old. As he was no longer strong enough to carry sacks, his master thought he would get rid of him. But the Ass, guessing his intention, escaped and ran away.

"After all, I need not starve," said he. "I can be a musician."

Presently he saw a Dog lying by the roadside. "What is the matter, friend?" he asked.

"Ah," replied the Dog, "I am getting old and cannot hunt any more, and my master would have killed me if I had not run away. And now I am too weak to earn a living."

"Come with me," said the Ass. "I am going to be a musician, and you can join me and beat a drum." So they walked on together. Before they had gone far they met a Cat.

"Why are you looking so dismal, old whiskers?" asked the Ass.

"My master ordered me to be drowned," replied the Cat. "The truth is, I am no longer young, and cannot catch mice as I used to do. I was obliged to run as fast as I could to escape death."

"You shall be our comrade," said the Ass. "You can

make night music, I know, and if you will join us, we can make a good trio."

"With all my heart," said the Cat; and they went on their way. Presently they came to a farmyard, and saw a Cock on a gate, crowing with all his might.

"Your voice goes through my head," exclaimed the Ass. "What is the matter with you?"

"The cook is going to cut off my head," replied the Cock. "She says I am only good to make soup. I am to be killed to-night, so I am going to make as much noise as I can in the meantime."

"Don't stay to be killed," said the Ass. "Come with us, and share our fortune. We are poor musicians, as badly off as you. But you have a fine voice, and should be able to earn a livelihood."

The Cock immediately agreed to join the party, and the four friends set out once more. It was impossible to reach the town that night, so they turned into a wood to rest. Suddenly the Cock exclaimed: "Look at that light shining in the valley. It must surely come from a house, and that would give us better shelter than the trees."

The light grew brighter as they approached, and they found it came from a robbers' cave. The Ass, who was the tallest, crept near and looked in.

"What do you see?" whispered the others.

"I see a table laid for supper," said the Ass, "and the robbers are sitting round eating and drinking. Oh, if we could only think of a plan to drive them away!"

The animals consulted together. Presently the Ass put his forefeet on the window-sill; the Dog sat on his back; then the Cat climbed on to the Dog, and the Cock flew up

on to the Cat's head. Then they all began to make music together. The Donkey brayed, the Dog barked, the Cat mewed, and the Cock crew. Directly the robbers heard this dreadful din, they jumped up from the table and fled. The four musicians, delighted at the success of their plan, went in and made a hearty supper. When they had finished, they put the light out, and lay down on the robbers' beds, where they soon fell fast asleep.

Before long the robbers recovered from their fright, and crept cautiously back to the cave. Hearing no sound, they thought the danger was over, and one of them ventured in. This woke the Cat, and the robber, seeing her eyes glowing like hot coals, struck a match to make them blaze. The Cat immediately sprang up and scratched his face. Then the Dog bit his leg, the Donkey gave him a kick, while the Cock, who was roosting on a beam, cried "Cock-a-doodle-doo!" till the cave rang.

The robber rushed back to his companions, crying that a horrible witch had scratched his face and bitten and kicked him. The robbers were so frightened at this that they never again entered the cave, and the animals lived there in comfort and happiness for many years.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

THERE was once a poor Miller who had a beautiful daughter. One day he met the King, and to show that he was somebody of importance, he told him that he had a daughter who could spin straw into gold. The King ordered the Maiden to be brought to the castle. When she arrived, he took her to a room which was quite full of straw, with a spinning-wheel in the middle.

"Now, set to work at once," said he. "If all this straw is not spun into gold before the morning, you shall be put to death." Then he left her, locking the door behind him.

The poor Maiden was in despair, and she wept bitterly, for she knew she could not spin straw into gold. Suddenly the door opened, and a tiny Mannikin entered.

"What will you give me," he asked, "if I do your spinning for you?"

"I will give you my beautiful necklace," replied the Maiden.

The little man seated himself before the spinning-wheel and began to spin. For many hours he worked, and before morning came all the straw was turned into gold. The Maiden gave him her necklace as she had promised, and he immediately disappeared.

When the King came and found the room full of gold,

he thought: "This is indeed a wonderful Maiden, and if I make her spin for me, I shall soon be the richest King in the world." So he put her into another room full of straw, and ordered her to spin it into gold. As she sat weeping, the little man again appeared, and asked her what she would give him if he helped her as before.

"The ring from my finger," replied the Maiden.

When the King came the next morning, the room was full of gold as before. Then he led the Maiden to yet another room, and said: "Spin for me one more night, and then I will make you my wife."

For the third time the Mannikin appeared. But before he began his spinning, he said: "Now you are going to be Queen, promise that you will give me your first child." And the Maiden, seeing that there was no other way of saving her life, promised all the little man asked. And he soon spun all the straw into gold.

So the Miller's daughter became Queen, and as time went on she had a beautiful little child. She was so happy that she forgot all about her promise to the little man, till one night he appeared in her room, and said: "Give me your child."

The Queen, in great distress, offered him all the treasures in the palace. The little man refused, but the Queen pleaded so hard that he had pity on her, and said: "If you can find out my name in three days, I will let you keep your child."

The next night he came again, and the Queen repeated all the names she could remember. But the little man said: "No, I am not called by any of these."

Then the Queen made enquiries all through the

kingdom, and when the Mannikin came the second time, she tried all sorts of strange names, like Brown-bones, Dicky-bird, and Spindle-shanks. But he only shook his head.

Then the Queen sent out a messenger, but he was unable to find a single new name. As he was returning through the forest, however, he came upon a tiny cottage, with a fire burning before it, and round the fire a funny little man was hopping on one leg, and crying :

“ Though the Queen her heart should break,
To-morrow night her child I take ;
I will bear it far away—
Rumpelstiltskin wins the day ! ”

The messenger went home and told the Queen of his adventure. She was overjoyed when she heard the new name. Directly the little man appeared, she asked :

“ Is your name Conrad ? ”

“ No,” he replied.

“ Is it Henry ? ”

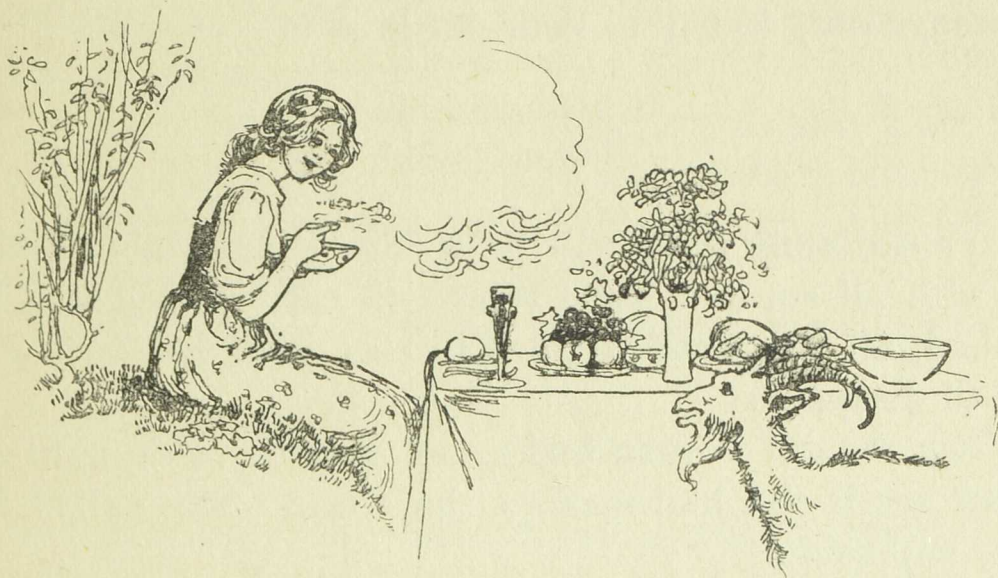
“ No.”

“ Then it is Rumpelstiltskin,” cried the Queen.

When the little man heard this, he flew into a terrible rage, and stamped his foot on the ground so violently that it sank into the earth, dragging him with it. Then, wild with fury, he seized his other foot in his hands and tore himself in two. And that was the end of Rumpelstiltskin.

ONE EYE, TWO EYES, AND THREE EYES

LONG ago there lived a woman who had three daughters. The eldest was called One Eye, because she had only one eye in the middle of her forehead. The second had two eyes like you and me, and was called Two Eyes.



A nice dinner-table with all sorts of good things to eat

The youngest had three eyes, which made her look even uglier than her eldest sister, and she was called Three Eyes.

Now little Two Eyes was good and beautiful, and her mother and sisters could not endure her. "You are just

a common little thing with your two eyes," they said. "You are not fit to belong to our family." They were very unkind to her, making her wear their old clothes and giving her only dry bread to eat, and Two Eyes was very unhappy. Every morning she was sent into the field to take care of the goats; and one day, as she was sitting weeping on a stone, an old woman came up and asked: "What is the matter, little Two Eyes?"

"I cannot help crying," she replied. "My mother and sisters hate me because I have two eyes like other people, and they are very unkind to me. I have had nothing to eat all day, and I am nearly starving."

"Never mind," said the old woman, "I will help you. You have only to say to your pet goat:

"If you're able,
Lay my table,"

and immediately there will be a nice dinner-table before you with all sorts of good things to eat. When you are finished, all you have to do is to clap your hands, and it will all disappear."

When the old woman had gone, Two Eyes thought she would see if she had spoken the truth. She called her goat, and said:

"If you're able,
Lay my table."

She had hardly spoken the words when the prettiest little table appeared, with spoons and forks and plates all ready, and all the things to eat that Two Eyes liked best. She ate them all up, for she was very hungry. When she

had finished, she clapped her hands, and the table and everything on it vanished.

In the evening she went home, and her sisters gave her some scraps of bread that had been left from their own dinner, but she did not eat them. In the morning the same thing happened, and the two sisters went to their mother and said: "Two Eyes has eaten no supper and no breakfast. She must get food from somewhere, and we mean to find out about it."

So they arranged that One Eye was to go to the fields with Two Eyes to watch what she did. It was a very warm morning, and Two Eyes drove her goats so far that at last One Eye was obliged to ask her to stop and rest.

"Certainly," said Two Eyes. "And while you are resting, I will sing to you."

One Eye lay down in the long grass, and Two Eyes began to sing softly. One Eye was so worn out with the long distance they had come, that before long her one eye closed and she was fast asleep.

Then Two Eyes called her pet goat, and said:

"If you're able,
Lay my table,"

and immediately the little table appeared with a nice dinner on it. She ate and drank as quickly as she could, for she was afraid that One Eye would wake and see her. But it was not until evening that One Eye opened her eye: and when they returned home, and her mother and sister questioned her as to what had happened, she was obliged to confess that she had been asleep all day. Then Three Eyes said: "To-morrow I will go to the fields

with Two Eyes." So the next morning she followed Two Eyes, who, knowing her thoughts, led her through the long grass till she was quite tired out. But when they sat down to rest, and Two Eyes began to sing softly, Three Eyes pretended to fall asleep and saw everything that happened. The table appeared at Two Eyes' bidding, and vanished when she had finished eating. Three Eyes went to her mother and sister and told them all she had seen. The cruel mother cried : "This is a nice thing, that Two Eyes should have fine food while we eat like everyone else !" And she took a big knife and went out and killed the little goat.

The next day, as Two Eyes was sitting in the field, crying bitterly, the old woman appeared, and said : "Do not weep, little one. You shall not starve, for I will help you. Go and ask your sister to give you the goat's heart, and then bury it in the ground in front of the door."

Two Eyes thanked the old woman, and did as she had been told. The next morning, on looking out of her window, she saw that a beautiful tree, with silver leaves and golden apples, had sprung up during the night. She ran and told her mother, who said to One Eye : "Climb up into the branches and gather as many apples as you can. Such fruit must be worth its weight in gold."

One Eye climbed up, but no sooner did she stretch out her hand than the apples sprang away, and, try as she might, she could not reach them. Then Three Eyes climbed, but the same thing happened to her. At last Two Eyes asked to be allowed to try.

"You !" cried the sisters, scornfully. "Is it likely you will succeed where we have failed ?" But the mother let

Two Eyes climb, for she thought: "She may manage to shake one down, and then I can sell it." The apples, instead of springing away, came to her hand, and she soon had her apron full, and was obliged to come down and empty it. Just as she reached the ground, a young knight came riding by.

"Run away and hide yourself, Two Eyes," cried the mother. "I am ashamed for you to be seen." And she pushed her under an empty cask which stood near.

The young knight, seeing the beautiful tree, stopped to look at it.

"To whom does this tree belong? With one branch of it I could buy everything I want."

"It belongs to us," said the sisters; "we will give you a branch if you like." And they tried to break one; but the branches flew from their hands as soon as they touched them.

"This is very strange," said the Knight; "you say the tree belongs to you, and it will not let you touch it."

"It certainly belongs to us," they cried. At the same moment, Two Eyes rolled one of her apples from under the cask to the young Knight's feet. He gazed at it in astonishment, and presently Two Eyes rolled out another. Seeing where it came from, he went to the cask and raised it, and there was little Two Eyes sitting underneath, with her apron full of golden apples.

"The tree belongs to me," she said, "and I can break off as many branches as you want."

"If you will give me one," said the Knight, "that is all I ask."

Two Eyes climbed up the tree and brought down a

beautiful branch covered with silver leaves. The Knight was so astonished at her beauty and sweetness, that he could scarcely thank her. "Little Two Eyes," said he, "what can I give you in return for this?"

"Ah!" she answered, "I am often cold and hungry, and my mother and sisters do not love me. If you will take me with you, I will be your servant and work for you."

"You shall come with me," said the Knight, "and I will make you my wife, and you shall have everything you wish for." And he lifted her onto his horse and rode away, leaving the jealous sisters and their cruel mother behind. The wonderful tree followed them to the Knight's castle, and planted itself in front of the door; so that whenever they wanted to buy anything, all they had to do was to go out and gather an apple, and they had more gold than they could spend.

Years afterwards, Two Eyes was told that two poor women had come to the castle and had begged for a crust of bread. She went out and found that they were her sisters, who had become so poor that they had nothing to eat but what was given to them in charity. When Two Eyes saw how sad they looked, she forgot all their unkindness to her, and gave them money and food. They begged her to forgive them, and she took them into the castle, where they all lived happily together for many years.

THE DRAGON'S GRANDMOTHER

A KING once had a large army of soldiers, but he paid them so badly that often they had not enough to eat. At last three of them decided to run away. They hid themselves in a field of corn which grew so high that it completely covered them. When they had been there for two days and nights, one of them said : "What is the use of running away if we are to die of hunger in a cornfield? We are worse off than we were before, and if we go back we shall certainly be hanged."

At that moment a huge Dragon appeared in the air above their heads.

"If that is all your trouble," said he, "I can soon get you out of it. If you will promise to serve me for seven years, I will carry you safely past the army and give you all you wish for. At the end of seven years you will belong to me. But I will give you one chance to escape me. If, at the end of that time, you are able to guess a riddle I will ask you, you shall be free."

The soldiers readily agreed. The Dragon seized them in his great claws and carried them over the army. When he had set them down in a place of safety, he gave them each a whip, saying : "Whenever you want money, crack these whips, and you will have enough and to spare." He then made them sign their names in his book, and flew away over the tree-tops.

The soldiers immediately began to crack their whips. Gold fell about them in a shower, and in two minutes they had enough money to buy horses and carriages, and fine clothes and everything they could wish for. They travelled all round the world, laughing and enjoying themselves all the time. As the end of the seven years



A huge dragon appeared

approached, two of them began to be very doleful. But the third said :

“Come, comrades, we have had a good time, and we have not got to the end of it yet. Trust me to find out the Dragon's riddle.”

At the same moment an old woman came up to where they were sitting, and said :

"What is the matter? You two look as dismal as if the sky had fallen."

Then they told her about the Dragon, and how the seven years were nearly over. "And we shall never be able to guess the riddle," said the two doleful ones. "But we are ready to try," added the cheerful one.

"I will help you," said the old woman. "I can see that you are a brave man. Go into the forest, and you will find a little house beside a high rock. Enter it, and you will then know what to do."

The soldier set out, and soon found the little house. Here he saw a very old woman sitting on the doorstep.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"A friend," replied the soldier, pleasantly. "Who are you?"

"I am the Dragon's Grandmother," she answered. "You must not stay here. The Dragon is out hunting; but if he returns and finds you, he will eat you up."

"He will probably eat me in any case," thought the soldier, "so I may as well risk it." He sat down beside the old woman, and began to talk to her so nicely that in two minutes she had promised to do all that she could to help him. When she had heard his story, she led him into the house, and showed him a great flat stone in the middle of the floor.

"You must lift this," said she, "and go down into the cellar beneath. When the Dragon comes home, do not make a sound, or he will be sure to hear you. I will ask him about the riddle, and you will hear his answer."

The soldier went down into the cellar and waited. At midnight a great rushing sound was heard, and the

Dragon came in, calling for his supper. The Grandmother had laid the table ready with all the things he liked best, and he sat down in high good humour. When he had eaten a great deal, the old woman said :

“Well, how many poor people have you caught to-day?”

“Aha!” said the Dragon, “I have got three soldiers in my clutches, who have served me for seven years, and will be mine altogether if they cannot guess a riddle I will ask them.”

“And what is the riddle?” asked the old woman.

“I don't mind telling you,” said the Dragon, “if you promise not to let it go any further. In the North Sea lies a dead sea-cat, which will be their roast meat; the bone of a whale shall be their spoon, and they shall have a horse's hoof for a wine-glass.”

When he heard this, the soldier could scarcely help jumping for joy. When the Dragon had fallen asleep, the Grandmother raised the stone and set the soldier free. He stepped cautiously over the sleeping Dragon, and got safely out of the cottage.

The next day the seven years came to an end, and the Dragon appeared to the soldiers.

“Aha!” cried he. “Now you are in my power, and must come to my kingdom and be my servants for ever.”

“How about the riddle?” asked the soldiers.

“You will never guess it,” said the Dragon. “But here it is. What will you have for your roast meat?”

The soldiers answered at once: “A dead sea-cat from the North Sea.”

“What will be your spoon?” cried the Dragon.

“The bone of a whale,” replied the soldiers.

At this the Dragon turned green with rage and fear, and screamed: “What will your wine-glass be?”

They answered all together: “We will have a horse’s hoof for a wine-glass.”

The Dragon gave a shriek of rage, and flapping his wings wildly, he sprang into the air and disappeared over the tree-tops. The soldiers cracked their whips for joy, and gold showered on them till it lay in great heaps; and they had enough to buy everything they wanted for the rest of their lives.

THE CLEVER LITTLE TAILOR

THERE once lived a Princess who was very fond of making her servants guess riddles, and whenever a suitor came to the Court she always made him try to guess the answer. At last she grew so proud of her cleverness, that she made it known that she would marry the first man who could give the correct answer to the riddle she asked him.

Now, there happened to be three Tailors in the town who could sew on buttons better than anyone else, and they thought that they would try their luck at guessing with the others. When they got to the palace, the Princess said:

“You will never find the answer; but here is my riddle. I have two different kinds of hair on my head. What colour are they?”

The eldest Tailor looked carefully at the Princess' head, and answered : "Black and white."

"Quite wrong," said the Princess. Then the second one said :

"Not black and white, but red and brown, like my coat."

"Wrong again," said the Princess ; and she turned to the third, who was a very little man, and not considered as clever as the others. "Well, what have you to say?"

"You have a golden and a silver hair on your head," replied the little Tailor, "so of course they are of different colours !"

When the Princess heard this she turned quite pale, and cried : "You little wretch of a Tailor, you have guessed right ! But I am not going to marry you until you do something else I tell you. There is a Bear in the stable : you must spend one night with him, and if you come to me alive in the morning, I will be your wife."

She said this because she thought the little Tailor would never dare to sleep with a Bear, or if he did, the Bear would certainly eat him up. But the little Tailor merely said : "Nothing venture, nothing have" ; and when evening came he went to the stable, and made the Princess' servants lock him in the cage. The Bear, who did not happen to be hungry at the moment, patted him gently with his paw.

"Good evening, friend," said the little Tailor, cheerfully ; and he made a nice soft place in the straw and sat down as if he had not a care in the world, and began to crack nuts. The Bear watched him, and presently said : "I am very fond of nuts. Give me some of yours."

"Certainly," replied the little Tailor, and he put his hand in his pocket and drew out what appeared to be a nut, but was really a hard pebble. The Bear put it in his mouth and tried to crack it. He bit it so hard that he broke several of his teeth.

"There, see what a poor creature you are!" said the Tailor. "My mouth is not half as big as yours, and I can crack my nuts quite easily."

"Well, crack mine for me," said the Bear. The little Tailor took the pebble and pretended to put it in his mouth, but slipped a nut in instead. Crack it went at the first bite, and he handed it politely to the Bear.

"Give me some more nuts," cried the Bear. "I am not going to be beaten by a creature like you." The little Tailor gave him a handful of pebbles, and the Bear set to work to crack them. The more the Tailor laughed at him, the harder he bit, till at last his teeth were quite blunt and useless, and he was obliged to give in.

Presently the little Tailor took his fiddle and began to play. The Bear was fond of music, and at the first note he jumped up and began to dance. When he was quite out of breath he stopped and said: "If only I knew how to play the fiddle, I could dance whenever I wanted to."

"It is quite easy," said the little Tailor. "You hold the fiddle with your left hand, and draw the bow across the strings with your right, and the music comes."

"Will you undertake to teach me?" asked the Bear.

"Willingly," replied the little Tailor. "But first you must let me cut your claws; they are much too long."

The Bear, suspecting nothing, immediately held out

his paw. The little Tailor took his scissors and cut the claws so short that they were quite harmless.

“There,” said he, when he had finished the second paw, “you have neither teeth nor claws, and cannot hurt me if you try.” And he lay down on the straw and settled himself very comfortably to sleep for the rest of the night. The Bear was furious, but he could neither bite the little Tailor nor tear him to pieces.

The next morning the Princess came to the stable, expecting to find that the Bear had devoured the little Tailor during the night. What was her surprise to see him lying peacefully asleep. She was obliged to order her servants to unlock the cage and let him out. Very soon after the wedding took place, and the Princess grew to love the little Tailor for his cleverness and bravery, and they lived happily together for many years. If you don't believe this story, you must pay a forfeit of one shilling.

THE SIX SWANS

A KING once went hunting in the forest, and rode so quickly that none of his servants could keep up with him. When at last he stopped, he found that he had lost his way. Just as he was wondering what he should do, he saw an old woman coming towards him, and asked her the way to the castle.

"I will tell you on one condition," said the old woman. "I have an only daughter, and if you will promise to make her your wife, I will guide you safely out of the wood. If you will not, you shall stay here and die of starvation, or be devoured by wild beasts."

Now, the old woman was a Witch, and had the power to make her daughter look beautiful, though she was really ugly and wicked. The King, seeing no other way out of the difficulty, promised to marry her: and he put her on his horse, and they rode back to the castle, where the wedding was celebrated.

The King had been married before and had seven children, six boys and a girl, whom he loved very dearly. Fearing that the stepmother might do them some harm, he took them away, and put them in a little house in the depths of a wood—so hidden by trees that he himself could scarcely have found it if he had not had a ball of magic yarn. Whenever he put this ball on the ground it

ran before him, unwinding itself as it went, and only stopped when it reached the door of the little house. The King went so often to see his children, that the Queen noticed his absence, and thought she would try to find out where he went. So she gave a servant a lot of money to follow the King. He came back and told her about the children and the magic ball of yarn: and that night, when the King was asleep, she stole the ball, and, laying it on the ground, soon found her way to the little house and knocked at the door. The six sons, thinking it was their father, ran out to meet her. She then threw over them six little shirts which she had made on purpose, and they were immediately turned into swans, and flew away over the tree-tops. When the little girl saw what had happened, she ran away and hid herself: and the Queen, knowing nothing of her, went back to the castle thinking she had got rid of all the children.

When the King came and found the little girl alone, he asked: "Where are thy brothers?" And she wept, and answered: "Dear father, a strange lady came and turned them into swans, and they have flown away and left me alone." The King mourned for his sons, but never suspected that the strange lady was the Queen. He was so afraid of some harm happening to his little daughter that he wanted to take her home with him: but she was afraid of her stepmother, and begged to be allowed to stay in the little house for one more night.

When morning came, she thought: "To-day I shall have to go to the castle to live with my stepmother. Rather than do that I will go out into the world, and perhaps some day I shall find my brothers." So she ran



THE SIX SWANS

away into the wood. After going a long way she came to a cottage, went in, and found a room with six white beds already made. She was so tired she could scarcely stand, but she was afraid to lie down, so she crept under one of the beds to see what happened. Presently she heard a rustling of wings, and six swans flew in at the window. They alighted on the floor, and began to blow at each other till their feathers came off, and their skins fell to the ground. Then the little girl looked at them and saw that they were her brothers. You can imagine how happy they were at meeting again, but their happiness did not last long.

"You cannot stay here," said one of the brothers. "This house belongs to a band of robbers, and if they find you here they will kill you. We cannot take care of you, for we are only allowed to lay aside our swans' skins for a quarter of an hour at sunset. At the end of that time we are changed into swans again."

The sister wept, saying : "Can nothing be done to save you?"

"There is one thing," they answered, "but it is too difficult. If you remain silent for six years, neither speaking nor laughing, and make us six shirts of asters sewn together, we might be ourselves again. But if you say a single word during that time, we are lost for ever."

The little girl determined to try. She went out, gathered a big bunch of asters, and began her work. She had no one to speak to, and she was too sad to want to laugh. When she had lived in this way for a long time, it happened that the King of the country came into

the forest to hunt, and saw her sitting under a tree. He came to her and said :

“Who are you, little maid?” She shook her head in answer, for she dared not speak. The King, thinking she did not understand him, questioned her in all the languages he knew. She still remained silent, making signs to him to leave her. But she was so beautiful that the King fell in love with her then and there, and put her on his horse, and carried her to the palace. After a time he married her, and the people called her the Silent Queen. Everyone loved her for her beauty and sweetness, except the King's mother, who was jealous of her and wished to get rid of her. When a little Prince was born, the old mother stole the child away and pretended that the young Queen had hidden it. The King was in great distress, but would not believe anything against his wife. He went to her and questioned her, and as she still refused to speak, the old woman persuaded him to put her in prison until she would confess where she had hidden her child.

So the poor young Queen was thrown into prison, where she remained for many days. She was allowed to take her sewing with her, and by the end of the six years she had finished the shirts. Then she began to weep in her prison, for she thought : “My brothers will never be able to find me in this place, and all my work will be wasted.”

At the same moment she heard a rustling of wings, and looking up, saw the six swans hovering outside the window. She was overjoyed to see them, and each in turn flew near enough for her to put on one of the shirts.

At last her six brothers stood before her. Then she sent for the King, and told him all her story, and he begged her to forgive him, and they went back to the palace amid great rejoicing. The old woman confessed that she had stolen the little Prince, and was punished for her wickedness. But the King and Queen lived in great happiness for the rest of their lives.

THE KING'S CHILDREN

THERE was once a Prince who went out into the forest to hunt. When he had wandered a long way he met a tall man, who said: "You are too far from home to return to-night. Come to my castle, and you shall eat and sleep, and go on your way to-morrow."

As they sat at dinner the tall man said: "I am King of this country, and now you are in my power. But I have three daughters, and if you can watch with the eldest all night without going to sleep, you shall have her for your wife, and be set free. I will come to the room every hour and call to you, and if you fail to answer me, your head shall be cut off in the morning."

The eldest Princess led the Prince to her room. On the table stood the statue of a man, and the Princess went to it and said: "When my father calls, answer him." The statue nodded its head, and the Princess went to bed, while the Prince lay down on the threshold, and they

were soon both sound asleep. When the King came and called, the statue answered, and the King, thinking it was the Prince's voice, went away again.

The next morning he said to the Prince: "You have done well, but I cannot give you my daughter yet. If you can cut down my forest and make a lake there before sunset, you shall marry her." Then he gave him a silver axe and a silver spade, and sent him into the forest.

The Prince set to work with a will, but at the first stroke his axe turned. He sat down in despair to wait for sunset, when he knew he would be put to death. But at midday the King said to his daughters: "One of you must take him something to eat." The eldest Princess took some food and carried it to the Prince, but he refused to eat.

"What is the use," said he, "when I must die at sunset?"

"Lie down and rest," said the Princess, "and I will comb your hair. Then you will feel more hopeful, and perhaps find a way out of the difficulty after all."

The Prince lay down, and she combed his hair with her golden comb, and he presently fell asleep. Then she took out her handkerchief and struck it three times on the ground, saying: "Workers in the earth, come out!" At once a perfect army of little brown men sprang from the earth, and cried: "Here we are! What have you for us to do?"

"Cut down the forest," said the Princess, "and make a big lake with a fountain in the middle, and swans floating on it."

The little men immediately began work, and there were

so many of them that long before sunset the forest had disappeared, and in its place was a large lake. Then the Princess clapped her hands, and said: "Workers in the earth, go home!" And they all sank into the ground and disappeared. The Princess got up very quietly so as not to disturb the Prince, who was still fast asleep, and ran back to the castle.

When the Prince woke and saw the lake, he could scarcely believe his eyes. He went to the King, and said: "The forest is levelled, and a great lake is in its place. Now give me your daughter as you promised."

But the wicked King answered: "I cannot give her to you yet, your work is not yet done. Beyond the lake there is a high mountain, covered with thick bushes. If you can clear them away and build a castle half a mile high before sunset to-morrow, then she shall be your wife." He then gave him a glass axe, and the Prince set out once more. Everything happened as it had done the day before. The glass axe proved as useless as the silver one, and he was almost in despair when the Princess brought him food, and persuaded him to lie down and rest. Directly he was asleep she struck the earth with her handkerchief, and called up the little men. When the Prince woke, he saw before him a most splendid castle, which seemed to reach the sky. They hurried home together, feeling very happy; but when the wicked King heard that the Prince had once more accomplished his task, he flew into a great rage, and refused to let him marry the Princess. He ordered her to be locked into her room, and sent the Prince out of the castle. But at night, when everybody was asleep, the Prince put a ladder

up to the Princess' window, and she climbed down, and they ran away together.

When the sun rose, the Princess looked back and saw her father following them with a great train of servants.

"Oh! what shall we do?" she cried.

"If my father overtakes us he will kill you and take me home again. I will change you into a briar, and myself into a rose, and perhaps he will pass us by."

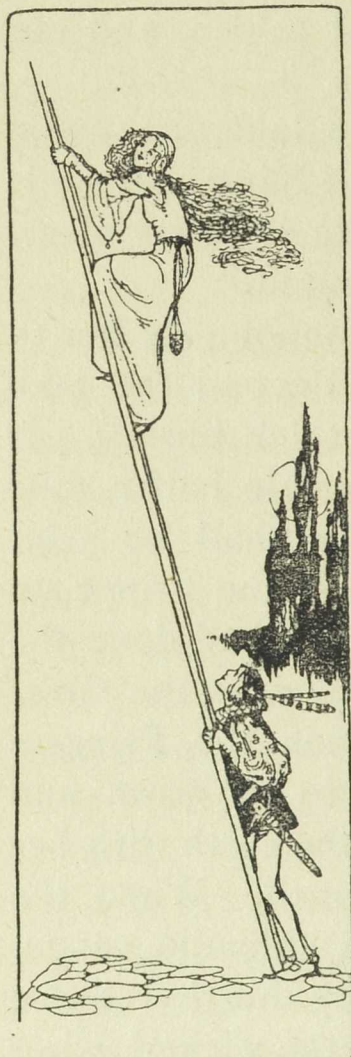
When the King came up to where he had seen them standing, all he found was a rose-bush with one rose on it. He returned home and told the Queen what had happened.

"You should have gathered the rose," said she. "Go at once and fetch it." So the King hurried out, but by that time the Prince and Princess had become themselves again, and were running on as fast as they could. When the King saw them, he set off in pursuit and would have overtaken them if the Princess had not changed the Prince into a church, and herself into the parson.

When the King came to the church

he gave up the chase, sat down and listened to the sermon, and then went slowly home.

"You foolish man!" cried the Queen, when she had heard his story. "You should have taken the parson



She climbed down

prisoner and brought him home with you. To-morrow I will go myself, and we shall see what will happen."

When the Princess looked back and saw her mother coming, she cried: "Oh, how shall we escape her? I will change you into a pond, and I will be a fish."

But the Queen knew at once what the Princess had done, and she bent over the pond and tried to catch the fish: but it jumped about in such a lively manner that she could not get near it. Then she knelt down and tried to drink the pond: but she could not possibly drink it all. At last she said: "Daughter, if you will change yourself into your own form again, you shall marry the Prince and do anything you wish." The pond with the fish in it immediately disappeared, and the Prince and Princess stood before her.

Then the Queen gave her daughter three walnuts, saying: "If ever you are in trouble, these will help you." And the Prince and Princess set out once more to journey to his father's kingdom.

When they came to the town in which the palace stood, the Prince said, "Wait here, while I go to the palace and send a carriage to bring you. You are my bride, and must not arrive at the palace on foot." So he left her, and went on alone. The King and Queen were overjoyed to see him, and when he told them that he had brought home a bride and that she was in the town, the King at once ordered a carriage to be harnessed with six horses to go and fetch her. As this was being done, the Queen, who was really a witch, kissed her son on the forehead so that he forgot the Princess and everything that had

happened. He no longer wished to go and bring his bride, and the horses were taken out of the carriage, and everyone went back into the palace.

Meanwhile the poor Princess waited and waited ; until at last night came, and she was obliged to ask for shelter at a mill close by. The next day came, and still the Prince did not return ; so she became the miller's servant, and sat by the mill-pond and washed the dishes.

Soon after the Queen found a bride for her son, a Princess who was as ugly as she was rich. When the real bride heard that the wedding was to take place, she cried very bitterly, thinking that the Prince no longer loved her. Then she remembered the walnuts her mother had given her, and she broke one of them, and found a beautiful silk dress inside. She dressed herself in it and went to the church. She looked so beautiful that when the bride saw her she stopped, and cried : "That lady has a finer dress than mine ! I will not be married till I have one like it." She sent her servants to the Princess to ask if she would sell the dress ; but she answered no, she would not sell it ; but the bride might earn it if she chose. Then she went to her, and said : "If you will let me sleep for one night on the threshold of the Prince's room, the dress shall be yours."

The bride longed so much to look as beautiful as the Princess that she consented. She thought : "I will give the Prince a cup of charmed wine, and then he will fall asleep, and never know that this miller's servant has been near." When night came she sent the wine to his room, but the servant who took it changed the cup for another, so that when the real bride came and lay down

on the threshold, the Prince awoke, and cried : "Who is there?"

The Princess answered, weeping : "I had the forest cut down for you, and made a lake, and built a castle. I changed you into a briar, then into a church, then into a pond. I have loved you and saved your life, and you have forgotten me and taken another bride."

Then the spell of the Queen's kiss was broken, and the Prince remembered everything. The very next day he was married to the Princess, and they came home to the castle amid great rejoicing. The Queen and the false bride were so frightened when they heard what had happened, that they ran away into the forest, and were never heard of again. And, for my part, I shall not run after them.

THE HOUSE IN THE WOOD

A POOR Wood-cutter once said to his wife: "I am going out into the forest to work, and shall not be back till evening. Let my eldest daughter bring me my dinner at mid-day. But in case she should lose her way, I will take a bag of linseed with me and strew it all along the path."

At twelve o'clock the daughter took a jug of soup and some bread, and set out. But the sparrows had eaten all the linseed, and there was nothing to show her the path. She wandered on till night came, and she found herself in the darkest part of the wood. Suddenly she saw a light shining through the trees. "That must be a cottage," she thought. "I will go and beg for a night's lodging."

She went in the direction of the light, and presently came to a tiny house with only one window. She knocked at the door, and a gruff voice answered, "Come in!"

She lifted the latch, and found herself in a room where an old man was sitting. A fire blazed on the hearth, and before it lay three animals—a cock, a hen, and a speckled cow.

"If you please," said the Maiden, "I have lost my way in the wood, and it is so dark that I cannot go any further. Let me shelter here till morning."

The old man turned to the animals, and said : “ Shall we let her stay ? ” The cock crowed, the hen clucked, and the cow said “ Moo ! ” The old man, who seemed to understand their language perfectly, said to the Maiden : “ We will give you food and shelter, but you must make



She came to a tiny house

yourself useful in return. Go into the kitchen and cook us some supper.”

Now the Maiden was rather proud, and did not like being ordered to work in this way. But she was obliged to do as she was told, and presently returned with a dish of nice stew. She and the old man sat down and ate as

much as they wanted, but she quite forgot to give any to the animals. When she had finished, she said : "I am so tired I cannot keep my eyes open. Show me where I am to sleep."

"Not so fast," said the old man ; "you must make the beds first," and he led her upstairs. The Maiden prepared her own bed, and without thinking of one for the old man, lay down and went to sleep. When the old man came upstairs and found his bed not made, and the Maiden comfortably sleeping, he opened a trap-door in the floor of the room and let her down into the cellar.

When the Wood-cutter got home, very tired and hungry, his wife told him how their eldest daughter had set out in the morning and had not returned. "No doubt she has lost her way," said the Wood-cutter, "and will come home in a day or two. To-morrow our second daughter must bring me my dinner, and I will take some corn and strew it on the path. It is larger than linseed, and the sparrows will not be able to swallow it."

The next morning he went out to his work, dropping the corn as he went. But the larks came and ate it up as fast as he let it fall ; and when the second daughter set out at midday with her father's dinner, she could not find the path. She wandered on till night-fall, as her sister had done, and begged for food and lodging at the old man's cottage. She ate her supper and lay down to sleep without thinking of giving the animals anything to eat, or of making the old man's bed. So he opened the trap-door and let her down into the cellar, bed and all.

On the third morning the Wood-cutter said to his wife : "Our second daughter must have lost her way too. For

two days I have had no dinner, and I shall starve if this goes on. Our youngest child must bring me my soup and bread to-day."

"No, no," said the mother. "I have lost two of my children, and I cannot let the last one go."

"She is sure not to lose her way," said the Wood-cutter. "I will take a bag of peas with me this time, and strew them all the way. They are bigger than corn, and the larks will never be able to swallow them."

Once more he set out, strewing the peas as he went. But at noon, when the youngest daughter tried to find them, there was not one to be seen, for the pigeons had eaten them all up. There were several paths in the forest, and she took one of them, saying to herself: "I am sure this was the way my father went, and I must try and find him, or he will get no dinner and be hungry all day."

So she wandered on as her sisters had done. When night came she was very unhappy, thinking how anxious her mother would be; but she saw the light of the old man's cottage shining through the trees, and went and begged for shelter. The old man let her in, and she spoke kindly to the animals, and stroked and patted them. When she had cooked the supper, she would not touch a morsel until they had all been fed. She went upstairs and made the old man's bed, and being quite tired out, lay down and fell fast asleep.

When she woke the next morning, she was amazed to find herself in the most beautiful room she had ever seen. Her bed was of ivory, the coverlet of velvet, and the walls were hung with rich brocade embroidered in gold. While she was gazing round wondering if she were dreaming,

the door opened, and three servants came in and asked what they could do for her.

"Nothing, thank you," replied the Maiden. "I will get up at once, for I have to cook the old man's breakfast and feed the animals."

She dressed quickly, and ran downstairs. What was her surprise to find, instead of the old man, a handsome young Prince awaiting her.

"Do not run away," said he. "I am a King's son, whom a wicked Witch changed into the old man you saw last night. My castle was changed into this little house, and my three servants into a cock, a hen, and a cow. The spell could not be broken until a beautiful maiden should come who was as kind to animals as human beings. Last night, while you were asleep, we were all changed into our proper shape."

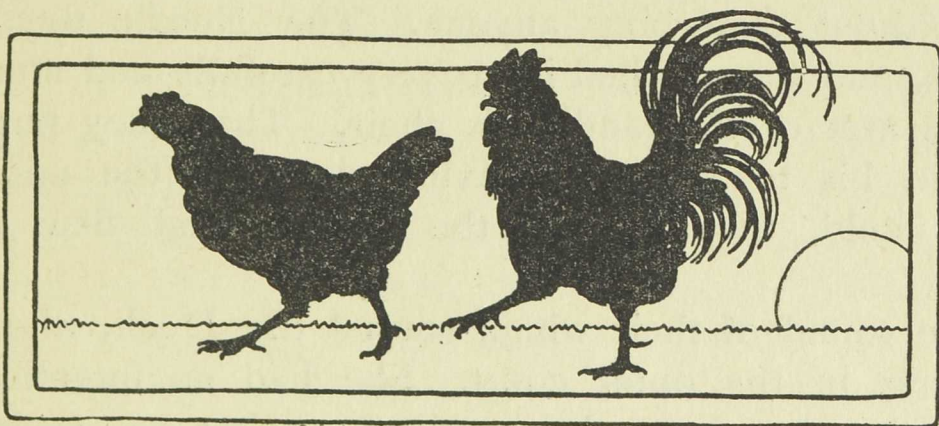
"But I must go back to my father and mother," said the Maiden.

"I have sent for them," said the Prince, "and they are coming to be present at our wedding. For I love you, and want you to be my bride."

So they were married, but not before they had gone down to the cellar and released the two elder daughters.

A PACK OF KNAVES

ONE day a young Cock and his wife went into a wood to eat nuts. When evening came they found themselves some distance from home ; so the Cock made a neat little carriage of nut-shells. When it was finished, the Hen seated herself in it, and said : "Now harness yourself, and draw me home."



A young Cock and his wife

"Certainly not," replied the Cock. "I am going to be coachman, and sit on the box."

As he spoke, a Duck came by. "How dare you eat nuts in my wood?" she cried ; and she gave the Cock a peck with her beak, and knocked him over. The Cock was very angry at this, and flew at the Duck, and gave her such a beating that she begged for mercy. Then he harnessed her to the carriage, and drove off at a furious rate.

Presently they overtook a Pin and a Needle, who were walking very unsteadily along the road. "Stop, stop!" cried the Pin. "We are so tired, and night is coming on, and we shall never reach home. Let us ride a little way in your fine carriage."

So the Cock pulled up and took them in. When it was quite dark, they came to a roadside inn. By this time the Duck was so tired that she could scarcely waddle, and they decided to stay the night. They had no money, but the Cock made himself so pleasant to the landlord that he never thought but that they were rich people, and welcomed them to his house.

Early in the morning the Cock and Hen woke, and got up without disturbing anyone. The Needle was still asleep, and they picked it up very carefully and stuck it in the arm of the landlord's chair. Then they put the Pin in his towel; and, having done all the mischief they could, they opened the window and flew away home.

The sound of their wings roused the Duck, who was roosting in the outer court. She had no intention of being harnessed to the carriage again; so, seeing a stream close by, she waddled quietly down to it and swam home.

Presently the landlord woke, and proceeded to get up and dress. As he was drying himself with the towel, the Pin made a red scratch right across his face. Then he went into the kitchen and sat down in his armchair to smoke his pipe; but he was no sooner seated than the Needle pricked him so badly that he sprang up with a shout of pain, crying that his house was bewitched. He

went out to look for his guests, and found they were gone. Then he took a solemn oath that he would never again let such people enter his house, who ate his food, and slept in his beds, and never paid him a farthing.

FREDERICK AND CATHERINE

THERE was once a husband and wife whose names were Frederick and Catherine. One day, when they had been married only a short time, Frederick said: "I am going to be out in the fields all day. I shall be tired and hungry when I return, so have something nice for supper, and a good jug of ale."

When dinner-time came, Catherine put a sausage on the fire to fry. Presently she thought: "While the sausage is cooking, I may as well draw the ale." She took a jug and went down into the cellar. The ale ran quickly, and the jug was nearly full when Catherine suddenly remembered that she had left the dog unchained in the kitchen. She ran up the cellar steps as quickly as she could, but the dog had already seized the sausage and was running out of the door. She rushed after him, but he was too quick for her, and she soon had to give up the chase and return home. All this time she had quite forgotten that she had left the beer running, and when she got to the top of the steps she saw that the cask had emptied itself on the cellar floor.

"Oh dear," she said, "what shall I do? Frederick will come home and see it, and be angry with me." Then she got the sack of fine flour which they had bought at the last fair, and sprinkled it over the floor till the beer was all dried up.

Soon after Frederick came home very tired and hungry, and asked for his supper.

"Oh, Frederick," said Catherine, "the dog has stolen the sausage, and the ale is all spilt, and I have used the flour to soak it up with. But do not be angry, the cellar is now quite dry."

"Oh, Catherine," said Frederick. "How could you be so careless?"

"How should I know?" said Catherine. "You should have told me."

The husband thought: "If my wife cannot manage better than that I shall have to look after things myself."

One day he brought home a bag of gold, and said to Catherine: "Look, here are some yellow buttons, and I am going to put them in a can and bury them in the stable. Be very careful not to touch them."

Soon after some pedlars came to the door with plates to sell. "I cannot buy," said Catherine. "My husband is out, and I have no money. But there are some pretty yellow buttons buried in the stable, and if you care to take them in exchange I will gladly take the plates."

So she gave the pedlars a spade, and they soon found the gold, and ran off with it as fast as they could, leaving the plates behind. When Frederick came in she told him what had happened.

"Oh, wife!" he exclaimed. "The buttons were pure gold, and all we have in the world. And now they are all gone!"

"Oh, Frederick, how should I know? You should have told me. But let us run after the pedlars and get it back."



She rolled the cheese down the hill

"We must do our best," said Frederick. "But take some butter and cheese to eat on the way; we may have to go far."

They set out, and as Frederick walked faster than Catherine she was soon left some way behind. Presently she came to a part of the road where there were deep ruts on either side. "Ah!" she thought. "How hard the poor earth looks, and how the wheels must hurt it!"

So she smeared the butter on the ruts to soften them. As she stooped to do so, a cheese fell out of her pocket and rolled down the hill. "Silly cheese!" thought Catherine. "I am too tired to go after it. I will send another to bring it back." So she took a second cheese from her pocket, and rolled it after the first. Then she sat down to wait; but as neither of them returned, she got impatient and sent her two remaining cheeses down the hill. At last she became angry, and cried: "Very well, then, you can just follow me when you like. It will be all the farther for you to walk." And she went on, and presently overtook Frederick, who asked her to give him something to eat.

"Oh, Frederick," said Catherine, "the cheeses are all at the bottom of the hill, and I have smeared the butter on the ruts, and there is nothing left but dry bread." So poor Frederick had to make his dinner of crusts. When he had finished, he said: "Wife, did you remember to lock the door before you came out?"

"No, Frederick, you should have told me."

"You must go back and do so; and while you are about it, bring something to eat. I will wait for you here."

Catherine went home and got a bag of nuts and a bottle of vinegar. She locked the upper door and took out the lower one, and, putting it on her shoulder, set out once more, for she thought: "They say that if the door is kept securely, no one can get into the house." When Frederick saw her bringing the door, he cried: "What a wife I have! Now anyone can walk into my house and steal everything I have!"

"I did not know," said Catherine; "you should have told me."

"You must carry the door now you have brought it," said Frederick.

"I cannot carry the nuts and vinegar as well," said Catherine. "I will hang them on the door, and it will carry them."

They travelled all day, and when night came they found themselves in a dark wood. They climbed up into a tree for safety, intending to spend the night there. Hardly had they done so when the pedlars came and sat down immediately below them. While they were quarrelling over their booty, Frederick slipped down on the other side of the tree and gathered some large stones, intending to throw them at the thieves from above. But he was not a very good shot, and they only glanced up and said: "What a lot of fir-apples the wind is shaking down!"

"Frederick," said Catherine, "these nuts are so heavy that I can hold them no longer. I am going to throw them down."

"No, no, Catherine, they will show the thieves where we are."

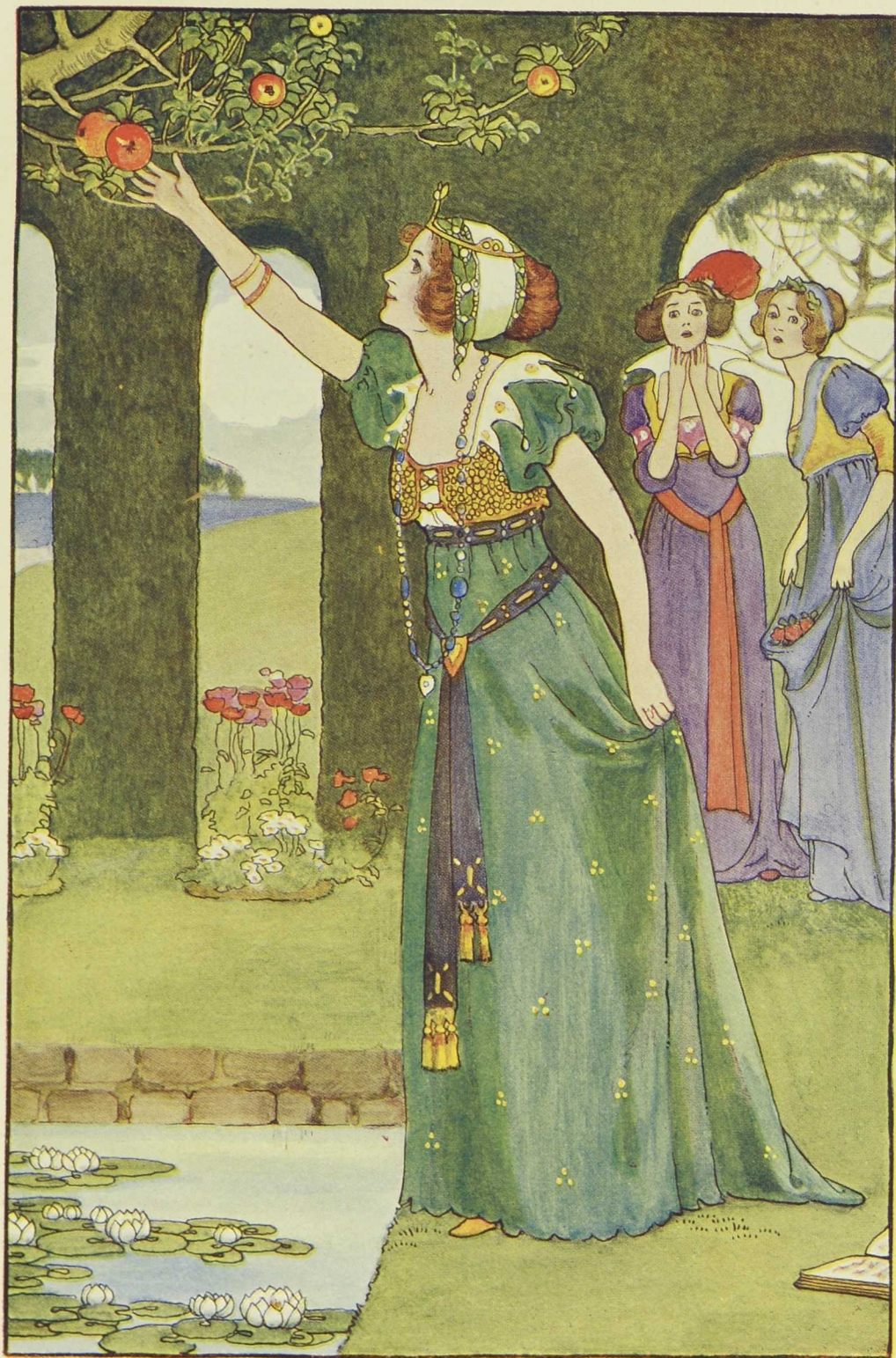
"I cannot help that," said Catherine, and she dropped the nuts through the boughs. As they pattered on the ground the thieves said: "It is hailing." Soon after, Catherine complained that the vinegar was too troublesome to hold, and she began to pour it out of the bottle. But the rogues only thought it was the dew falling, and took no notice.

At last Catherine said: "I cannot bear this heavy door

on my shoulders any longer. I am going to throw it down."

"No, no," said Frederick. "If you do, we are lost. The thieves will be certain to find us."

"I cannot help that," said Catherine. And she dropped the door, which fell with such a clatter that the pedlars, thinking an evil spirit had come for them, ran away as fast as their legs would carry them. Frederick and Catherine then came down from the tree, and gathered up the gold which the thieves had forgotten in their haste; and when morning came they returned home, well pleased with the result of their journey.



THE EARTH MANIKIN

THE EARTH MANNIKIN

THERE was once a King who had three beautiful daughters. In the Garden of the Palace where they lived stood a wonderful tree, covered with blood-red apples ; whoever ate one of these apples sank a thousand fathoms into the earth. Now the King had strictly forbidden his daughters to touch the tree, but they longed more and more to taste the fruit. At last the youngest said : " Our father loves us too dearly to punish us, whatever we do. Let us eat just one apple, to see what it is like." So she picked one, and they each ate a piece. No sooner had they done so, than they sank through the earth and disappeared.

When the dinner-bell rang, and no Princesses could be found anywhere, the King was in great grief. He guessed what had happened, and had it proclaimed through the kingdom that whoever brought his children back to him, should choose the one he liked best for his wife. At this, many young men came to the Palace, and examined the tree and the ground where the Princesses had last been seen, but no one succeeded in finding them. At last three young huntsmen came, and asked to be allowed to try. Everyone had already looked in the Garden, so they mounted their horses and rode out into the forest.

When they had travelled many days, they came to a castle in which were beautiful rooms, but no people. They went into the dining-hall, and there was a table ready laid for dinner, with all sorts of rich food and wine.

"This is a piece of luck," said the eldest. "A man might do better than stay here, with nothing to do and plenty to eat and drink. Let us draw lots for one of us to stay, and the other two to go and look for the Princesses."

The lot fell on the eldest, and the next day the two youngest went out, leaving him in the castle. At dinner-time a little Mannikin came down the chimney and asked for a piece of bread. The hunter gave him a piece, but in taking it the Mannikin let it drop.

"Pick it up for me!" said he, rudely; and the hunter, who was really a great coward, stooped down to do as he was told. As he did so, the Mannikin seized him by the hair, and gave him such a beating that the hunter shouted with pain. The next day the lot fell on the second hunter, and exactly the same thing happened to him. On the third day the youngest took his turn, but when the Mannikin appeared and ordered him to pick up the bread, the hunter said:

"Pick it up yourself, little man! If you will not take as much trouble as that, you are not worth much."

"You shall pick it up!" screamed the Mannikin in a rage, and he rushed at the hunter and tried to hit him; but he could not reach higher than his knee. The hunter picked him up and gave him a sound beating.

"Oh, let me go!" cried the little man. "Only stop

beating me, and I will show you where the King's daughters are ! ”

Upon this the hunter put him down, and the Mannikin led him out into the forest, and showed him an empty well.

“ You must get a big basket, ” said he, “ and get your comrades to lower you to the bottom. There you will



The Dragon with four heads

see three doors. Open the first, and you will find the eldest Princess, guarded by a Dragon with nine heads. In the next room is the second Princess, guarded by a Dragon with seven heads ; and in the last is the youngest Princess, but her Dragon has only four heads. You must cut off all the heads before you can rescue the Princesses ; and if you take my advice, you will not trust your comrades. If you do, they will deceive you, and pretend that they have rescued the King's daughters.”

When his comrades came in, the hunter told them all that had happened. They were much too frightened to go down into the well, but they put the youngest into the basket and lowered him till he reached the bottom. There he found the three doors, and opening the first, saw the eldest Princess guarded by a huge Dragon. After a fearful struggle he succeeded in cutting off the Dragon's nine heads, and set the Princess free. In the second room he found the Dragon with seven heads, which he quickly cut off. He had barely strength left to rescue the youngest Princess, but at last all three Dragons lay dead on the ground. The King's daughters could not find words to thank him, and clapped their hands for joy. One by one he put them into the basket, and they were drawn up by his comrades who waited at the mouth of the well. Then he remembered the Earth Mannikin's warning, and when the basket was lowered for the fourth time, instead of getting in, he put a heavy stone in his place and gave the signal for them to draw up the basket. When it was about half-way up his wicked comrades cut the rope, and the basket fell to the bottom of the well. Then they made the Princesses promise to say that it was they who had rescued them and slain the Dragons: and they went back to the palace, and each of the hunters was given a Princess for his wife.

Meanwhile, the youngest hunter wandered through the passages underground, trying to find a way on to the earth. At last he came to a room where a flute was hanging on the wall. He took it down and began a very sad tune, telling of all his sorrow and trouble. He had not played a dozen notes before the room was full of little

Elves, who asked him what he wanted. He said : "Oh, little Elves, I want to see the sunlight on the earth again, and to marry the Princess whom I love." Immediately they seized him by the hair and carried him up through the ceiling into the world. He hurried to the palace, where the wedding-feasts were just beginning, and presented himself before the King. Directly the other hunters saw him, they threw down their spoons and forks and ran as hard as they could over the hills and far away. Then the youngest hunter told his story, and the King gave him his youngest daughter for his bride. And they all danced in glass slippers until they were quite tired out.

THE TWO BROTHERS

THERE was once a Goldsmith, who had made a large fortune. His brother, who was a Broom-maker, was so poor that he had scarcely enough money to buy bread for himself and his two sons. Sometimes, when the children were very hungry, they went to the house of their rich uncle and begged for the pieces that had been left on the table.

One day the Broom-maker was in the forest gathering rushes, and saw a beautiful bird with golden plumage. He threw a stone at the bird, and hit it: and one of its golden feathers fell to the ground. He took the feather to the Goldsmith, who weighed it on his scales, and said: "This is pure gold," and gave him money for it.

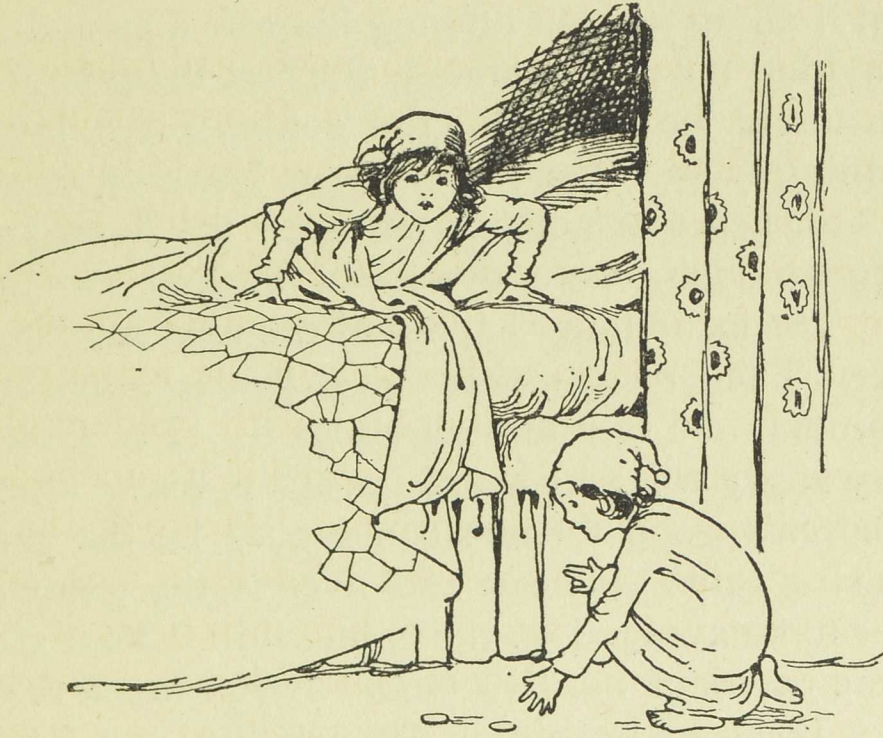
The next day the Broom-maker again went into the forest, and saw the bird hovering above a certain tree. He climbed the tree, and found a nest in which lay a golden egg. He took the egg home, and sold it to his brother for a large sum. Then the Goldsmith said: "If you will bring the bird to me, I will buy that also."

For many days the Broom-maker hunted the bird, and at last hit it with a stone, and killed it. His brother willingly gave him a bag of gold in exchange, and he went home, happy and contented, for he thought: "Now I shall have enough to live on for the rest of my days."

But the Goldsmith, who was wicked and cunning, had

really cheated his poor brother, for he knew that the bird was enchanted, and that whoever ate its liver and heart would find every morning under his pillow a piece of gold. So he told his wife to roast the bird for his dinner.

Now it happened that the two little boys had had very little to eat that day, and they thought they would go to



They were overjoyed to find two golden pieces

their uncle's house to see what they could pick up. They went into the kitchen and saw the bird turning on the spit. Presently two little pieces fell from it into the gravy beneath. One of them said: "No one will ever miss those two little pieces, and we have had scarcely anything to eat all day." And they each took a piece, and ate it.

Presently the Goldsmith's wife came in, and said: "What have you been eating?"

"Only the two little pieces that fell into the gravy," they answered. The Goldsmith's wife was in a great fright, for she knew that the pieces must have been the heart and liver of the bird. She was afraid to tell her husband, so she ran out and killed a chicken, took out the heart and liver, and put them in the golden bird. When dinner-time came, she brought it to the Goldsmith, who gobbled it all up without offering his wife a morsel.

On waking the next morning, the first thing he did was to look under his pillow for the golden piece, but there was nothing there. The two children, however, on getting out of bed, heard something fall onto the floor, and, on stooping to look, were overjoyed to find two golden pieces. The same thing happened the next morning, and the next. The Broom-maker was so puzzled, that he went to his brother and told him all about it. The Goldsmith was very angry when he heard the story, for he knew that the children's good fortune could only be the result of their having eaten the heart and liver of the golden bird. In order to be avenged on them, he said: "Your children are in the power of the Evil One. If you touch the gold, or allow them to remain in your house any longer, a dreadful misfortune will happen to you."

The Broom-maker went home very sorrowful, for he loved his children dearly: but he was very much afraid of the Evil One, so he took the boys into the forest, and left them there. All day long they wandered about, trying to find their way home. When night came, they met a hunter, and asked him to help them. The hunter was a kind-hearted man, and when he heard about the gold pieces, he said: "I will take you home with me, and if I

find you have told me the truth, you shall live with me as my own children."

So they went with him, and he treated them with great kindness, and taught them to hunt and shoot. Every morning he took the two gold pieces from under their pillows and put them in a bag, to save up for a time when they should be needed.

Time went on, and the boys grew up so much alike that you could scarcely tell them apart. One day the hunter said to them: "You are now old enough to be hunters and go out into the world. I will give you each a gun and a dog, and I am going to divide the gold I have saved between you." So the brothers bade him good-bye and set out on their journey together.

They had travelled some days through the forest when they found themselves short of food. So one of them loaded his gun and looked about for some animal that he could kill and cook for dinner. Presently a hare came by, but the hunter had no sooner raised his gun than she cried:

"Spare my life, and you'll not rue,
My little ones I'll give to you."

Then she ran into a bush and returned with two little ones. They were such pretty little creatures that the brothers could not bear to shoot them; so they walked on again, with the little hares following like dogs.

After going some distance they saw a fox, and were just about to shoot him, when he cried:

"Spare my life, and you'll not rue,
My little ones I'll give to you."

Then he brought two little ones, who looked so pretty with their bushy tails that the hunters allowed them to follow with the hares.

They went on, meeting several other animals, and the same thing happened each time, till at last they had two hares, two foxes, two wolves, two bears, and two lions, who followed them wherever they went. Then one of the hunters said: "This is all very well, but we are still hungry. Come, fox, you are sharp enough. Tell us where we shall find something to eat."

"There is a village not far from here," replied the fox, "where I sometimes go in search of chickens. I will show you the way."

They followed the fox, and very soon came to a village, where they bought food for themselves and the animals; but they were such a large party that they could find no inn big enough to take them in for the night. There was nothing to be done but to separate. They divided the animals so that each had a hare, a fox, a wolf, a bear, and a lion, and promising to meet again, the brothers parted.

One of them soon came to a large town, where all the houses were hung with crape. He went to an inn, and asked the landlord why the town was in mourning, and he replied: "Because the King's daughter will die to-morrow morning."

"Is she dangerously ill?" asked the hunter.

"No," replied the landlord, "but she will die all the same. Close to the town there is a mountain, in which dwells a Dragon. He demands that every year a young maiden should be given to him to devour, or he

threatens to destroy the whole country. The King's daughter is the only one left, and she must be sacrificed like the others. Many brave men have tried to kill the Dragon, but he is a fearful creature, with seven fiery heads, and they have all been devoured in their turn. The King has promised that he will give his daughter to the man who rids the country of this dreadful curse, and make him heir to his throne as well."

Early the next morning, the hunter went up into the mountain, followed by his faithful animals. On the top there was a church, and on going in he found three full goblets standing on the altar, with this inscription: "Whoever dares to drink this wine will be the strongest man in the world, and will be able to wield the sword which lies beneath the altar."

The hunter soon drained the goblets, and found the sword, which he raised quite easily, in spite of its great weight. He hurried out of the church, and saw the Princess coming up the mountain followed by the King and a long procession all dressed in black. When they reached the church, the King bade his daughter farewell, and returned with his courtiers to the palace. The King's Marshal alone remained on the mountain to watch what happened; and the poor Princess sat down on a stone to wait for the Dragon, weeping bitterly.

Then the hunter stepped forward, and said: "Princess, take comfort. I am the strongest man in the world, and I am going to fight the Dragon and rescue you from this fearful death." As he spoke, a dreadful roar was heard, and the Dragon rushed down the hill. His eyes shone

like coals, and out of each of his seven heads came a red tongue like a flame of fire. When he saw the hunter, he stopped, and cried : "Who are you ? And how dare you come here ?"

"I am a hunter, and I am going to fight you."

The Dragon laughed. "Bigger men have tried that, and lost their lives. I will make short work of you." And he rushed on the hunter, breathing fire and smoke from his seven mouths. The hunter was half suffocated, but he seized his sword and, stepping quickly aside as the Dragon rushed at him, with one stroke cut off three of his heads. The Dragon turned and, mad with rage, leapt on him once more. Again the hunter swung his sword, and three more heads fell to the ground. Feeling his strength failing him, he called to his faithful animals, who seized the Dragon and held him down while he cut off the remaining head. Then he hurried to where the Princess was waiting, and raised her up, and showed her the Dragon dead upon the ground. And she said : "You have saved me from a terrible death, and now you shall be my husband, and my father will make you heir to his throne." Then she took off her necklace, which had five strings of coral, and divided it among the animals as a reward ; to the Lion she gave a little gold clasp as well, because he was the strongest. She gave her handkerchief, which was embroidered with her name, to the hunter ; and he cut the seven tongues out of the Dragon's heads and wrapt them up in it. Then he said : "We are both weary, and a rest would do us good. No harm can happen to us now, and we can sleep in peace."

So the Princess lay down, and as soon as she was

asleep, the hunter said to the Lion : " You must stay near us and watch." Then he too lay down, and being worn out with the struggle was soon fast asleep.

The Lion watched for a time, but he soon became very drowsy, and said to the Bear : " Come and sit beside me while I have a doze, and if anyone comes wake me up."

The Bear sat down, but feeling rather tired too, said to the Wolf : " Watch by me, and if anything happens, wake me up."

Presently the Wolf said to the Fox : " You have good eyes, and can watch better than I. If you hear anything, wake me up." And he lay down and was soon fast asleep.

After a while the Fox began to yawn, and said to the Hare : " I am quite tired out, and must sleep. Watch by me, and if anything happens, wake me up."

The Hare sat down beside the Fox ; but she, too, was very tired, and soon fell asleep.

Now, the King's Marshal, who had been watching from a distance, had seen the Princess and the hunter and all the animals lie down one after another and fall into a deep sleep. He crept near, and finding the Dragon's dead body on the ground, knew that the hunter had succeeded in killing him, and would presently wake and claim his reward. Being wicked and envious, he drew his sword and cut off the hunter's head as he lay asleep.

Then he awakened the Princess, and said : " You are in my power, and if you do not promise to obey me in everything, I will kill you." In her terror she promised all he asked, and he carried her down the mountain, and brought her to her father.

"I have killed the Dragon," said he, "and I now claim my reward."

"I will gladly give you my dear daughter," said the King. And he ordered preparations to be made for the wedding. But the Princess pleaded so hard that it might not take place for a year, that he at last consented. And the Princess thought: "By that time something will have happened to prevent it, and I shall perhaps hear something of my dear lover."

For a long time the animals lay sleeping beside their dead master: then a humble-bee came and stung the Hare on the nose, and she woke with a start. She immediately woke the Fox, who woke the Wolf, who woke the Bear, who woke the Lion, and they all sat up. The Lion, on seeing that the Princess was gone and his master dead, gave a dreadful roar, and cried: "Bear, I told you to watch. Why did you not wake me?"

And the Bear said: "Wolf, I told you to watch. Why did you not wake me?"

"Fox," cried the Wolf, "why did you not wake me?"

"Hare," cried the Fox, "why did you not wake me?"

The poor little Hare had nothing to say, for there had been no one to waken her. So they all said that it was her fault, and were so angry with her that she cried: "Oh, don't kill me! I know a wonderful root that will cure every wound in the world, and I am sure I can bring our master back to life, but the mountain where it grows is a long way from here."

"Very well," said the Lion. "We will give you twenty-four hours to get there and back. If you bring us

the root, we will forgive you for not having kept watch as you should."

Off went the Hare, and was back before the following morning with the root in her mouth. The Lion immediately placed the head of the hunter on the neck, and the Hare held the root to the place where the join was. In their hurry they did not notice that they had put the head on back to front, and it was not until the hunter sat up and tried to eat something that they discovered the mistake. However, they soon took the head off and put it on again the right way, and healed the wound with the root. Then they told the hunter all that had happened, and when he heard that the Princess had disappeared he was very sorrowful, and thought: "I shall never see her again."

The next day he took his gun and set out to travel about the world, leaving his animals to be taken care of by the landlord of the inn. When he had wandered for a whole year, he found himself once more in the town. The houses were hung with scarlet cloth and all the people had on their holiday clothes. He went to the landlord, and said: "Last time I came to your town all the houses were hung with black. Now they are hung with scarlet."

"Ah!" replied the landlord. "Last year we thought the Princess was going to be given to the Dragon, but the King's Marshal killed him, and he is to marry the Princess to-morrow, and be made heir to the throne. He is a brave man, and deserves his good fortune."

When the hunter heard this he sat silent for a long time, thinking deeply. Then he sent for his animals, and said: "Go to the palace and tell the Princess that your

master, who killed the Dragon, is in the town, and asks her to send him some bread from the King's table and some wine from the King's cup."

The animals ran off to do their master's bidding. When they got to the palace the sentry stopped them at the gates, but the Bear gave him such a box on the ear that he let them pass without asking any more questions. The butler at the door was so frightened when he saw them that he took to his heels and ran away, leaving the door open. They trotted upstairs to the Princess' room and knocked at the door. When she opened it and saw them, she cried: "Oh, you dear animals, where have you been all this time?"

They answered all together: "Our master, who killed the Dragon, is in the town and asks you to send him some bread from the King's table and some wine from the King's cup."

The Princess sent for the chief butler and the King's cup-bearer, and ordered them to bring some bread and wine. The baskets were hung round the necks of the Bear and Lion, and the animals ran back to the inn and gave them to the hunter, who was overjoyed to think that the Princess still loved him.

The same day the King said to his daughter: "What did all those animals want who came to see you?"

"I cannot tell you," replied the Princess; "but their master is at the inn, and if you send for him he will answer your question."

The King sent a servant to the inn with an invitation to the hunter. The answer came: "Tell the King I

cannot come to the palace unless he sends me a suit of clothes and a carriage with six horses."

When he heard the message, the King went to his daughter, and said: "This stranger seems to be very proud. How shall I answer him?"

"Send all he asks for," replied the Princess.

So they sent a handsome suit and a carriage with six white horses, and soon after the hunter arrived, looking very handsome in his new clothes. He came into the hall followed by his animals, and was received by the King with great ceremony. The Marshal, believing him to be dead, did not recognise him, and they seated themselves on either side of the Princess.

The King ordered the seven heads of the Dragon to be brought in to show to the guests. "These heads," said he, "belonged to the Dragon whom the Marshal bravely slew. I therefore gladly give him my daughter in marriage, and make him heir to my kingdom."

"These indeed are the heads," said the hunter; "but where are the tongues?"

The Marshal sprang from his seat, pale with fear. "Dragons have no tongues," he cried.

"We will see about that," said the hunter; and he unrolled the handkerchief the Princess had given him, and showed the seven tongues. He placed one in each of the seven heads, and they fitted exactly. Then he took the handkerchief to the Princess, and said: "Did you not give me this handkerchief the day I killed the Dragon?"

"Yes," she replied; "and I gave a string of my coral necklace to each of your animals, and a gold clasp as

well to the Lion, because he was the strongest and helped you most."

The hunter called to his animals, and showed the strings of beads to the King, and the gold clasp on the Lion's neck. Then he cried :

"I slew the Dragon, as these things prove. The Marshal cut my head off while I was sleeping, and stole the Princess from me. I now claim her as my bride."

"And I will marry him and no other," said the Princess. "The wicked Marshal threatened to kill me if I spoke the truth, and that is why I begged to have the marriage delayed for a year."

Then there was great rejoicing, and the King ordered the Marshal to be driven out of the kingdom. The same day the hunter married the Princess, and was made heir to the throne. His faithful animals stayed with him, and were allowed to live in the palace, and roam the King's forests at will.

Soon after his marriage, the Prince was hunting in the forest with a number of attendants, and saw a beautiful snow-white deer. He told his servants to wait for him, and rode off in pursuit, followed by his faithful animals. The servants waited all day, but when evening came and he did not return, they rode back to the palace and told the Princess what had happened. She was very much alarmed, for she knew that part of the forest was enchanted by a wicked Witch, who enticed people in and then changed them into strange shapes.

In the meantime the Prince had ridden after the white deer, but had never been able to get near enough to shoot it. At last he lost sight of it altogether, pulled up

his horse, and blew his horn loudly. As there was no reply, he knew that he had ridden too far to return that night, so he dismounted, lit a fire under a tree, and determined to stay where he was till morning.

Presently he heard a voice above his head, and looking up, he saw an old woman sitting on a branch of a tree.

"Hulloh!" he cried. "Who are you, perched up there?"

The old woman only shivered, and muttered: "Oh! I am so cold! I shall freeze, I shall freeze!"

"Come and warm yourself at my fire," said the Prince, kindly.

"If I come down," she replied, "your animals will bite me."

"No, no," said the Prince, "I will not let them hurt you."

"I am not sure," said the old woman. "Take this twig and touch them with it, and then I shall feel safe."

She dropped a twig as she spoke, and the Prince, to satisfy her, took it up and touched each of the animals with it. They were immediately turned to stone. The old Witch dropped from the branch and touched the Prince, and he was also turned to stone. Then she rolled them all into a hole which she had dug ready, and covered them with leaves.

All this time the brother of the Prince had been wandering through the world with his animals. When he left home, his foster-father had given him a magic knife, and told him that whenever his brother was in trouble, the blade of this knife would become rusty. Directly the Prince was turned to stone, the hunter had only to look

at the knife to know that some misfortune had happened to his brother. He set out at once to find him, and presently came to the town where the Princess lived. As soon as the watchman saw him he sent a messenger to the palace to tell the Princess that her husband had returned. And when the hunter walked through the town, followed by his animals, he looked so exactly like his brother that even the Princess was deceived, and mistook him for her husband. The hunter did not stay long at the palace, but learning that his brother had gone hunting and had not returned, he bade good-bye to the Princess and rode into the forest.

He had not gone far before he saw the white deer, and set off in pursuit. When night came he found that he was lost, and lighted a fire as his brother had done. As he sat round it with his animals, he heard the old woman shivering and grumbling in the branches overhead, and called to her: "Come down, and warm yourself at my fire."

"No, no," said she, "I am afraid your animals will bite me. But if you will strike them with this twig they will not be able to hurt me."

When the hunter heard this he grew suspicious, and said: "No, I will not strike my animals. Come down from the tree, or I will shoot you."

"Shoot away," said the Witch. "You can't hurt me."

The hunter raised his gun and shot her; the bullet passed through her, but she only laughed.

Then the hunter cut three silver buttons from his coat and loaded his gun with them. He pulled the trigger,

and the Witch fell to the ground. Then he cried : " You wicked old Witch, if you do not at once tell me where my brother is, I will throw you into the fire."

The Witch was in such a fright that she confessed at once. She led him to where the stones lay, and was obliged to take the twig and strike them. Immediately the Prince and his animals came back to life. The two brothers were overjoyed at meeting again, and told each other all that had happened while they had been separated. Then they set out to return to the palace. On the way, the Prince said to his brother : " We are dressed alike, and your animals are the same as mine. Let us go into the palace at different gates and see if the King can tell one from the other."

As the Princess and her father were sitting at dinner, two sentinels came in at opposite doors, and announced, at the same moment, that the Prince and his animals had returned.

"How is this?" cried the King. "One of you must be mistaken, for the gates where you are on guard are half a mile apart."

As he spoke, the Prince entered at one door and his brother at the other, each followed by his animals. The King stared at them in bewilderment. Then he turned to his daughter, and said : "Which of these is your husband? They are so exactly alike that I cannot see the least difference between them."

For a moment the Princess was too frightened to answer. Suddenly she saw the golden clasp on the neck of one of the lions, and cried : "The one whom that lion follows is my husband."

The Prince laughed and kissed her ; and they all sat down to dinner and were very happy. Their troubles were now past, and they all lived together at the palace in peace and contentment till the end of their lives.

OLD SULTAN AND HIS FRIENDS

A MAN once had a faithful dog, called Sultan, who had grown so old that he was no longer of any use. He was too lame to follow with the pack, and his bark was so feeble that thieves were not afraid of him. So his master decided to kill him.

Now, Sultan had a great friend, a Wolf, who lived in the forest. When he heard of his master's intention, he went to the Wolf, and said : " This is my last day on earth, for to-morrow my master is going to kill me."

The Wolf thought for a long time, then he said : " If you will do as I tell you, I think I can help you out of your difficulty. Your master and his wife are going haymaking to-morrow, and while they are at work they will lay their little child under the hedge, and tell you to watch him. I will rush out of the wood, seize the child, and carry him off. You must bark loudly to attract their attention, and spring after me. I will drop the child, and you will take him back to his parents, who will think that you have saved his life. Then they will be so grateful to you that they will be ashamed that they ever intended to kill you."

The Dog did all the Wolf told him, and everything fell out as they had planned. When he saw the Wolf spring upon the child, the father thought that nothing could save it; but when Sultan brought it alive and well, and laid it at his feet, his joy and gratitude knew no bounds.

“I will never part from you now,” said he. “If I had killed you a day sooner than I intended, our child would have been lost.” To his wife he said: “Go quickly home and make Sultan a nice bowl of bread and milk. He must have soft food, as he has no teeth to bite with. And he shall have my pillow to make a soft bed.”

So Sultan went home with them, and lived in luxury for the rest of his days.

THE LITTLE BROTHER AND SISTER

THERE was once a little brother and sister who had a cruel stepmother. They were so unhappy at home that at last they could bear it no longer, and ran away into the forest.

Now the stepmother was a wicked Witch. She followed the children, and bewitched all the springs and streams in the forest. For she knew that sooner or later they must grow thirsty and drink, and she was determined they should not escape her.

At last the brother knelt by a stream and drank. And no sooner had the first drop passed his lips than he was changed into a fawn. The little sister wept when she saw her enchanted brother, but she could not change him back again. So she took off her little golden garter and put it round his neck for a collar, and led him away into the forest. There they found a deserted hut which they made their home.

After they had lived in the forest for some time, it happened that a hunting party came there, and among them the King of the country. No sooner did the fawn hear the barking of the dogs and the sounding of the horn, than he longed to join the chase. The little sister wept, and tried to prevent his going.

“The huntsmen will catch and kill you,” she said, “not



THE LITTLE BROTHER AND SISTER

knowing that you are my brother. And then I shall be all alone in the forest." But the fawn begged so hard that at last she let him go. "But remember," she said, "when you return in the evening, say, 'Dear little sister, let me in'—then I shall know that it is you, and unlock the door."



They ran away into the forest

The fawn bounded away. All day the huntsmen followed him, but he was too fleet for them. At night he returned to the hut, and cried: "Dear little sister, let me in." And the little sister ran to unlock the door, overjoyed to have her brother safely home again.

The next day the same thing happened, but at night, as he was returning very footsore and weary, one of the

huntsmen followed him at a distance, and watched him go into the hut. The man went to the King and related what he had seen and heard. And the King said to his men : "To-morrow we will hunt again. But if you see the fawn with the golden collar, follow but do not kill him." To the man who had followed the fawn the day before he said : "Come and show me the little hut."

The next day the fawn bounded off into the forest as before. Soon after the King went to the hut, and knocking at the door, said softly : "Dear little sister, let me in."

As the door opened he stepped in, and there stood the most beautiful maiden he had ever seen. But the little sister was so frightened at seeing a noble gentleman with a gold crown on his head instead of her dear little fawn, that for a long time she could not believe that he was a friend. However, after a little talk, he took her hand, and said :

"Will you go to my castle, and be my wife?" And the little sister answered : "Ah, yes. But I cannot leave my dear brother."

"He shall come with us," said the King. "He shall live in the palace, and have everything he wants."

So they rode away together, with the fawn running beside them. And soon after the marriage was celebrated with great rejoicing.

Now all this time the wicked stepmother had supposed that the brother and sister had died of hunger in the forest, or been devoured by wild beasts. When she heard of their happiness, she was so filled with envy and malice that she could not rest until she had tried to injure them. Especially she longed to hurt the little sister,

now a great Queen, for she had a daughter of her own who was very ugly, with but one eye: and the little sister's beauty and goodness made her furious with jealousy.

As time went on the Queen had a little son. While the King was out hunting, the wicked stepmother changed herself into a chambermaid, and went into the Queen's room. "Come," said she, "the bath is ready."

The ugly daughter was close at hand, and together they carried the Queen to the bathroom and put her in the bath; then they locked the door and ran away. But they had made so great a fire in the bathroom that the poor Queen was soon suffocated.

And then the old Witch took her own daughter, and gave her the form of the Queen, and put her in the Queen's bed. When the King came home, he was overjoyed to hear that he had a son, and went quickly to his wife's room. But when he would have drawn the curtains of the bed, the old Witch cried: "Take care! Leave the curtains down. The Queen must not be disturbed." The truth was, that with all her art she could not restore her daughter's missing eye, and she knew that if the King looked into the bed he would see that it was not his true Queen who lay there.

That night, when everyone else in the palace was asleep, the nurse was watching alone beside the baby's cradle. The nursery door opened, and the real Queen came in. She took the child out of his cradle, and nursed him in her arms. Then she laid him down again, and, going to the corner of the room where the fawn lay,

stroked him gently. Then she passed silently out of the room.

On the second night the Queen came again in the same manner, and the nurse went to the King and told him what had happened. And he said : "To-morrow I will watch by the child myself."

The next evening he went to the nursery, and in the middle of the night the Queen appeared and nursed the child in her arms. And when he saw her the King sprang up, and cried : "You can be no one but my wife !"

She answered : "Yes, I am your wife !" and the same moment her life came back, and she was as young and beautiful as ever. Then she told the King how cruelly she had been treated by the Witch and her ugly daughter, and the King condemned them both to death.

No sooner was the Witch dead than the spell which had changed the Queen's brother into a fawn was broken, and he appeared before them a tall and handsome young man.

After this, the brother and sister lived happily for the rest of their lives.

THE GIANT AND THE TAILOR

THERE was once a Tailor who boasted that he was the cleverest man in the world. He was always talking about the wonderful things he could do, but people said that he talked a great deal and did very little. One day he took it into his head to go on a journey. Before he had gone far he found himself in a wood, and was terrified to see a huge Giant coming towards him.

"Hulloh! little fly," said the Giant, "what are you doing in my wood?"

"I am doing no harm," said the Tailor, in a fright.

"I am a poor man, and want to earn my bread."

"I want a servant, as it happens," said the Giant, "and you will do as well as another."

"What wages shall I have?" asked the Tailor.

"Three hundred and sixty-five days a year," answered the Giant.

When they arrived at the Giant's castle, the Tailor asked what he should do first.

"I am thirsty," said the Giant. "Bring me a jug of water."

"Why not the whole well, while I am about it?" said the Tailor. He could not help boasting, though he was still a good deal frightened.

"You can't bring the well," said the Giant.

nervous that he could not sleep, but lay awake all night trying to think of a way out of the difficulty. He dared not tell the Tailor to go, for fear of making him angry. The next morning they went out together, and came to a marsh where some willows were growing.

"You are such a little man," said the Giant to the Tailor, "if I put you on one of these willow branches, I don't believe your weight would bend it down."

"I weigh as much as you do, and more," said the Tailor, and he let the Giant pick him up and put him on the branch. He took a deep breath, to make himself as heavy as possible, and the bough bent down; but he could not hold his breath for ever, and directly he let it out the branch flew up, taking him with it, and he disappeared in the sky. The Giant never saw him again. And if he has not fallen down, I think he must still be up there.

THE GOOSE-GIRL AT THE WELL

THERE was once a King who had three daughters. He called them to him, and said : “ My children, I know that you love me as I love you. But to the one who loves me best of all, I am going to leave my kingdom and all my possessions.”

The eldest daughter said : “ Father, I love you better than the sweetest sugar.”

And the second said : “ I love you better than the prettiest of my dresses.”

But the youngest daughter, who was the most beautiful of all, remained silent.

“ Come, my child,” said the King, “ have you nothing to say ? ”

“ I do not know how to tell my love,” she replied, “ it is too great. But as the nicest food tastes of nothing without salt—I love you as I love salt.”

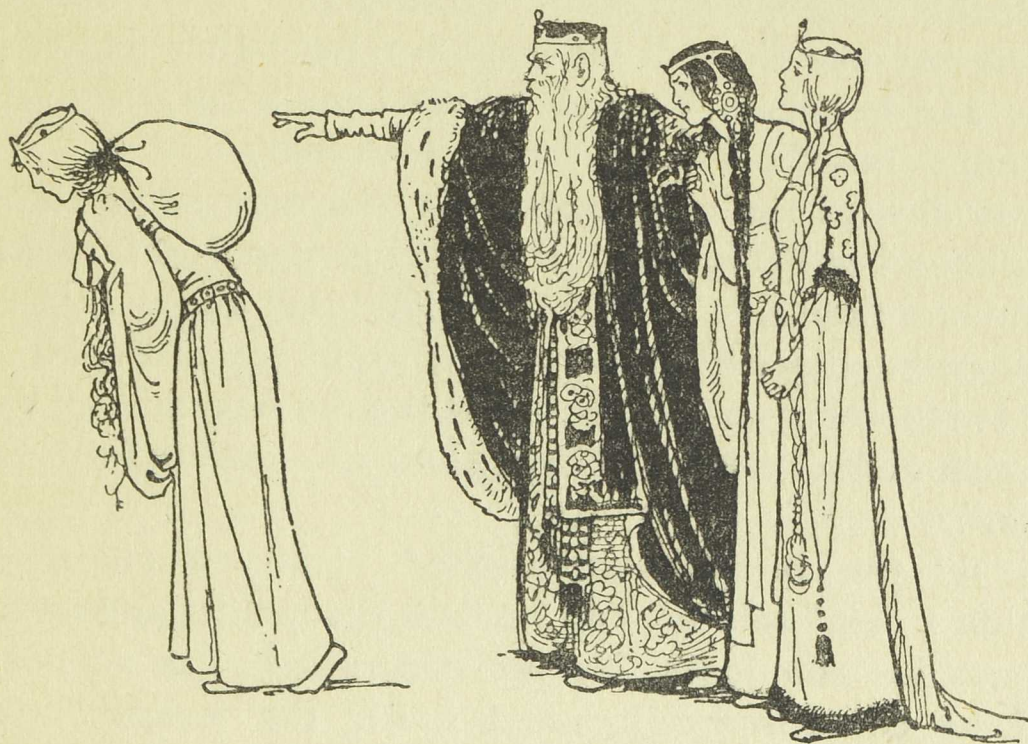
When the King heard this he was very angry. “ As your love for me is like salt,” he cried, “ you shall have enough and to spare.” And he ordered a heavy bag of salt to be tied on her back, and drove her into the forest. Before a day had passed he had repented of his unkindness, and wished to have his daughter back. But though they searched the forest for many weeks, they could see nothing of her.

The Princess wandered away, weeping bitterly, and presently saw an old woman sitting by the roadside.

"What is the matter, Princess?" she asked.

"My father has driven me from home," replied the Princess, "and I have nowhere to go."

"Come with me," said the old woman kindly, "and I



He drove her into the forest

will show you how you can earn your bread and have a soft bed to sleep on. But first you must put this skin on your face and cover your golden locks with these grey ones, for if you should meet a Witch in the forest and she saw how beautiful you are, she would change you into a hideous toad."

The Princess put on the false skin and hair, and no one would have guessed that she was a beautiful maiden.

They walked on together, and presently came to the cottage where the old woman lived.

"You shall tend my geese," said the old woman, "and I will call you my daughter; and in return for your service, I grant that every tear you shed shall be changed into a pearl."

So the Princess became a goose-girl. Every evening as she sat by the well she wept for her father's unkindness, and her tears became a little heap of pearls on the ground: but she was too sad to heed them.

One day, as the old woman was returning home with a bundle on her back, she met a young man. She looked so old and tired that he pitied her, and said kindly: "Give me your bundle, and I will carry it to the top of the hill."

"It is too heavy for you," said the old woman. "You are rich and a nobleman's son, and are not used to hard work."

At this the young Count laughed. "If you can carry it I think I can," said he, and he took the bundle and swung it onto his shoulder. To his surprise, it was so heavy that he could scarcely stand under the weight. He staggered on, but had not got half-way up the hill before he stopped, and gasped out: "I must rest for a few minutes. Help me to take the bundle off my back."

"No, no," said the old woman. "You are young and strong, and should be able to do a little work. Carry my bundle home for me, and you shall have your reward."

The young Count struggled on. He was almost dropping with fatigue when they reached the cottage, but directly the old woman took the bundle from his back he felt as fresh as if it had never been there.

"Now you may rest," said the old woman. "Look! here is my beautiful daughter coming to welcome you."

The Count looked, and saw a flock of geese coming from the well, and behind them the ugliest woman he had ever seen. She wished him good evening in a sweet voice, and went into the cottage.

"Now you must return home," said the old woman. "But first you shall have your reward, as I promised." And she gave him a casket which had been cut out of a single emerald. "Go to the castle," said she, "and show this casket to the King, and say: 'The old woman in the forest gave it to me'; and you shall be rich and happy for the rest of your life."

The young Count thanked her, and went straight to the castle and asked to see the King. When he came into his presence, he knelt before him and laid the emerald casket at his feet. The King ordered it to be opened, and it was found to be full of the most beautiful pearls.

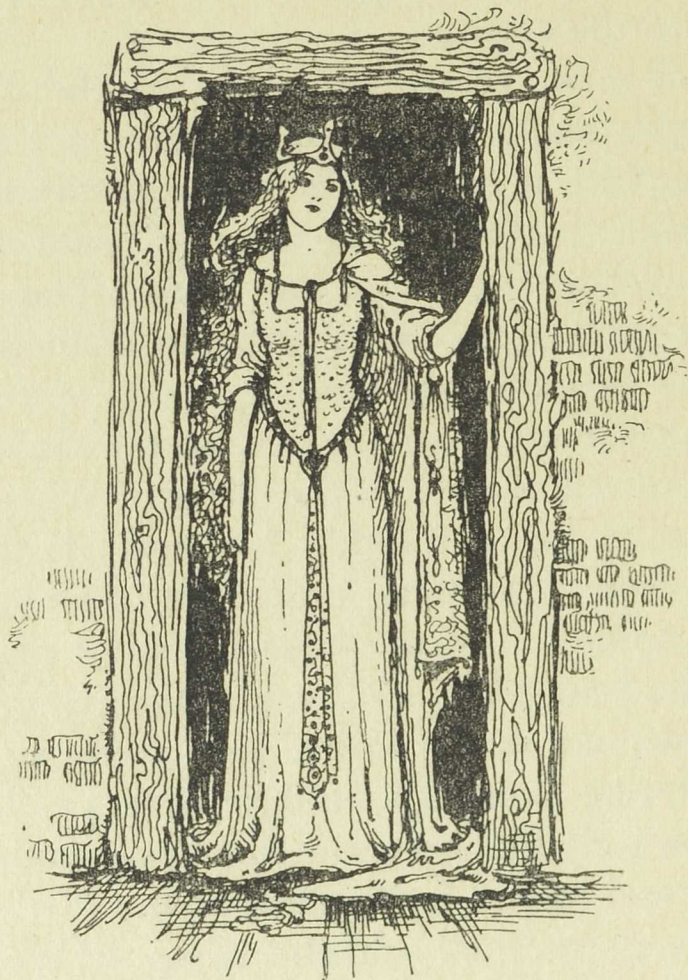
"Where did you get this?" asked the King.

"The old woman in the forest gave it to me," replied the Count. "She lives in a cottage near a well, and has a daughter as ugly as night, but she has promised that I shall be rich and happy for the rest of my life."

"This is very strange," said the King. "We must find out more about this old woman and her daughter."

And he called his servants and set out, bidding the Count lead the way. Now it happened that the Count went faster than the others, and when evening came he found himself alone. He climbed into a tree which grew beside a stream, and determined to remain there all night. Presently he heard footsteps, and looking down saw that

the Witch's daughter had come to the stream. She knelt down, and what was his surprise to see her take off her grey hair and the skin that covered her face, and lay them on the bank beside her. Her own golden hair fell round



There stood the King's daughter in a silken dress

her and drooped into the water, and her cheeks were as pink-and-white as apple-blossom. As she bathed her face and hands she wept bitterly, and her tears fell into the stream and were changed into pearls. When she had finished she put on the false skin and grey hair, and went

slowly home. The Count came down from the tree and followed her. He saw her go into the cottage, and creeping cautiously to the window, peeped in. The old woman was busy spinning. As the door opened and the Princess came in, she looked up and smiled.

"You have been a long time in the forest," said she. "What did you hear and see?"

"I heard the wind blow and saw the moon rise," replied the Princess.

"Go into your room," said the old woman, "and take the skin from your face and the grey hair from your head, and wait till I call you."

The Princess went out and the old woman resumed her spinning. The Count went to the door and knocked boldly.

"Come in," cried the old woman. At the same moment the King and his servants came up and they all went in together.

"Where is your daughter?" asked the Count.

"I have no daughter," replied the old woman. "But the Princess will welcome you." And she went to the door and called: "Princess, Princess—the King is waiting."

The door opened, and there stood the King's daughter in a silken dress, with her golden hair falling about her. She was so beautiful that the Count could only gaze at her in wonder. The King took her in his arms and kissed her tenderly, begging her to forgive him. And very soon after they went back to the castle.

No one knows the end of this story, but I feel sure that the Count married the Princess, and that they lived happily and had everything they could wish for.

THE GOLD RING

A LITTLE maidservant was once travelling with her master and mistress. As they were going through a wood they were attacked by robbers, who killed them all except the little maid. They let her go because she was poor, and had nothing worth stealing. She ran through the wood till she was quite tired out and was obliged to stop. She sat down under a tree and began to cry bitterly.

Presently she looked up and saw a white Dove sitting on a branch with a golden key in his beak. He flew to her, and dropped the key in her lap, saying : "Don't cry, little maid. The tree under which you are sitting is a magic tree. Look carefully, and you will find a lock on it which can be opened with this key."

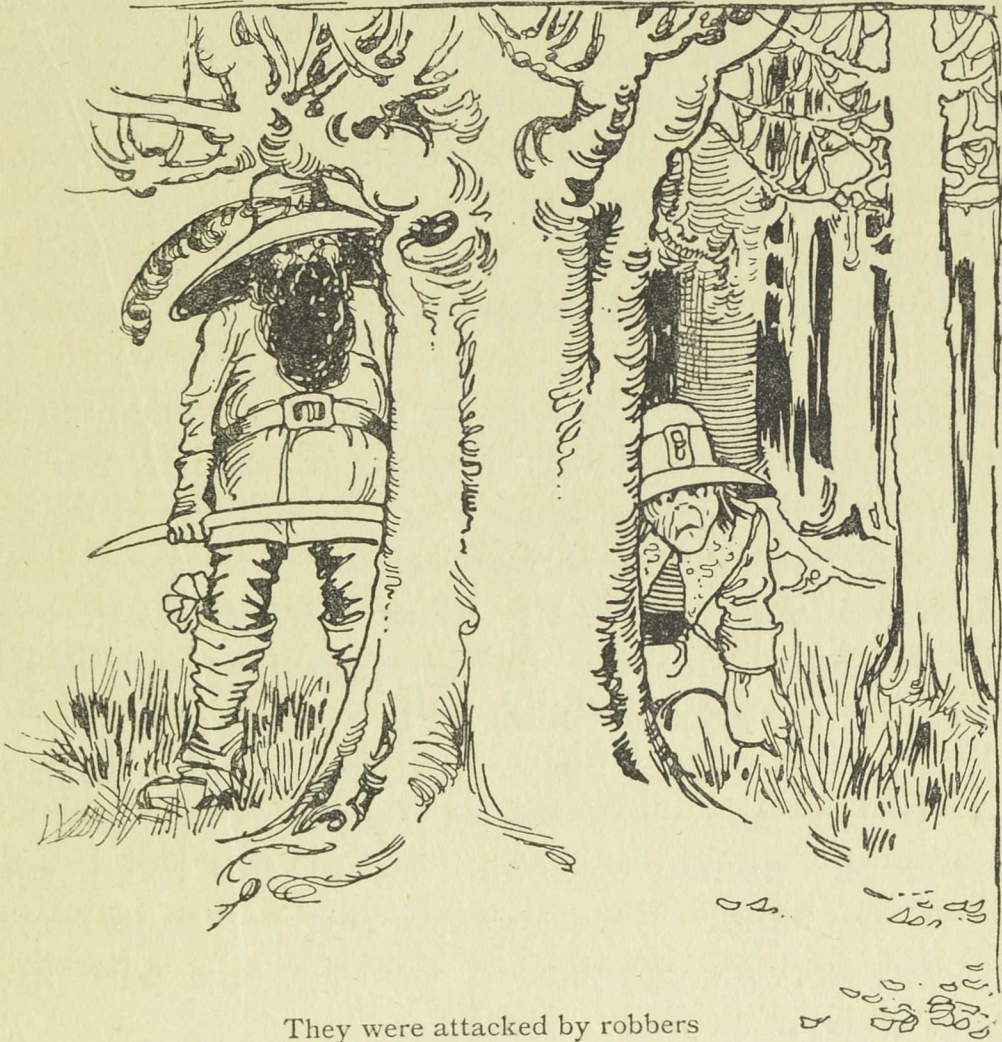
The maiden thanked the Dove, and unlocked the tree. In it she found all kinds of good things to eat and drink. When her hunger was satisfied, she sat down again, and said : "Oh, I am so tired ! If only I had somewhere to sleep except the hard ground !"

Immediately the Dove flew down with another key, and said :

"Open the tree with this, and see what you will find."

The maid unlocked the tree again, and there was a pretty white bed. She lay down on it, and was soon fast asleep.

When she woke in the morning, the Dove came with another key, and told her to unlock the tree again. This time she found a beautiful dress, embroidered in silver and gold, such as she had never dreamed of wearing.



They were attacked by robbers

For some time she lived in this way, with plenty of food, a soft bed to lie on, and a new dress whenever she chose to unlock the tree. One day the Dove came to her and said : "I have given you all I can give. Will you do something for me in return?"

"With all my heart," replied the maiden.

Then the Dove said : "Go into a cottage I will show you, and there you will find an old woman sitting. She will say 'Good morning' to you, but do not reply ; if you say a single word, you will be in her power. Turn to the right, and you will find yourself in a room full of rings set with all sorts of precious stones. Among them is a plain gold ring. Find it, and bring it to me, but do not on any account touch any of the others."

The Dove then led her to the cottage, and she went in. There sat the old woman, looking very cross and ugly.

"Good morning," said she ; but the maiden gave no answer, and went quickly through a door at the right. "You shall not go in there !" cried the old woman in a rage, and she rushed forward to prevent her. But the maiden remained perfectly silent, and the old woman was powerless. She went quickly into the room, in which she found a table covered with glittering rings. She searched everywhere, but could not find the plain gold one. Just as she was about to give up in despair, she saw the old woman creeping out of the room with a cage in her hand. She ran after her, and took the cage from her, and on opening it, found a bird with a gold ring in its beak.

She took the ring and hurried back to the tree ; but the white Dove was not there. She waited for a long time, till she grew quite tired, and leant against the trunk of the tree. Suddenly it grew soft and warm, and two of the branches came down and wound themselves about her. She looked up, and saw that the tree had disappeared,

and in its place stood a handsome young man, who kissed her, and said : “ Do not be afraid. I am a King’s son, whom the wicked Witch changed into a tree. Every day for an hour she made me into a white dove ; but I could not recover my own shape until someone was brave enough to take the gold ring from her. You have released me, and now I will take you to my father’s castle, and you shall be my wife.”

They got into a carriage which stood near, and drove away in state. So the little maidservant became a Princess, and lived happily ever afterwards.

THE WILLOW-WREN

IN olden days, the birds decided that they would have a king. A great meeting was called, and the question arose as to which of them should be chosen. After a great deal of talking and ruffling of feathers, the Eagle said: "Let us settle it this way: whoever can fly nearest to the sun shall be king."

It was agreed, and on a certain day all the birds, great and small, assembled on the roof of a house. The signal was given, and the whole flock rose in the air. The little birds soon came down again, or were carried away by the wind; the big ones flew higher and higher, but even those with strong wings had to give in, and at last only the Eagle was left. "That is all right," thought he. "I need not trouble to fly any higher." And he dropped his wings and began to descend. As he did so, a little Brown Bird, who had concealed himself in the Eagle's feathers, sprang from his hiding-place and flew high up into the air.

"I am king! I am king!" he cried, in a shrill little voice, and flew down to the earth again, expecting to be received with great honour. But the Eagle cried: "He has won by treachery; do not make him king!" Some of the birds said one thing, some another. At last they agreed that they must try a new plan, and it was decided

that whoever could sink lowest into the earth, should be king.

"I can!" quacked the Duck, and sat down as flat as possible.

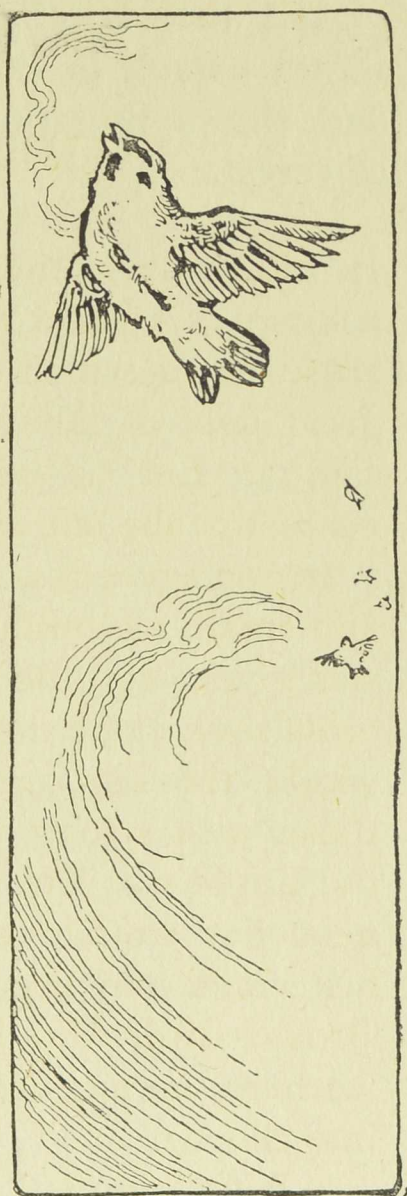
"I can!" cried the Cock, and began to scratch a hole in the ground.

"I am king! I am king!" cried the little Brown Bird, and he dived into a mouse-hole. No one else had thought of this, and so they all cried indignantly:

"Make you our king, you little trickster? You shall die first!" And they shut him up in the mouse-hole, and set the Owl to guard the door, and see that he did not escape.

Night came, and the Owl grew very sleepy. "I need not keep both eyes open," thought she; "I will close one, and watch with the other." So she shut her right eye, and kept her left fixed on the mouse-hole. Presently she thought: "My left eye is quite tired out. It must rest for a little." So she closed that too, intending to open the other.

But before she could do so, the little Brown Bird had slipped out of the hole and flown into the hedge,



The whole flock rose in the air

crying in his shrill voice : "I am king, I am king !"

And that is why the Owl flies by night, and never shows herself in the daytime. This story is quite true, and shows that the biggest people are not always the cleverest.

THE BATTLE

A BEAR and a Wolf were once walking in a wood, when they heard the sound of singing. The Bear stopped, and said: "What bird is that who sings so sweetly?" And the Wolf answered: "It is the king of the birds, and we must treat him with respect." But it was only the Willow-Wren.

"If he is the king of the birds," said the Bear, "where is his palace?"

"Come, and I will show it to you," said the Wolf. "But first we must wait until the queen comes home."

They hid themselves under a bush, and presently Jenny Wren and her husband appeared, with food in their beaks for their little ones. After feeding them they flew away again, telling the children to stay quietly till they returned. When they were gone, the Bear climbed up the tree and looked into the nest.

"Do you call this a palace?" he cried. "It is a miserable little place, not fit for anyone to live in."

"Go away," squeaked the little birds all together. "We are the king's children, and you are very rude."

"You the king's children?" cried the Bear. "You wretched little creatures, you are no bigger than mice."

"You shall pay dearly for this," cried the little birds,

in a rage. "Our parents shall hear what you have said, and then we shall see!"

The Bear was very much frightened when he heard this, and scrambled down the tree in a hurry. Soon after the Wren and his wife returned and found their children in tears.

"Children, children, what is the matter?" cried the anxious mother.

"The Bear has insulted us," cried the little ones. "He said we were miserable creatures, no bigger than mice; and we will not eat another morsel of food until you have made him apologise."

The father-bird flew to the Bear's den, and said: "I hear you have insulted my children. If you do not apologise, you shall suffer for it."

The Bear refused, and war was immediately declared. The Bear had not expected this, and was very much alarmed at the idea of going to war with the king. He hurried away to collect his army, which consisted of all the four-footed animals. The Wren called together all the birds he could find, with flies and bees, and all winged creatures. The Gnat, being the most cunning, was chosen as spy, and as the time for the great battle drew near, he hid himself under a leaf near the enemy's camp to find out what they intended to do. He heard that they had chosen the Fox for their general, but could not agree about a signal. At last the Fox said:

"I have a long bushy tail which can be seen from a great distance. If I hold it straight up, it means 'Charge! you are sure to win.' But if I lower it, it means 'Run away as fast as you can!'"

The Gnat flew back to the Wren, and told him what he had heard. The animals rushed into the field where the battle was to take place, looking so fierce and strong that it seemed as if the little flying creatures could have no chance. But the Wren sent for the Hornet, and told him to go and sit on the Fox's tail, and when he held it straight up, to sting it with all his might. The battle began, and directly the Fox gave the signal the Hornet stung his tail so badly that he was obliged to lower it. He raised it again, but this time the Hornet hurt him so much that he gave a loud cry and dropped his tail to the ground. Seeing this, the animal army broke up in great confusion, tumbling over each other and crying that all was lost. And in two minutes they had all fled, and the Wren was left master of the field.

With great joy the father and mother flew back to their nest, and cried : "Dear children, we have won the battle and you are avenged."

But the little ones still refused to eat anything until the Bear was made to apologise. So the Wren flew off and brought the Bear to the nest and obliged him to make a humble apology for his rude remarks. Then the little Wrens were satisfied, and consented to make a very hearty supper.

