



# WONDER WORLD

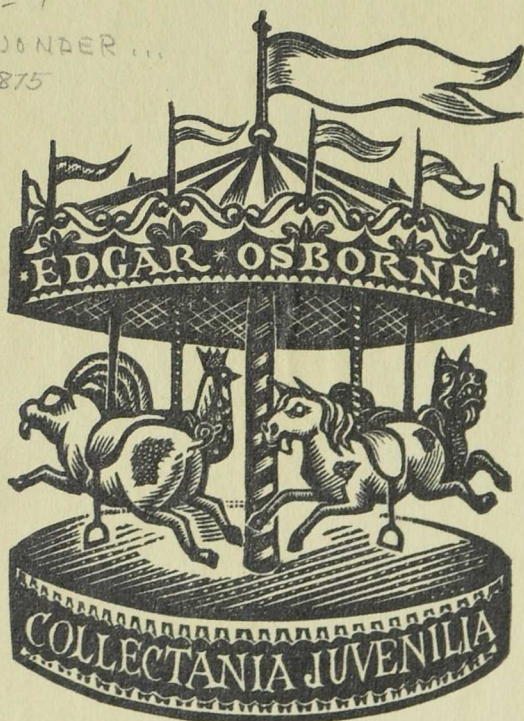
FAIRY TALES  
OLD AND NEW



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WONDER...

1875



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Elizabeth Alcock  
from her Brother  
John  
August 17<sup>th</sup> 1875  
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WONDER-WORLD.













THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.



# WONDER-WORLD.

A COLLECTION OF

## FAIRY TALES, OLD AND NEW.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH, GERMAN AND DANISH.

WITH FOUR COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS, AND NUMEROUS WOODCUTS BY  
L. RICHTER, OSCAR PLETSCH, AND OTHERS.



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## P R E F A C E.



SOME of the tales included in this volume are so old and familiar, and have a place so distinctly recognised in the literature of English children—for whom this book is intended—that no apology is needed for their republication. But amongst them there will be found others which have hitherto been unknown in an English form, and these, it is hoped, will afford no less wholesome food for the developing mind than the perennial favourites which have already served their turn for several generations.

The wide storehouse of German literature abounds in child-lore such as this—much of it original, but the greater part adapted from that wonderful fountain-head of imaginative narrative, the popular folk-lore, familiar to all through the world-renowned collection of the Brothers Grimm. To this source, indeed, nearly all our well-known tales may be

traced—sometimes directly, sometimes through the French narrator. In this volume the tales which are already familiar have been translated from the French or German, according as the one or the other language seemed to have originally furnished the version popular in England. The others are mostly taken directly from the German, or, in the case of certain of Hans Christian Andersen's (without some of whose charming tales no children's story-book would be worthy of the name), from the original Danish.

The woodcuts are for the most part the same as those used in a collection of stories published in Germany entitled 'Der Kinder Wundergarten.'





# CONTENTS.

	PAGE
The Sleeping Beauty . . . . .	<i>Perrault</i> . . . . . 1
Blue-Beard . . . . .	" . . . . . 7
Puss in Boots . . . . .	" . . . . . 13
Little Red-Riding-Hood . . . . .	<i>Grimm</i> . . . . . 20
Little Snow-White . . . . .	" . . . . . 23
Cinderella . . . . .	<i>Perrault</i> . . . . . 33
The Golden Goose . . . . .	<i>Grimm</i> . . . . . 41
The Fisherman and his Wife . . . . .	" . . . . . 46
The Poor Man and the Rich Man . . . . .	" . . . . . 56
King Thrush-Beard . . . . .	" . . . . . 61
Hans in Luck . . . . .	" . . . . . 68
The Nixie . . . . .	" . . . . . 79
Mother Holle . . . . .	" . . . . . 84
The King and the Journeyman . . . . .	<i>Lausch</i> . . . . . 89
The Manikin . . . . .	<i>Muldener</i> . . . . . 91
Table-Ready . . . . .	<i>Bechstein</i> . . . . . 100
The Seven Ravens . . . . .	" . . . . . 108
The Old Wizard and His Children . . . . .	" . . . . . 113
The Golden Roebuck . . . . .	" . . . . . 118
Little Meta . . . . .	<i>Anonymous</i> . . . . . 123
The Grateful Dwarf . . . . .	" . . . . . 134
The Knight and his Wife . . . . .	<i>Leander</i> . . . . . 143

	PAGE
The Glass Mountain . . . . .	<i>Kletke</i> . . . 150
The Invisible Kingdom . . . . .	<i>Leander</i> . . . 155
The Ugly Duckling . . . . .	<i>Hans C. Andersen</i> . 168
Little Thumb . . . . .	„ . 180
The Storks . . . . .	„ . 197
The Flying Trunk . . . . .	„ . 204
The Swineherd . . . . .	„ . 213
The Brave Tin-Soldier . . . . .	„ . 220
The Little Match-Girl . . . . .	„ . 226
Sunshine Stories . . . . .	„ . 231
The Old Bachelor's Grave. . . . .	<i>Leander</i> . . . 237
The Nutcracker . . . . .	<i>Anonymous</i> . . . 243
Padmanaba and Hassan . . . . .	<i>Arabian Nights</i> . . 246
The Wood-Maiden . . . . .	<i>Büchmann</i> . . . 257

---

## COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
THE SLEEPING BEAUTY . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
CINDERELLA . . . . .	38
LITTLE META . . . . .	130
PADMANABA AND HASSAN . . . . .	250



# W O N D E R - W O R L D .

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## *THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.*

ONCE upon a time there lived a king and queen who had no children, which was a source of great grief and disappointment to them. At last, however, a lovely little daughter was born to them, and the king's delight was so great that he immediately gave orders that she should have the grandest christening that had ever been seen.

He invited all the fairies who could be found in the country (seven in number) to come and act as godmothers to the princess, hoping by this means to secure her being endowed with every imaginable accomplishment, since the good ladies were each sure to bestow a christening gift on her, after their usual custom.

When the baptism was over the company reassembled in the palace, where a splendid feast was laid out for the fairies. Seven gold plates were set for them, with knives, forks, and spoons whose handles glittered with rubies and diamonds; but as they took their places at the table an old fairy came in who had not been invited, because she had left the country on a journey some fifty years before, and everyone believed her to be dead or enchanted. The king ordered a place to be

set for her also, which was instantly done ; but unluckily she could not have a gold plate, knife, and fork, like the others, because only *seven* of them had been made. On perceiving this, the old fairy thought she was slighted, and uttered some unpleasant threats between her teeth. A young fairy who stood near overheard her, and guessed that she would perhaps bestow some evil gift on the little princess out of spite ; so as soon as they rose from the table she went and hid herself behind the tapestry, in order that she might be the last to speak, and be able, if necessary, to counteract any evil that the old dame might do.

At last the godmothers began to decide upon their gifts. The first said that the princess should be as lovely as the day ; the second that she should be as wise as an owl ; the third that she should be as graceful as a swan ; the fourth that she should sing like a nightingale ; the fifth that she should dance as lightly as a feather ; the sixth that she should be able to play every sort of musical instrument to perfection. When the old fairy's turn came she shook her head ominously, and declared that the young princess should prick her hand with a spindle and die from the wound.

This terrible threat filled the whole court with horror ; but at this moment the young fairy stepped out from behind the tapestry, exclaiming—"Take comfort, your Majesties, the princess shall not die. I cannot free her entirely from the spell, it is true ; but instead of dying she shall fall into a deep sleep that shall last for a hundred years, at the end of which time a king's son shall come and awaken her."

The king, in order to escape the dreadful evil announced by the old fairy, immediately published a proclamation, by which he forbade anyone in the kingdom to spin with a spindle on pain of death.



When the princess was about fifteen years old it happened one day that the king and queen were away at their country house, and she went rambling over the castle by herself, mounting from one room to another, till at length she came to a little garret in one of the turrets, where sat an old woman spinning with a distaff. The dame was aged and deaf, and had never heard of the king's proclamation.

"What are you doing, my good woman?" asked the princess.

"Spinning, my child," replied the old woman.

"Ah! what pretty work," cried the princess: "how do you do it? Let me try if I can spin too."

She had no sooner taken the distaff than, being very eager, rather heedless, and influenced moreover by the fairy's decree, she pricked her hand and fell senseless.

The old woman, terribly alarmed, cried for help. The courtiers rushed in on every side: they threw water in the princess's face, unlaced her dress, and rubbed her hands, but nothing revived her. Then the king, who had in the meantime come back, remembered the fairy's prediction, and knowing that what had happened was inevitable, ordered the princess to be placed in the most beautiful apartment in the palace, upon a bed embroidered with gold and silver, and said that she should sleep there in peace until the hour of her reawakening came.

The princess lay looking as lovely as possible, for the colour had not left her cheeks or lips, and though her eyes were shut it was quite clear she was not dead, for she distinctly breathed.

The kind fairy who had saved her life by putting her to sleep instead for a hundred years, was in the kingdom of Matinguin, about twelve hundred leagues away, when the accident

happened, but she was instantly informed of it by a little dwarf, who possessed a pair of seven-league boots. The fairy set out directly, and in an hour's time arrived at the palace in a chariot of fire drawn by two dragons. She approved of all that the king had done; but being a very far-seeing lady, and thinking that the princess would feel very lonely at the end of her hundred years' sleep, if she woke and found all her friends dead and gone, she touched with her wand everyone in the palace (except the king and queen)—the governesses, maids of honour, ladies, of the bed-chamber, officers, stewards, cooks, scullions, guards, soldiers, pages, and footmen; she touched, too, all the horses that were in the stables, with their grooms, the great mastiff in the courtyard, and Puff, the princess's little pet-dog, who was near her on the bed. Directly she had done so they all fell into a deep sleep, from which they would not awaken until their mistress did, so that they might be ready to serve her when she required them. The spits even, which hung before the fire, with partridges and pheasants, fell asleep, and the fire too. All this was done in a moment—fairies are very quick workers.

The king and queen having kissed their dear daughter (which did not arouse her), came out of the palace, and published a proclamation forbidding anyone to approach the spot. This, however, was quite unnecessary, for in the space of an hour there sprang up all round it such a thick hedge of great and small trees, interlaced with thorns and bramble bushes, that neither man nor beast could get through it, and nothing was visible except the tops of the highest turrets on the castle. There could be no doubt that this was the fairy's doing, in order to protect the princess from the prying eyes of the world around her.



A hundred years passed slowly away, and the story of the sleeping princess was almost forgotten, when one day a young prince, the son of the king then reigning, was hunting in the country and, catching sight of the turrets of the enchanted palace, he inquired what they were. Everyone told him a different tale. One said that it was a castle haunted by ghosts, another that an ogre lived there; but at last he came across an old peasant who said, "My prince, more than fifty years ago I remember my father telling me that in that castle there is a princess more beautiful than any other in the world, who has fallen asleep for a hundred years, but at the end of that time she will be awakened by a king's son, for whom she is being reserved."

On hearing this the young prince was fired with excitement, and instantly imagined that he himself must be destined to put an end to this wonderful mystery; so he resolved to set about it at once. Hardly had he advanced towards the wood when the trees, thorns, and briars disentangled themselves, and all made a way for him to pass through. He walked on to the palace, which he saw at the end of the long avenue of trees through which he passed, and to his surprise discovered that none of his attendants were able to follow him, since the trees closed up behind him as fast as he proceeded. Nothing daunted, he still advanced towards the palace, and entered a large courtyard, the first sight of which gave him a thrill of fear. A frightful silence seemed to reign there, and all around lay the bodies of men and animals apparently dead. On coming nearer, however, he saw by their ruddy faces that they were only sleeping. He next passed into a courtyard paved with marble, ascended a flight of steps, and entered the guard-room, where the soldiers stood in a row, halberds in hand, snoring loudly. He passed through several other

apartments, in which were people, some sitting, some standing, but all asleep. At length he reached a room, the walls of which were exquisitely gilded, and there saw lying the loveliest princess he had ever set eyes on. Trembling with excitement and admiration, he threw himself on his knees before her, on which the princess awoke, and on seeing him exclaimed,—

“Is that you, my prince? I have been waiting a long time for you.” The prince, charmed on hearing these words, and still more at the sweet tone in which they were uttered, scarcely knew how to express his delight. The princess, however, seemed to be at no loss for want of words, for the good fairy had supplied her with pleasant dreams during her hundred years’ sleep, and she had an endless amount of things to tell and ask about. Several hours passed by, and still their conversation never flagged.

Meanwhile, the whole palace having woke up at the same instant that the princess did, everyone went on with their work; but as they were not all in love they began to feel hungry, and at last one of the maids of honour was despatched by the others to tell the princess how long dinner had been waiting. The prince gave her his arm, and they sat down to the table without further delay, the princess being magnificently attired, and though it was much in the same fashion as the portrait of her grandmother who hung on the wall, yet she looked none the less lovely, and the prince was too much lost in admiration to notice it. Whilst they were eating, music was played on violins and cornets, which seemed none the worse for having been silent so long. Shortly after this their wedding was celebrated with great joy, and they lived very happily together for the rest of their lives.



*BLUE BEARD.*

ONCE upon a time there was a very rich man, who had large houses both in town and country, plates and dishes of gold and silver, beautifully embroidered furniture, and gilt carriages. But unfortunately his beard was of a bright blue colour, which made him so hideously ugly, that all women and children ran away at the mere sight of him.

One of his neighbours, a lady of title, had two lovely daughters, and he sent to her asking to marry one of them, and leaving her to decide which of them it should be. But neither of them would consent to his proposal, and they tried to put it off upon each other, for they could not make up their minds to marry a man with a blue beard. And what they disliked still more about him was that he had already married several wives, who disappeared one after the other, and no one knew what had become of them.

Blue Beard, wishing to become better acquainted with the two girls, invited them and their mother, with three or four other friends and some young people in the neighbourhood, to one of his country houses, where they remained for more than a week. The whole of this time was spent in dancing and feasting, picnics, hunting and fishing expeditions, and all manner of amusements, and so pleasantly did it all pass off that the younger sister began to discover that her host's beard was not so *very* blue after all, and that he really was

a most agreeable man; and soon after their return to town she made up her mind and married him.

At the end of their honeymoon, Blue Beard told his wife that he was obliged to leave her for a month or six weeks, as he had been called away on some important business into the country; but he begged that during his absence she would amuse herself as much as she could by inviting her friends to see her, driving them about the country if she liked, and, above all, feasting well. "There," said he, "are the keys of my two great store-rooms: one contains the gold and silver plates, which must only be used on special occasions, the other all my chests of money and my caskets of precious stones; and here is the latch-key to all the rooms. This little one belongs to the cupboard at the end of the long gallery. Open everything and go everywhere, except into this one cupboard—there I forbid you to enter; and so strictly do I forbid you, that you will find there is no limit to my rage if I am disobeyed."

She promised to keep all his injunctions most faithfully, and after embracing her he got into his carriage and drove off on his journey.

Scarcely had Blue Beard started than all the ladies in the neighbourhood rushed off to call upon his wife: they were full of curiosity to examine all the pretty things in the house, but never dared to come whilst he was at home, being so much afraid of his blue beard.

The bride took them through all the rooms, galleries, and passages, each of which was grander than the other; and they were lost in admiration at the beauty of the tapestries, the sofas, couches, chairs, tables, and mirrors in which they could see themselves at full length, with silver-gilt frames of more exquisite workmanship than any they had



ever beheld before. They were ceaseless in their exclamations of admiration and envy of the good fortune of their friend, who meanwhile, was not even amused by the sight of all her riches, so devoured was she with curiosity to see the contents of the little cupboard at the end of the long gallery.

Her longing at length became so intense that, without stopping to consider even how rude it was to leave her guests, she stole away by a back staircase in such a hurry that she nearly broke her neck in rushing down the steps.

Having arrived before the door of the cupboard, she stood for some moments thinking about her husband's order, and wondering what punishment could possibly befall her if she ventured to disobey him; but the temptation was so great that she could no longer resist it, and putting the little key into the lock, she slowly opened the door, trembling in every limb. At first she could see nothing, because all the shutters were closed; but after a few moments she discovered that the floor was stained with blood, and that the bodies of all Blue Beard's previous wives (whose disappearance had caused her so much uneasiness) were hanging from the walls. Horrified at this sight, she nearly fainted with terror, and the key which she had drawn out of the lock fell from her hand on to the floor.

After having somewhat recovered her senses she hastily picked it up, re-locked the door, and returned to her own room, where she tried to calm herself a little; but all to no purpose, the shock had been so intense. She now observed that the key of the cupboard was stained with blood. She wiped it several times, but the stain would not move; she washed it well in water, and even rubbed it with sand-paper, but still the blood remained; for the key was a fairy one, and there was no possibility of getting it clean again. When the

mark seemed rubbed off on one side it appeared on the other. Blue Beard returned the same evening from his journey, and said he had received letters on the road to tell him that the business he was going on had all been settled satisfactorily, and so he had no need to go any farther.

His wife tried to look delighted at his speedy return.

Next day he asked her for his keys, and she gave them to him; but her hand trembled so violently that he saw directly what had happened.

"How is it," he asked, "that the key of the little cupboard is not with the rest?"

"I must have left it on my table upstairs," answered she.

"Go and bring it to me immediately," said Blue Beard.

After various delays she was obliged at last to bring it to him.

Having looked closely at it, Blue Beard said to his wife, "How is it that there is this stain of blood on the key?"

"I don't know," replied the poor woman, pale as a sheet.

"You don't know," cried Blue Beard, "but I know very well: you have been wanting to look into the little cupboard, I see. Very well, then, you *shall* look in, and shall take your place amongst the other ladies whom you saw there."

She threw herself at her husband's feet, sobbing and imploring him to forgive her for having disobeyed his orders. Her tears would have melted a stone, but Blue Beard's heart was harder even than that.

"You will have to die shortly, Madam," said he.

"Well, if I really must," replied his unhappy wife, "at least give me a little time to prepare myself for it."

"I will give you a quarter of an hour," said Blue Beard, "but not a moment more."

As soon as she was alone she called her sister and said,



"Sister Anne, Sister Anne, go up, I implore you, to the top of the tower, and see if my brothers are coming, for they promised to come and see me to-day, and if they are in sight make signs to them to hasten their speed."

Sister Anne went up to the top of the tower, and the poor wife kept calling to her from time to time, "Anne, Sister Anne, can't you see anything?" and Sister Anne replied, "I can see nothing except the shining sun and the growing grass."

Blue Beard, sword in hand, now called out with all his might, "Be quick and come down here, or I shall come up there."

"One moment more, I beseech you," cried his wife; and then she added in a lower tone, "Anne, Sister Anne, can't you see anything?" and Sister Anne answered, "I can see nothing except the shining sun and the growing grass."

"Come down directly," cried Blue Beard, "or I shall come up."

"I am coming," replied his wife; and once more she asked, "Anne, Sister Anne, can't you see anything?"

Then Sister Anne answered, "I can see a cloud of dust coming down the road."

"Is it my brothers?"

"Alas! no, dear sister, for now I see it is raised by a flock of sheep."

"Are you coming or not?" cried Blue Beard.

"In half an instant," replied his wife; and once more asked, "Anne, Sister Anne, can't you see anything?"

"I can see two horsemen," she answered, "coming along the road; but they are still a long way off." In another moment she exclaimed, "they are indeed our brothers—I will make signs to them to hasten as much as they can."

Blue Beard now shouted so loudly that the house shook. His wife went down and flung herself at his feet, bathed in tears, and with her hair dishevelled.

"It's of no use," said Blue Beard, "you have to die." And taking hold of her hair in one hand and his sword in the other, he prepared to cut off her head.

"Let me have one moment more," cried the poor woman. "Nothing of the sort," said he, raising his arm. At that instant there was a loud knock at the door, which made Blue Beard hesitate, and in walked two young soldiers, who ran straight at him, swords in hand. He recognised them directly as being his brothers-in-law, the one a dragoon and the other a hussar, and tried to escape; but all to no purpose, they soon put him to death. Their poor sister lay senseless on the floor, but soon recovered, and embraced her deliverers. On examining into Blue Beard's affairs they found he had left no will, and had no other heirs, so his wife became possessor of all his immense wealth. She spent part in making a marriage settlement upon her sister Anne, who had long been engaged to a poor but excellent young man, another part in rewarding her brothers, and keeping the rest herself, she married, some time after, a second husband, who made her so happy that she quite forgot the wretched time that she had spent with Blue Beard.





*PUSS IN BOOTS.*

THERE was once a poor miller, who, when he died, had nothing to leave his three sons save his mill, his ass, and his cat. These were easily divided without calling in any lawyers to help, who would soon have swallowed up the whole of the small patrimony themselves : the eldest boy took the mill, the second the ass, and nothing was left for the youngest except the cat. On finding this he was terribly disappointed, and grumbled to himself, saying—" My brothers can work together, and may live very comfortably ; but as for me, when I've eaten my cat and made a cap out of his skin, I shall be reduced to beggary."

The cat overheard him talking in this manner, and came forward, stroking his whiskers, and said—

" Don't worry yourself about the future, my master, only provide me with a large bag and a strong pair of walking boots, and you shall soon see that your share of the property is worth more than you imagine."

The youth did not place much reliance on this promise, but as he had often seen puss play remarkably clever tricks upon the rats and mice, when trying to catch them, such as hanging himself up by the heels amongst the bags of flour and pretending to be dead, he thought it would be as well to provide him with the things he asked for, and accordingly did so.

Puss pulled the boots firmly on, slung the bag over his shoulder, and set out for a neighbouring rabbit-warren. Having put some sow-thistles and bran into his bag, he lay down, stretching out his body as if he were dead, and waited until some foolish young rabbit, ignorant of the wickedness of the world, should creep into the bag to taste its contents. In a few moments a scatterbrained rabbit came scampering up, crept into the bag, and puss forthwith jumped up, drew the strings, caught and killed him. Highly delighted with the prize, he now set out for the king's palace, and demanded to speak to him. The servants were surprised at his boldness, but showed him up into the king's apartment. On reaching this he made a profound bow, and said—

“Here, your Majesty, is a prime young rabbit sent by the Marquis of Carrabas” (this was the title he gave his young master), “with his best respects.”

“Tell your master that I'm much obliged, and shall enjoy eating it,” replied the king.

Puss now hurried home, only waiting to catch another rabbit for his master's dinner on the way.

The next day he went and hid himself in a corn-field, placing his bag open, and when a couple of partridges had ventured in, he drew the strings, and caught them. He now proceeded again to the king's palace, and presented them to him in the same manner as before. The king again accepted them with delight, and ordered his attendants to give puss some refreshment.

Two or three months thus passed away, during which the cat constantly carried presents of game to the king, and presented them in the name of the Marquis of Carrabas. At last one day he heard that the king and his daughter



(who was the loveliest princess in the world) had gone to take a drive on the bank of the river, so he ran to his master and exclaimed—



“If you will only do as I tell you your fortune is made. Go and bathe in the river at the spot that I show you, and leave me to manage everything else.”

The youth did as his cat advised, not knowing what was to follow. Whilst he was in the water the king came by, and puss immediately began to shriek with all his strength—"Help! help! help!—the Marquis of Carrabas is drowning!"

On hearing this cry the king put his head out of the carriage window, and recognising the cat, who had so often brought him game, he ordered his attendants to run directly to the assistance of the marquis. Whilst they were drawing the unfortunate nobleman out of the river, the cat approached the carriage, and told the king that as his master was bathing some thieves had run off with his clothes, the truth being that he had hidden them under a big stone. The king immediately ordered the gentlemen of his wardrobe to go and fetch one of his best suits for the Marquis of Carrabas to put on. When dressed in this the king shook hands most warmly with him, and the princess looked at him in admiration, for he was a fine-looking youth to begin with, and his splendid clothes displayed all his charms to full advantage. As for the marquis himself, he had scarcely looked two or three times at the lovely princess before he fell desperately in love with her. The king now invited him to get into the carriage, and drive with them. Puss was enchanted to see how well his plans were succeeding, and ran on before the carriage. He soon met some countrymen who were mowing a meadow, and said to them, "My good mowers, if you don't tell the king that this meadow belongs to the Marquis of Carrabas, you shall be chopped as small as mince-meat."

When they reached the meadow the king inquired whose it was.

"It belongs to the Marquis of Carrabas," replied all the mowers in a breath, having been greatly alarmed by the cat's threat.



"You seem to have a very fine property here," remarked his Majesty.

"Yes," replied the marquis, "this meadow always bears a fine crop, every year."

Puss, who still ran ahead, now met some reapers, and said to them, "My good reapers, if you don't tell the king that this corn belongs to the Marquis of Carrabas, you shall be chopped as small as mincemeat."

In a few moments the king drove by, and asked to whom the corn belonged that he saw.

"To the Marquis of Carrabas," replied the reapers in a breath; and the king again congratulated the marquis.

The cat, who continued to keep before the carriage, said the same thing to all the people he met; and the king became more and more astonished at the wealth and property of the young nobleman.

At last puss arrived at a large castle in which lived the richest Ogre that ever was seen, for all the lands that the king had driven through in reality belonged to him; puss knew all about this, and knocking boldly at the door asked to speak to him. Having made a polite bow, he said that he was passing near, and did not wish to do so without calling to pay his respects.

The Ogre received him as civilly as an ogre can, and asked him to rest a little.

"I have heard," said the cat, "that you actually possess the power of transforming yourself into any animal you please. Can this be really true—such as a lion or an elephant?"

"Of course it is," replied the Ogre roughly; "and to prove it, you shall see me become a lion."

Puss was so much frightened on seeing a live lion before

him, that he hastily ran up to the roof of the castle, where he had great difficulty in keeping his footing on the slates in consequence of wearing his great boots. He waited, however, until he saw the Ogre take back his proper form, and then descended, exclaiming how alarmed he had been. "I have heard, too," said the cat, "but this I cannot believe, that you can change yourself into the smallest animal also, such as a mouse or rat; it must be impossible!"

"Impossible!" cried the Ogre. "You shall soon see," and he immediately changed himself into a mouse and ran across the floor. In an instant puss pounced upon him and gobbled him up.

At this moment the king was approaching the castle, and on perceiving it he expressed a wish to get out and go in.

Puss, hearing the noise of the carriage crossing the draw-bridge, ran out and said to the king:

"Allow me to welcome your Majesty into the Marquis of Carrabas' castle."

"What!" cried the king. "Is this castle his too? I never saw anything finer than this courtyard and the buildings round it. Pray let us look inside too."

The marquis gave his hand to the lovely princess, and they followed the king, who walked in first. They now entered a magnificent hall, where a splendid dinner was laid out, which the Ogre had been preparing for some friends.

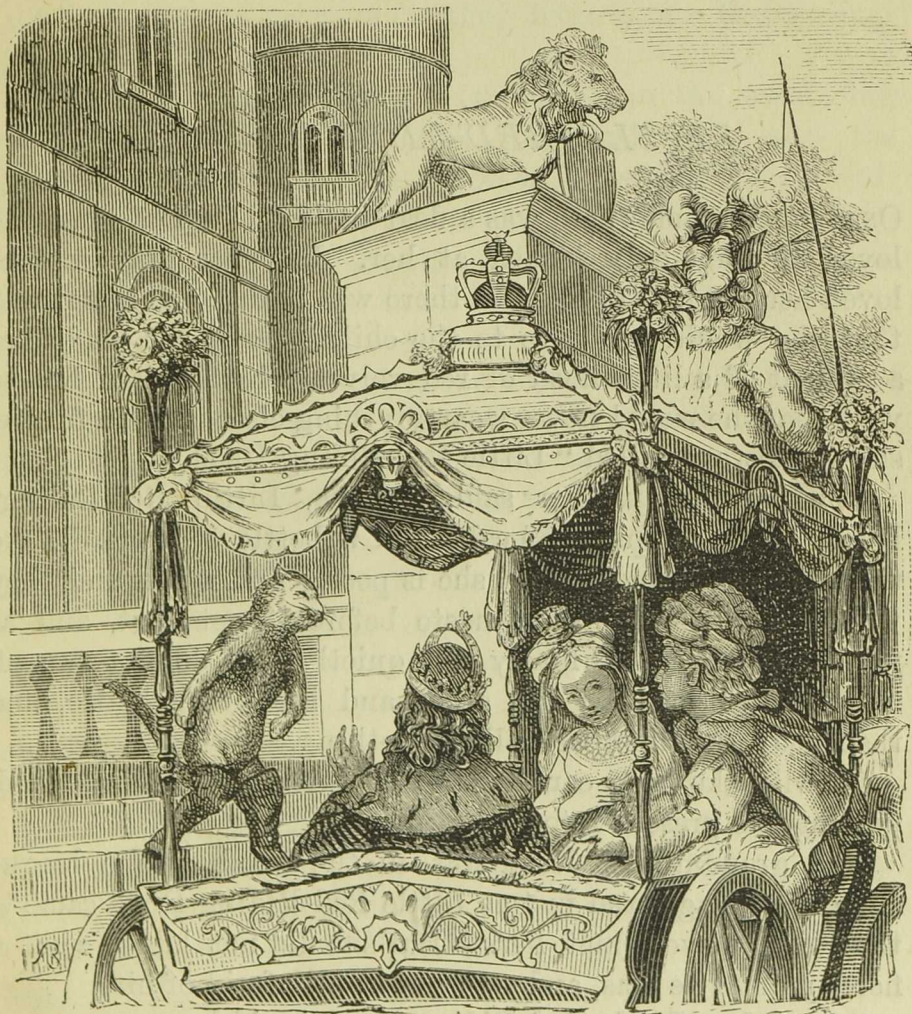
They soon seated themselves at the table and ate an excellent repast. The king having drunk several glasses of wine felt his heart growing warmer and warmer towards their host, and at length exclaimed:

"It only remains with you, my dear Marquis, to decide whether you will become my son-in-law or no!"

His offer was accepted by the young marquis with the



utmost delight, and the princess's consent being readily granted, they were married the following day, and entered into full possession of the Ogre's house and property.



As for Puss, he was made a nobleman, and never afterwards caught mice for anything but his own amusement.

*LITTLE RED-RIDING-HOOD.*

ONCE upon a time there was a dear little girl whom everyone loved if they only looked at her. But her grandmother loved her the best of all, and there was nothing in her power that she would not give to the child. Once she made her a present of a little hood of red velvet, which suited her so well, that she would never wear anything else; and, in future, she was always called "Little Red-Riding-Hood."

One day her mother said, "Come, Little Red-Riding-Hood, here is a piece of cake and a bottle of wine. Take them to your grandmother, she is poorly and weak, and they will do her good. Make haste before it gets hot, and as you are going, walk nicely and quietly and do not run off the path, or you may fall down and break the bottle, and then your grandmother will get nothing."

"I will take great care," promised Little Red-Riding-Hood, putting the present into her apron.

The grandmother lived out in the wood, half a league from the village, and just as Little Red-Riding-Hood came to the wood, a wolf met her. But she did not know what a fierce animal he was, and was not at all afraid of him.

"Good-day, Little Red-Riding-Hood," said he.

"Thank you, kindly, wolf."

"Whither away so early, Little Red-Riding Hood?"



## *LITTLE RED-RIDING-HOOD.*

“To my grandmother’s.”

“What have you got in your apron?”

“Cake and wine; yesterday was baking-day, so poor weak granny is to have something good, to make her stronger.”

“Where does your grandmother live, Little Red-Riding-Hood?”

“A good quarter of a league farther on in the wood; her house stands beneath the three large oak-trees, near the hazel-thickets; you surely must know it,” replied Little Red-Riding-Hood.

The wolf thought to himself, “what a young tender creature! what a nice plump mouthful she is—she’ll taste better than the old woman. I must act craftily, so as to catch both.” Meanwhile he walked for a short time by the side of Little Red-Riding-Hood. Then he said, “See, Little Red-Riding-Hood, how pretty the flowers are about here—why do you not look at them? I believe, too, that you do not hear how sweetly the little birds are singing; you walk gravely along as if you were going to school, while everything else is merry out here in the green wood.”

Little Red-Riding-Hood lifted her eyes, and when she saw the sunlight dancing here and there through the trees, and beautiful flowers growing around, she thought, “Suppose I take grandmother a fresh nosegay; how pleased she will be. It is so early in the day that I shall still get there in good time; and so she ran from the path into the wood to gather flowers. And whenever she had picked one, she fancied that she saw a prettier farther on, and ran after it, and so got deeper and deeper into the wood.

Meanwhile the wolf ran straight to the grandmother’s house and knocked at the door.

“Who is there?”

"Little Red-Riding-Hood," replied the wolf. "I have brought some cake and wine; open the door."

"Lift the latch," called out the grandmother, "I am too weak, and cannot get up."

The wolf lifted the latch, the door flew open, and without saying a word he rushed straight to the grandmother's bed, and ate her up. Then he put on her clothes, fastened on her cap, laid himself in bed and drew the curtains.

In the meantime Little Red-Riding-Hood, who had been running about picking flowers, remembered her grandmother, and started on her journey again.

She soon came to the cottage, and was surprised to find the door standing open. As she entered, she had such a strange feeling that she said to herself, "Oh dear! how dreadfully frightened I feel to day. Generally I like being with grandmother so much." She called out "Good morning," but there was no answer; so she went to the bed and drew back the curtains. There, as she thought, lay her grandmother with her cap pulled over her face, and looking very strange.

"Oh! Granny," she said, "what big ears you have!"

"All the better to hear you with, my child," was the reply.

"But, Granny, what big eyes you have," she said.

"All the better to see you with, my dear."

"But, Granny, what large hands you have!"

"All the better to hug you with."

"Oh! but, Granny, what a terrible big mouth you have!"

"All the better to eat you with!"

And scarcely had the wolf uttered this, than at one bound he sprung out of bed and seized poor Little Red-Riding-Hood and swallowed her up in a mouthful.



*LITTLE SNOW-WHITE.*

It was in the middle of winter, when the broad flakes of snow were falling around, that the queen of a country many thousand miles off sat working at her window. The frame of the window was made of fine black ebony, and as she was looking out upon the snow, she pricked her finger, and three drops of blood fell upon it. Then she gazed thoughtfully upon the red drops that sprinkled the white snow, and said, "Would that my little daughter might be as white as that snow, as red as that blood, and as black as this ebony window-frame!" And so the little girl really did grow up; her skin was as white as snow, her cheeks as rosy as blood, and her hair as black as ebony; and she was called Snow-white.

But this queen died; and the king soon married another wife, who became queen. She was very beautiful; but so vain that she could not bear to think that any one could be handsomer than she was. She had a fairy looking-glass, to which she used to go, and then she would gaze upon herself in it, and say,

"Tell me, glass, tell me true!  
Of all the ladies in the land,  
Who is fairest? tell me, who?"

And the glass had always answered,

"Thou, queen, art the fairest in all the land."

But Snow-white grew more and more beautiful; and when she was seven years old she was as bright as the day, and fairer than the queen herself. Then the glass one day answered the queen, when she went to look in it as usual,

“Thou, queen, art fair, and beauteous to see,  
But Snow-white is lovelier far than thee!”

When she heard this, she turned pale with rage and envy; and called to one of her servants and said, “Take Snow-white away into the wide wood, and kill her, that I may never see her any more.”

Then the servant led her away; but his heart melted when Snow-white begged him to spare her life, and he said, “I will not hurt thee, thou pretty child.” So he left her by herself; and though he thought it most likely that the wild beasts would tear her in pieces, he felt as if a great weight were taken off his heart when he had made up his mind not to kill her but to leave her to her fate, with the chance of some one finding and saving her.

Then poor Snow-white wandered along through the wood in great fear, and the wild beasts roared about her, but none did her any harm. In the evening she came to a cottage among the hills, and went in to rest, for her little feet would carry her no farther. Everything was spruce and neat in the cottage; on the table was spread a white cloth, and there were seven little plates, with seven little loaves, and seven little glasses with wine in them, and seven knives and forks laid in order, and by the wall stood seven little beds. As she was very hungry, she picked a little piece off each loaf and drank a very little wine out of each glass; and after that she thought she would lie down and rest. So she tried all the little beds; but one was too long,



and another was too short, till at last the seventh suited her :  
and there she laid herself down and went to sleep.

By-and-by in came the masters of the cottage. Now they



were seven little dwarfs, who lived among the mountains,  
and dug and searched about for gold. They lighted up their  
seven lamps, and saw at once that all was not right. The

first said, "Who has been sitting on my stool?" The second, "Who has been eating off my plate?" The third, "Who has been picking my bread?" The fourth, "Who has been meddling with my spoon?" The fifth, "Who has been handling my fork?" The sixth, "Who has been cutting with my knife?" The seventh, "Who has been drinking my wine?" Then the first looked round and said, "Who has been lying on my bed?" and the rest came running to him, and every one cried out that somebody had been upon his bed. But the seventh found Snow-white, and called all his brethren to come and see her; and they exclaimed with wonder and astonishment, and brought their lamps to look at her, and cried, "See! see! what a lovely child she is!" They were very glad to find her, and took care not to wake her; so the seventh dwarf slept an hour with each of the other dwarfs in turn, till the night was gone.

In the morning Snow-white told them her story; and they pitied her, and said if she would keep all things in order, and cook and wash, and knit and spin for them, she might stay where she was, and they would take good care of her. Then they went out all day long to their work, seeking for gold and silver in the mountains: but Snow-white was left at home; and they warned her, and said, "The queen will soon find out where you are, so take care to let no one come in."

But the queen, now that she thought Snow-white was dead, believed that she must be the handsomest lady in the land; and she went to her glass and said,

"Tell me, glass, tell me true!  
Of all the ladies in the land,  
Who is fairest? tell me, who?"



And the glass answered,

“Thou, queen, art the fairest in all *this* land :  
But over the hills, in the greenwood shade,  
Where the seven dwarfs their dwelling have made,  
There Snow-white is hiding her head ; and she  
Is lovelier far, O queen ! than thee.”

Then the queen was very much frightened ; for she knew that the glass always spoke the truth, and was sure that the servant had betrayed her. And she could not bear to think that any one lived who was more beautiful than she was ; so she dressed herself up as an old pedlar, and went her way over the hills, to the place where the dwarfs dwelt. Then she knocked at the door, and cried, “Fine wares to sell !” Snow-white looked out at the window, and said, “Good day, good woman ! what have you to sell ?” “Good wares, fine wares,” said she ; “laces and bobbins of all colours.”

“I will let the old lady in ; she seems to be a very good sort of creature,” thought Snow-white ; so she ran down and unbolted the door. “Bless me !” said the old woman, “how badly your stays are laced ! Let me lace them up with one of my nice new laces.” Snow-white did not dream of any mischief ; so she stood up before the old woman ; but she set to work so nimbly, and pulled the lace so tight, that Snow-white’s breath was stopped, and she fell down as if she were dead. “There’s an end to all thy beauty,” said the spiteful queen, and went away home.

In the evening the seven dwarfs came home ; and I need not say how grieved they were to see their faithful Snow-white stretched out upon the ground, as if she were quite dead. However, they lifted her up, and when they found what ailed her, they cut the lace ; and in a little time she

began to breathe, and very soon came to life again. Then they said, "The old woman was the queen herself; take care another time, and let no one in when we are away."

When the queen got home, she went straight to her glass, and spoke to it as before; but to her great grief it still said,

"Thou, queen, art the fairest in all *this* land:  
But over the hills, in the greenwood shade,  
Where the seven dwarfs their dwelling have made,  
There Snow-white is hiding her head; and she  
Is lovelier far, O queen, than thee."

Then the blood ran cold in her heart with spite and malice, to hear that Snow-white still lived; and she dressed herself up again, but in quite another dress from the one she wore before, and took with her a poisoned comb. When she reached the dwarfs' cottage, she knocked at the door, and cried, "Fine wares to sell!" But Snow-white said, "I dare not let anyone in." Then the queen said, "Only look at my beautiful combs!" and gave her the poisoned one. And it looked so pretty, that she took it up and put it into her hair to try it; but the moment it touched her head, the poison was so powerful that she fell down senseless. "There you may lie," said the queen, and went her way. But by good luck the dwarfs came in very early that evening; and when they saw Snow-white lying on the ground, they guessed what had happened, and soon found the poisoned comb. When they took it away she soon got well, and told them all that had passed; and they warned her once more not to open the door to anyone.

Meantime the queen went home to her glass, and shook with rage when she heard the very same answer as before; and she said, "Snow-white shall die, if it costs me my life."



So she went by herself into her chamber, and got ready a poisoned apple: the outside looked very rosy and tempting, but whoever tasted it was sure to die. Then she dressed herself up as a peasant's wife, and travelled over the hills to the dwarfs' cottage, and knocked at the door; but Snow-white put her head out of the window and said, "I dare not let anyone in, for the dwarfs have told me not." "Do as you please," said the old women, but at any rate take this pretty apple; I will give it you." "No," said Snow-white, "I dare not take it." "You silly girl!" answered the other, "what are you afraid of? do you think it is poisoned? Come! do you eat one part, and I will eat the other." Now the apple was so made up that one side was good, though the other side was poisoned. Then Snow-white was much tempted to taste, for the apple looked so very nice; and when she saw the old women eat, she could wait no longer. But she had scarcely put the piece into her mouth, when she fell down dead upon the ground. "This time nothing will save thee," said the queen: and she went home to her glass, and at last it said,

"Thou, queen, art the fairest of all the fair."

And then her wicked heart was glad, and as happy as such a heart could be.

When evening came, and the dwarfs had got home, they found Snow-white lying on the ground: no breath came from her lips, and they were afraid that she was quite dead. They lifted her up, and combed her hair, and washed her face with wine and water; but all was in vain, for the little girl seemed quite dead. So they laid her down upon a bier, and all seven watched and bewailed her three whole days; and then they thought they would bury her: but her cheeks

were still rosy, and her face looked just as it did while she was alive; so they said, "We will never bury her in the cold ground." And they made a coffin of glass, so that they might still look at her, and wrote upon it in golden letters what her name was, and that she was a king's daughter.

And the coffin was set among the hills, and one of the dwarfs always sat by it and watched. And the birds of the air came too, and bemoaned Snow-white: and first of all came an owl, and then a raven, and at last a dove, and sat by her side.

Thus Snow-white lay for a long, long time, but she looked as though she were only asleep; for she was still as white as snow, and as red as blood, and as black as ebony.

At last a prince came and called at the dwarfs' house; and he saw Snow-white, and read what was written in golden letters. Then he offered the dwarfs money, and prayed and besought them to let him take her away; but they said, "We will not part with her for all the gold in the world." At last, however, they had pity on him, and gave him the coffin; but the moment he lifted it up to carry it home with him, the piece of apple fell from between her lips, and Snow-white awoke, and said, "Where am I?" And the prince said, "Thou art quite safe with me."

Then he told her all that had happened, and said, "I love you far better than all the world; so come with me to my father's palace, and you shall be my wife." And Snow-white consented, and went home with the prince; and everything was got ready with great pomp and splendour for their wedding.

To the feast was asked, among the rest, Snow-white's old



enemy the queen ; and as she was dressing herself in fine rich clothes, she looked in the glass and said,

“ Tell me glass, tell me true !  
Of all the ladies in the land,  
Who is fairest ? tell me, who ? ”



And the glass answered,

“ Thou, lady, art loveliest *here*, I ween ;  
But lovelier far is the new-made queen.”

When she heard this she started with rage ; but her envy and curiosity were so great, that she could not help setting out to see the bride. And when she got there, and saw that it was no other than Snow-white, who, as she thought had been dead a long while, she choked with rage, and fell down and died : but Snow-white and the prince lived and reigned happily over that land many, many years ; and sometimes they went up into the mountains, and paid a visit to the little dwarfs, who had been so kind to Snow-white in her time of need.





*CINDERELLA.*

THERE was once an unlucky gentleman, who, having lost his first wife, married, as a second, the most conceited and ill-tempered lady in the whole country. She was a widow with two daughters of exactly the same disposition as herself. He also had one little girl who was remarkably pretty and sweet tempered, having inherited these good qualities from her mother.

No sooner were the wedding festivities over than the new wife began to display her spitefulness. She took a great dislike to her step-daughter, because she was so much nicer than her own children, and forthwith began to keep her out of sight as much as possible, in order that she might not be contrasted with them. The poor girl was turned into a perfect drudge, and set to do the roughest housework, wash the dishes, scour the floors, and sleep in a wretched garret, at the top of the house; whilst her sisters occupied the most luxurious apartments, beds with eider down quilts, and had mirrors in which they could see themselves from head to foot.

She bore it all quite patiently, and dared not complain even to her father, as he was completely under his wife's management, and would not have listened. When she had finished her work she was generally so much tired that she was glad to sit down amongst the ashes in the chimney-corner, from which

habit she soon got the name of *Cinderella*. Nevertheless, in spite of all her rough work and ragged clothes, Cinderella remained a thousand times prettier than either of her sisters in all their finery.

Now it happened that the king's son was going to give a grand ball, and sent out invitations to all the nobles and gentry in the country. Cinderella's sisters received one, and their delight was indescribable. They set to work immediately to choose the most becoming dresses that they could desire, and talked of nothing else all day long.

"I shall wear my red velvet," said the eldest, "with lace trimmings."

"I have only got my old silk petticoat," remarked the youngest, "but then I can wear my embroidered cloak and diamond tiara, which will make up for everything."

In this manner they spent all the time that ensued before the ball, and scarcely ate anything from excitement. They broke dozens of laces in endeavouring to make their waists slim; sent for the court hair dresser to arrange their curls in double rows, and bought patches from the best maker; but they could agree about nothing, and were continually squabbling as to which looked best, so at last on the eventful day they sent for Cinderella, whose good taste was well known, to decide all their disputes, and assist them to dress. She was already weary, having had to starch and iron all their frills and laces. But now she began with great good humour to adorn them as best she could.

"Should you like to go to the ball, Cinderella?" asked they.

"Don't make fun of me," replied she, "I know I should not be wanted there."

"You are right!" exclaimed one. "How people would laugh to see such a ragged creature in the room."



At last they started, and poor Cinderella stood and watched the carriage till it was out of sight, when she retired to her chimney corner, and burst into tears.

But just then her godmother, who was a fairy, happened to come to see her, and, entering at that moment, she asked what was the matter.

"I want . . . . I want very much" . . . . but she was crying so violently that she could say no more. The godmother said, "You want to go to the ball—isn't that it?"

"Yes, indeed!" cried Cinderella, with a sigh.

"Very well," replied her godmother, "if you will be a good girl, I will take you there, but first go into the garden and bring me a pumpkin." Cinderella ran off directly, gathered the finest she could see and brought it to her godmother, but could not imagine what a pumpkin had to do with her going to the ball. The old lady scooped out the inside, and having left nothing but the rind, she touched it with her wand, and the pumpkin was instantly changed into a beautiful gilt coach. Then she went to look in the mouse-trap, where she found six mice all alive. She told Cinderella to open the door of the trap, and, as each mouse ran out, she tapped them with her wand, and they became six fine horses of a lovely dapple-grey colour. She now seemed puzzled to know what to make into a coachman. "Shall I go and see if there is a rat in the trap?" asked Cinderella.

Her godmother nodded, and she quickly returned with the trap, in which were three great rats. The fairy picked out the one which had the longest whiskers, and having touched him, he was changed into a stout coachman with one of the finest moustaches that ever was seen.

"Now go into the garden again, and bring six green lizards which you will find behind the watering pot."

No sooner were they brought than she changed them into six footmen, with gold-laced livery, who jumped up behind the carriage, and stood erect, as easily as if they had been used to it all their lives. The fairy then said to Cinderella—"Well, here is everything ready to take you to the ball, are you satisfied?"

"Yes, quite," cried her goddaughter, "but how can I go there in these ragged clothes?" Her godmother in reply merely touched them with her wand—and they were instantly transformed into a lovely dress of gold and silver cloth, embroidered with jewels, to which were added the prettiest little pair of glass slippers imaginable.

Thus attired, Cinderella stepped into the carriage, whilst her godmother warned her on no account to stop at the ball after midnight; for as soon as the clock struck twelve her coach would become a pumpkin, her fine dress rags again, and her coachman and footmen reassume their real shapes. She thanked her godmother most heartily, and promising to attend strictly to her injunctions, set out in great delight. The king's son, who had been told that some grand princess had arrived whom no one knew, ran down to receive her at the door. He gave her his hand to help her from the carriage and brought her into the ball-room, where all the guests were assembled. Their entrance caused a profound silence, the dance was stopped, the violins ceased playing, and every one turned to gaze at the beauty of the unknown princess. Nothing was heard except confused exclamations of "How lovely she is!" Even the king, old as he was, couldn't take his eyes off her, and remarked to the queen, in a low voice, that he hadn't seen such a charming looking girl for a long time. All the ladies were engaged in examining her dress, with a view to having theirs made like it. The king's son



led her to the top of the room, and presently asked her to dance.

She moved with such ease and grace, that everyone was lost in admiration. Supper being ready, she sat down with the prince, who was so much engrossed in watching her that he could not eat a morsel.

Close by sat her two sisters, and she kindly handed them part of the oranges and citron, that the prince gave her; this astonished them very much—for they had no idea who she really was. Whilst they were talking, Cinderella heard the clock strike the quarter to twelve, and making a profound courtesy to the company, she ran out as quickly as she could.

On reaching home she went straight to her godmother, and told her in delight how greatly she had enjoyed herself, and how much she should like to go to the ball which was to be held the following evening, as the prince had begged her to come.

She was still busy telling the fairy all that had happened, when her sisters knocked at the door, and Cinderella ran to open it. "How late you are in coming home," cried she, yawning and rubbing her eyes, and stretching herself as if she had only just awoke from a nap.

"If you had been at the ball," said one of the sisters, "you wouldn't be feeling so weary. One of the loveliest princesses that anyone ever set eyes on was there, and she was remarkably polite to us, and helped us to oranges and citron." Cinderella felt delighted to hear all this, she inquired what the princess's name was, but they replied that no one knew, and that the king's son was dying to know, and would give all he possessed to discover.

Cinderella smiled and said, "She really was so very lovely then? How lucky you are to have seen her! Oh! Miss

Javotte, I wish you would lend me your common yellow dress, that I might have a chance of seeing her too."

"What an idea," exclaimed the younger sister, "for me to lend you one of my dresses. You must be mad to think of it!"

Cinderella expected to be refused, and bore it very composedly, for she would have been puzzled to know what to do with the dress if she had got it.

Next evening the sisters went to the second ball, and Cinderella went too, dressed even more magnificently than on the previous night. The king's son was constantly at her side, and paid her every possible attention. Cinderella was so happy she forgot how time passed and her godmother's warning. So that the first stroke of midnight sounded when she fancied it was only eleven. She rose and ran off as lightly as a bird. The prince followed, but could not catch her. In the hurry of the moment she dropped one of her glass slippers, which he carefully picked up. Cinderella reached home, breathless with running; without either carriage or footmen, and in her ragged clothes: nothing remained of all her grandeur except one little glass slipper, the fellow to the one she had dropped. The porters at the gates of the palace were asked if they had not seen a princess pass through, but they replied that they had seen no one except a poorly dressed girl, who looked more like a peasant than a princess.

When the two sisters returned, Cinderella asked whether they had enjoyed themselves, and whether the lovely lady had been there. They told her that she had, but that just as midnight was striking she had disappeared, and had run off so hastily that she had dropped one of her glass slippers, the prettiest ever seen; and that the king's son had picked it up,





Lith Emrik & Bingner.

CINDERELLA.





and had done nothing but gaze at it during the remainder of the evening; in fact, there could be no doubt that he had fallen deeply in love with the beautiful owner.

They were quite right, for a few days after, the prince sent out a trumpeter to make proclamation, that he would marry any girl in the realm whose foot was small enough to wear the little glass slipper. It was first tried on by the princesses, then by the duchesses and all the ladies at court, but with no success.

Presently it was brought to the house where the two sisters lived, they tried their utmost to squeeze their feet into it, but all in vain. Cinderella was watching them, and recognising her slipper, said, with a smile, "Let me try if it would not fit me." Her sisters were angry directly, and scorned the idea; but the gentleman who was superintending the trial of the slipper, having looked closely at Cinderella, and seeing that she was very pretty, said that it was only fair she should try, as he had orders to let any girl in the kingdom do so. He made Cinderella sit down, and putting the slipper to her little foot, he saw that it went on without the least difficulty, and fitted her like wax. The astonishment of the two sisters was great, and became greater still when she drew the other little slipper out of her pocket, and put it on too. At that moment her godmother arrived, who touched Cinderella's rags with her wand, and they directly became even more magnificent than her previous dresses. Her sisters now recognised her as the lovely princess they had met at the ball; and threw themselves forthwith at her feet, imploring her to forgive all the rude treatment she had received from them. Cinderella raised them from the ground, and with many embraces assured them that she forgave them from the bottom of her heart, and only begged they would

always love her in future. She was now taken to the palace in her resplendent costume. The prince thought her more lovely than ever. A few days after he was married to Cinderella, who, being as good as she was beautiful, sent for her sisters to share her happiness, and soon after married them to two gentlemen of the court.





*THE GOLDEN GOOSE.*

THERE was a man who had three sons. The youngest was called Dummling—which is much the same as Dunderhead, for all thought he was more than half a fool—and he was at all times mocked and ill-treated by the whole household.

It happened that the eldest son took it into his head one day to go into the wood to cut fuel; and his mother gave him a nice pasty and a bottle of wine to take with him, that he might refresh himself at his work. As he went into the wood, a little old man bade him good day, and said, “Give me a little piece of meat from your plate, and a little wine out of your bottle, for I am very hungry and thirsty.” But this clever young man said, “Give you my meat and wine? No, I thank you, I should not have enough left for myself:” and away he went. He soon began to cut down a tree; but he had not worked long before he missed his stroke, and cut himself, and was forced to go home to have the wound dressed. Now it was the little old man that sent him this mischief.

Next went out the second son to work: and his mother gave him too a pasty and a bottle of wine. And the same little old man met him also, and asked him for something to eat and drink. But he too thought himself very clever, and said, “The more you eat the less there would be for me: so

go your way !” The little man took care that he too should have his reward, and the second stroke that he aimed against a tree hit him on the leg ; so that he too was forced to go home.

Then Dummling said, “ Father, I should like to go and cut wood too.” But his father said, “ Your brothers have both hurt themselves ; you had better stay at home, for you know nothing about the business of wood-cutting.” But Dummling was very pertinacious ; and at last his father said “ Go your way ! you will be wiser when you have smarted for your folly.” His mother only gave him some dry bread and a bottle of sour beer. When he came into the wood, he met the little old man, who said, “ Give me some meat and drink, for I am very hungry and thirsty.” Dummling said, “ I have only dry bread and sour beer ; if that will suit you we will sit down and eat it, such as it is, together.”

So they sat down ; and when the lad pulled out his bread, behold it was turned into a rich pasty : and his sour beer, when they tasted it, was delightful wine. They ate and drank heartily ; and when they had done, the little man said, “ As you have a kind heart, and have been willing to share everything with me, I will send a blessing upon you. There stands an old tree ; cut it down, and you will find something at the root.” Then he took his leave, and went his way.

Dummling set to work, and cut down the tree ; and when it fell, he found, in a hollow under the roots, a goose with feathers of pure gold. He took it up, and went on to a little inn by the roadside, where he thought to sleep for the night on his way home. Now the landlord had three daughters ; and when they saw the goose, they were very eager to look what this wonderful bird could be, and wished very much to pluck one of the feathers out of its tail. At last the eldest

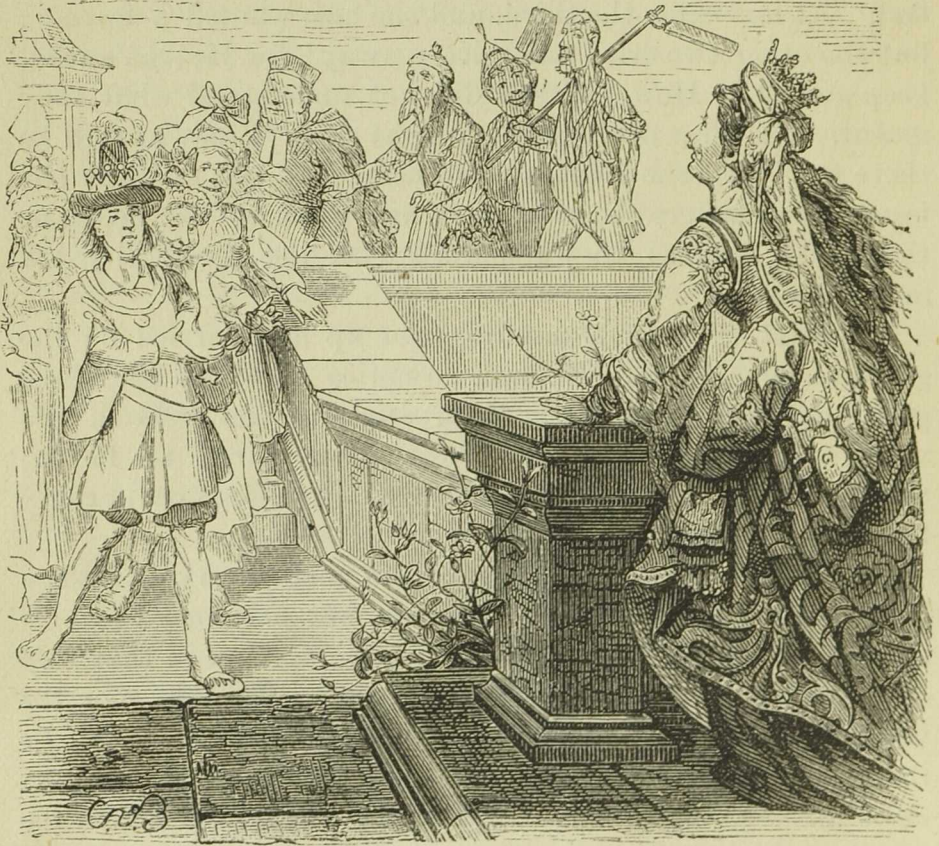


said, "I must and will have a feather." So she waited till Dummiling was gone to bed, and then seized the goose by the wing; but to her great wonder there she stuck, for neither hand nor finger could she get away again. Then in came the second sister, and wanted to have a feather too; but the moment she touched her sister, there she too hung fast. At last came the third, and she also wanted a feather; but the other two cried out, "Keep away! for Heaven's sake, keep away!" However, she did not understand what they meant. "If they are there," thought she, "I may as well be there too." So she went up to them; but the moment she touched her sisters she stuck fast, and hung to the goose, as they did. And so they remained with the goose all night in the cold.

The next morning Dummiling got up and carried off the goose under his arm. He took no notice at all of the three girls, but went out with them sticking fast behind. So wherever he travelled, they too were forced to follow, whether they would or no, as fast as their legs could carry them.

In the middle of a field the parson met them; and when he saw the train, he said, "Are you not ashamed of yourselves, you bold girls, to run after a young man in that way over the fields? Is that good behaviour?" Then he took the youngest by the hand to lead her away; but as soon as he touched her he too hung fast, and followed in the train; though sorely against his will, for he was not only rather too fat for running fast, but just then he had a little touch of the gout in the great toe of his right foot. By-and-by up came the clerk, and when he saw his master, the parson, running after the three girls, he wondered greatly, and said, "Holla! holla! your reverence! whither so fast?"

there is a christening to-day." Then he ran up and took him by the gown; when, lo and behold, he stuck fast too. As the five were thus trudging along, one behind another, they met two labourers with their mattocks coming from work; and the parson cried out lustily to them to help him.



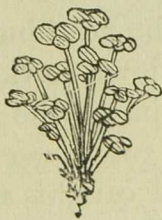
But scarcely had they laid hand on him, when they too fell into the rank; and so they made seven, all running together after Dummling and his goose.

Now Dummling thought he would see a little of the world



before he went home ; so he and his train journeyed on, till at last they came to a city where there was a king who had an only daughter. The princess was of so thoughtful and moody a turn of mind that no one could make her laugh ; and the king had made known to all the world, that whoever could make her laugh should have her for his wife. When the young man heard this, he went to her, with his goose and all its train ; and as soon as she saw the seven all hanging together, and running along, treading on each other's heels, she could not help bursting into a long and loud laugh. Then Dummling claimed her for his wife, and married her, and he was heir to the kingdom, and lived long and happily with his wife.

But what became of the goose and the goose's tail, I never could hear.



*THE FISHERMAN AND HIS WIFE.*

THERE was once a fisherman who lived with his wife in a hovel, close by the sea-side. The fisherman used to go out all day long a-fishing; and one day, as he sat with his rod, looking at the sparkling waves and watching his line, all on a sudden his float was dragged away deep into the water: and in drawing it up he pulled out a great flounder.

“Pray let me live!” cried the flounder, “I am not a real fish; I am an enchanted prince: put me into the water again, and let me go!” “Oh! ho!” said the man, “you need not make so many words about the matter; I will have nothing to do with a fish that can talk: so swim away, Sir, as soon as you please!” Then he put him back into the water, and the fish darted straight down to the bottom, and left a long streak of blood behind him on the wave.

When the fisherman got home to his wife in the hovel, he told her how he had caught a great flounder who said he was an enchanted prince, and how, on hearing it speak, he had let it go again. “Did not you ask it for anything?” said the wife. “No,” said the man, “what should I ask for?” “Ah!” said the wife, “we live very wretchedly here, in this dirty hovel; pray go back and tell the flounder that we want a snug little cottage.”



The fisherman did not much like to do this: however, he went to the sea-shore; and when he came there, the water looked all yellow and green. He stood at the water's edge, and cried,—

“O man of the sea!  
Hearken to me!  
My wife Ilsabill  
Will have her own will  
And hath sent me to beg a boon of thee!”

Then the flounder came swimming to him, and said, “Well,



what is her will? what does your wife want?” “Ah!” replied the fisherman, “she says that when I had caught you, I ought to have asked you for something before I let you go; she does not like living in our hovel any longer and wants a snug little cottage.” “Go home, then,” said the flounder; “she is in the cottage already!” So the man went home, and found his wife standing at the door of a nice trim little cottage.

"Come in, come in!" said she; "is not this much better than the wretched hovel we had?" There was a parlour and a bedchamber, and a kitchen; and behind the cottage there was a little garden planted with all sorts of flowers and fruits; and there was a courtyard behind, full of ducks and chickens. "Ah!" said the fisherman, "how happily we shall live now!" "We will try to do so, at least," said his wife.

Everything went right for a week or two, and then Dame Ilsabill said, "Husband, there is not near room enough for us in this cottage; the courtyard and the garden are a great deal too small; I should like to have a large stone castle to live in; go to the fish again and tell him to give us a castle." "Wife," said the fisherman, "I don't like to go to him again, for perhaps he will be angry; we ought to be easy with this pretty cottage to live in." "Nonsense!" said the wife; "he will do it very willingly, I know: go along, and try!"

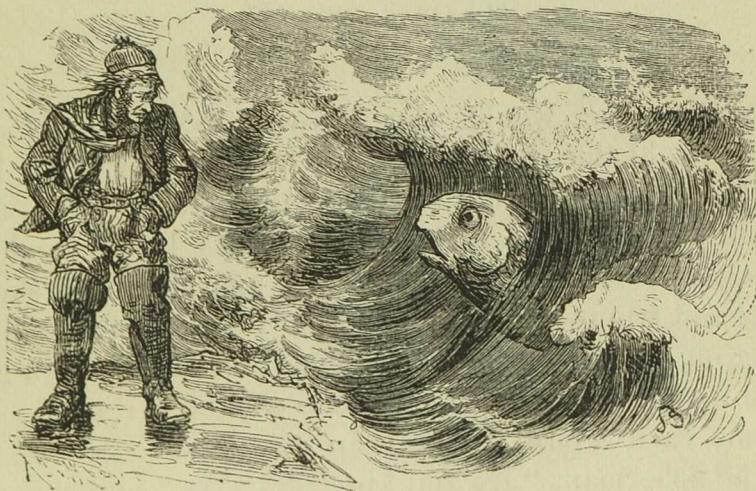
The fisherman went, but his heart was very heavy: and when he came to the sea, it looked blue and gloomy, though it was very calm; and he went close to the edge of the waves, and said,—

"O man of the sea!  
Hearken to me!  
My wife Ilsabill  
Will have her own will,  
And hath sent me to beg a boon of thee!"

"Well, what does she want now?" said the fish. "Ah!" said the man dolefully, "my wife wants to live in a stone castle." "Go home, then," said the fish; "she is standing at the gate of it already." So away went the fisherman, and



found his wife standing before the gate of a great castle. "See," said she, "is not this grand?" With that they went into the castle together, and found a great many servants there, and the rooms all richly furnished, and full of golden chairs and tables; and behind the castle was a garden, and around it was a park half a mile long, full of sheep, and goats, and hares, and deer; and in the courtyard were stables and cow-houses. "Well," said the man, "now we will live cheerful and happy in this beautiful castle for the



rest of our lives." "Perhaps we may," said the wife; "but let us sleep upon it, before we make up our minds to that." So they went to bed.

The next morning when Dame Ilsabill awoke it was broad daylight, and she jogged the fisherman with her elbow, and said, "Get up, husband, and bestir yourself, for we must be king of all the land." "Wife, wife," said the man, "why should we wish to be king? I will not be king." "Then I

will," said she. "But, wife," said the fisherman, "how can you be king? the fish cannot make you a king." "Husband," said she, "say no more about it, but go and try! I will be king." So the man went away quite sorrowful to think that his wife should want to be king. This time the sea looked a dark grey colour, and was overspread with curling waves and ridges of foam as he cried out,—

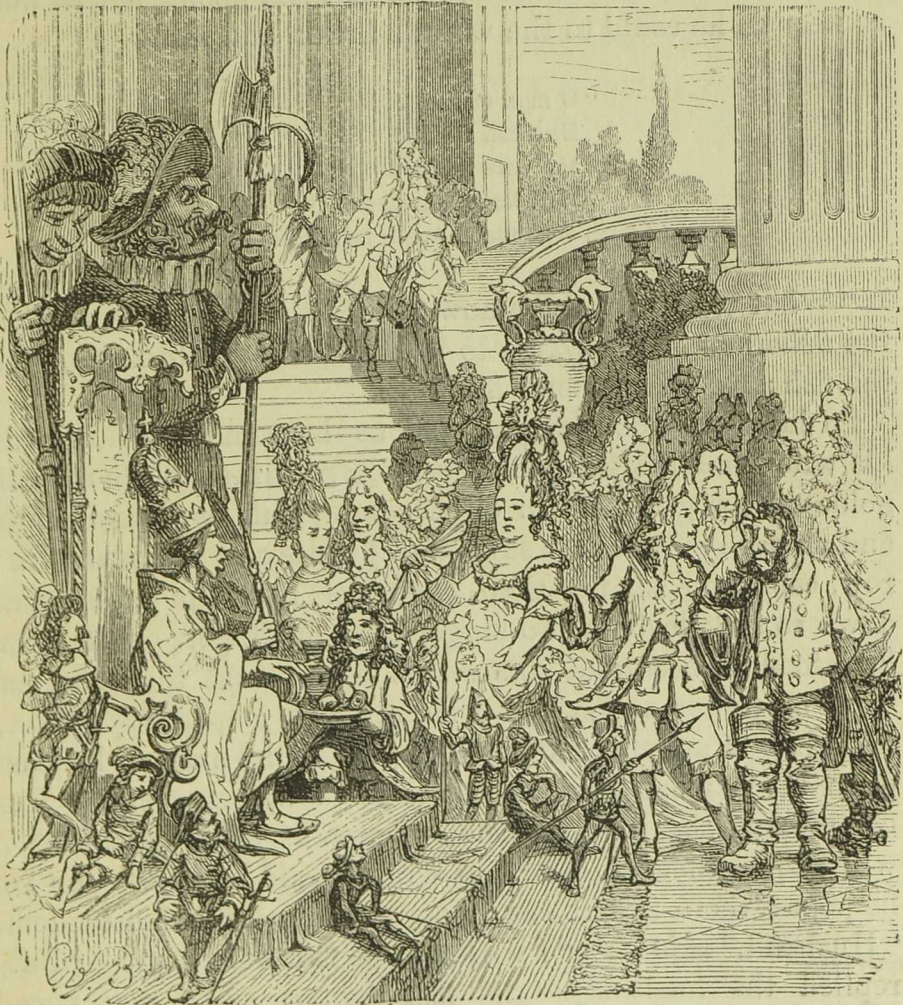
"O man of the sea!  
Hearken to me!  
My wife Ilsabill  
Will have her own will,  
And hath sent me to beg a boon of thee!"

"Well, what would she have now?" said the fish. "Alas!" said the poor man, "my wife wants to be king." "Go home," said the fish; "she is king already."

Then the fisherman went home; and as he came close to the palace he saw a troop of soldiers, and heard the sound of drums and trumpets. And when he went in he saw his wife sitting on a high throne of gold and diamonds, with a golden crown upon her head; and on each side of her stood six fair maidens, each a head taller than the other. "Well, wife," said the fisherman, "are you king?" "Yes," said she, "I am king." And when he had looked at her for a long time, he said, "Ah, wife! what a fine thing it is to be king! now we shall never have anything more to wish for as long as we live." "I don't know how that may be," said she; "never is a long time. I am king, it is true; but I begin to be tired of that, and I think I should like to be emperor." "Alas, wife! why should you wish to be emperor?" said the fisherman. "Husband," said she, "go to the fish! I say I will be emperor." "Ah, wife!" replied the fisherman, "the fish



cannot make an emperor I am sure, and I should not like to ask him for such a thing." "I am king," said Ilsabill, "and you are my slave; so go at once!"



So the fisherman was forced to go; and he muttered as he went along, "This will come to no good, it is too much to"

ask ; the fish will be tired at last, and then we shall be sorry for what we have done." He soon came to the sea-shore ; and the water was quite black and muddy, and a mighty whirlwind blew over the waves and rolled them about, but he went as near as he could to the water's brink, and said—

"O man of the sea !  
Hearken to me !  
My wife Ilsabill  
Will have her own will,  
And hath sent me to beg a boon of thee !"

"What would she have now?" said the fish. "Ah!" said the fisherman, "she wants to be emperor." "Go home," said the fish; "she is emperor already."

So he went home again; and as he came near he saw his wife Ilsabill sitting on a very lofty throne made of solid gold, with a great crown on her head full two yards high; and on each side of her stood her guards and attendants in a row, each one smaller than the other, from the tallest giant down to a little dwarf no bigger than my finger. And before her stood princes, and dukes, and earls: and the fisherman went up to her and said, "Wife, are you emperor?" "Yes," said she, "I am emperor." "Ah!" said the man, as he gazed upon her, "what a fine thing it is to be emperor!" "Husband," said she, "why should we stop at being emperor? I will be pope next." "O wife, wife!" said he, "how can you be pope? there is but one pope at a time in Christendom." "Husband," said she, "I will be pope this very day." "But," replied the husband, "the fish cannot make you pope." "What nonsense!" said she; "if he can make an emperor, he can make a pope: go and try him."

So the fisherman went. But when he came to the shore



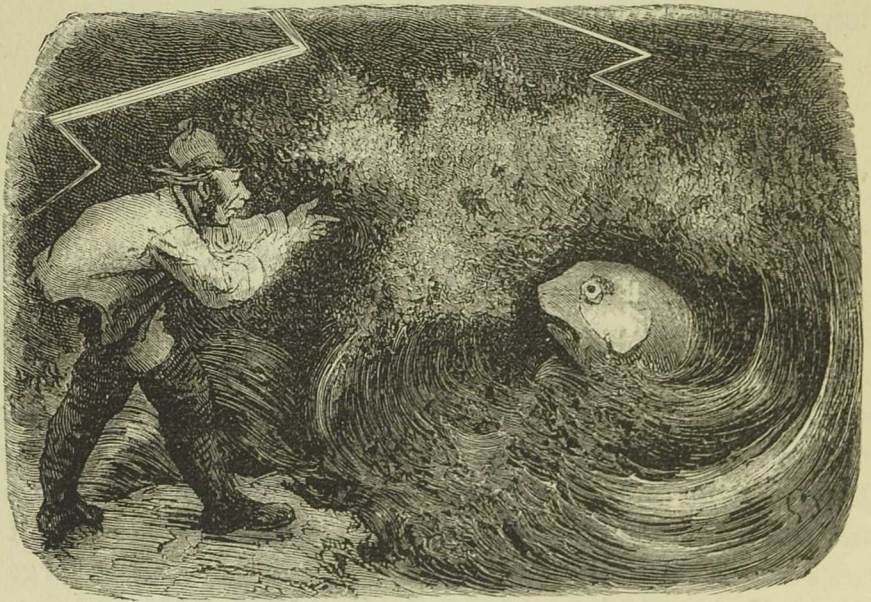
the wind was raging, and the sea was tossed up and down in boiling waves, and the ships were in trouble, and rolled fearfully upon the tops of the billows. In the middle of the heavens there was a little piece of blue sky, but towards the south all was red, as if a dreadful storm was rising. At this sight the fisherman was dreadfully frightened, and he trembled so that his knees knocked together: but still he went down near to the shore, and said,—

“O man of the sea!  
Hearken to me!  
My wife Ilsabill  
Will have her own will,  
And hath sent me to beg a boon of thee!”

“What does she want now?” said the fish. “Ah!” said the fisherman, “my wife wants to be pope.” “Go home,” said the fish; “she is pope already.”

Then the fisherman went home, and found Ilsabill sitting on a throne that was two miles high. And she had three great crowns on her head, and around her stood all the pomp and power of the church. And on each side of her were two rows of burning lights, of all sizes, the greatest as large as the highest and biggest tower in the world, and the least no larger than a small rushlight. “Wife,” said the fisherman as he looked at all this greatness, “are you pope?” “Yes,” said she, “I am pope.” “Well, wife,” replied he, “it is a grand thing to be pope; and now you must be easy, for you can be nothing greater.” “I will think about that,” said the wife. Then they went to bed: but Dame Ilsabill could not sleep all night for thinking what she should be next. At last, as she was dropping asleep, morning broke, and the sun rose. “Ha!” thought she, as she woke up and looked at it

through the window, "after all I cannot prevent the sun rising." At this thought she was very angry, and wakened her husband, and said, "Husband, go to the fish and tell him I must be lord of the sun and moon." The fisherman was half asleep, but the thought frightened him so much that he started and fell out of bed. "Alas, wife!" said he, "cannot



you be easy with being pope?" "No," said she, "I am very uneasy as long as the sun and moon rise without my leave. Go to the fish at once!"

Then the man went shivering with fear; and as he was going down to the shore a dreadful storm arose, so that the trees and the very rocks shook. And all the heavens became black with stormy clouds, and the lightnings played, and the thunders rolled; and you might have seen in the sea great black waves, swelling up like mountains with crowns



of white foam upon their heads. And the fisherman crept towards the sea, and cried out, as well as he could,—

“O man of the sea!  
Hearken to me!  
My wife Ilsabill  
Will have her own will,  
And hath sent me to beg a boon of thee!”

“What does she want now?” said the fish. “Ah!” said he, “she wants to be lord of the sun and moon.” “Go home,” said the fish, “to your hovel again.”

And there they live to this very day.



*THE POOR MAN AND THE RICH MAN.*

IN olden times, when angels used to walk about on this earth amongst men, it once happened that one was overtaken by the darkness before he could get a night's lodging. Before him on the road were two houses facing each other; the one was large and beautifully built, the other was small and poor. The large one belonged to a rich man, and the small one to a poor man. "Well," the angel thought, "I shall be no burden to the rich man, I will knock at his door." When the rich man heard the knocking, he opened the window and asked the stranger what he wanted. The angel answered, "I only ask for a night's lodging." Then the rich man looked at him from head to foot, and as the angel had on plain clothes, and did not look like one who had much money in his pocket, he shook his head, saying, "No, I cannot take you in, my rooms are full of plants and seeds; and if I were to lodge everyone who knocks at my door, I might very soon go begging myself. Go somewhere else for a lodging," and with this he shut down the window and left the angel standing there. So the angel turned his back on the rich man, and went over to the poor man's house and knocked. He had hardly done so when the poor man opened the door and bade the traveller come in, and stay over night with him. "It is already dark," said he; "you cannot go any farther to-night." The angel



was very pleased at his saying this, and he went in. The poor man's wife gave him her hand and welcomed him, saying he must make himself at home and put up with what they had got; they had not much to offer him, but what they had they would give him with all their hearts. Then she put the potatoes on, and while they were boiling she milked the goat, that they might have something to drink with them. When the cloth was laid, the angel sat down with them; and



he enjoyed their coarse food very much, for there were happy faces at the table. When they had had supper and it was bed-time, the woman whispered to her husband,

"I say, husband, let us make up a bed of straw to-night, shall we? and then the traveller can sleep in our bed and have a good rest, for he has been walking all day, and that makes one weary." "With all my heart," answered the man.

"I will go and tell him;" and he went to the angel and told him that if he would, he might make use of their bed and have a good rest. But the angel was unwilling to deprive them of their bed; however, they would not be satisfied, until at length he gave in to them and lay down in their bed, while they themselves lay on some straw on the ground.

Next morning they got up before daybreak and prepared a simple breakfast. When the sun shone in through the window, the angel got up, and had breakfast with the poor people, and then prepared to set out again on his journey. But as he was standing at the door he turned round and said, "As you have been so kind and good, you may wish three things and they shall be fulfilled." Then the man said, "What else should I wish but eternal happiness, and that we two as long as we live may be healthy and have every day our daily bread; for the third wish I do not know what to have." And the angel said to him, "Would not you like a new house instead of this old one?" "Yes," said the man; "I should like that if I can have it." And the angel fulfilled his wish, and changed their old house into a new one, and then he left them and went on.

The sun was high when the rich man got up and leaned out of his window. He saw a pretty house with red tiles and bright windows where the old hut used to be. He was very much astonished, and called his wife and said to her, "Just look! How has that happened? Yesterday there was a miserable little hut standing there, and now there is a pretty new cottage. Run over and see how it is." So his wife went and asked the poor people, and they said to her, "Yesterday evening a traveller came here and asked for a night's lodging, and this morning on leaving us he granted us three wishes—eternal happiness, and health and our daily bread while we



are in this life, and, besides these, a pretty new cottage instead of our old hut." When the rich man's wife heard this, she ran back and told her husband how it had happened; and he broke out, "I wish I may be hanged! Would that I had only known that! The traveller came to our house too, and I sent him away." "Quick!" said his wife, "get on your horse. You can still catch the man up and get three wishes granted you."

So the rich man mounted directly and soon came up with the angel, and he addressed him politely and told him he must not take it amiss that he had not let him in directly; he was looking for the front door key when the stranger had gone off; when he came back again he must come and stay with him. "Yes," said the angel; "if I ever come back again I will do so." Then the rich man asked if he might not have three wishes too, as his neighbour had had. "Yes," said the angel, he might, but it would not be to his advantage, and he had better not wish anything; but the rich man thought he would choose something which would add to his happiness, if he only knew that it would be fulfilled. So the angel said to him, "Ride home then, and the three wishes which you shall wish will be fulfilled."

The rich man had now gained what he wanted, so he rode home, considering what he should wish. As he was going along deep in thought he let the reins fall, and the horse began to caper about, and this disturbed his meditation; he could not collect his thoughts at all. He patted it on the neck, saying, "Gently, Polly;" but the horse reared up again. Then he began to grow angry, and when the horse again reared, he cried out impatiently, "I wish your neck was broken!" Directly he had said the words, plump he fell on the ground, and there lay the horse dead; for it never moved

again. Thus his first wish was fulfilled. As he was a very avaricious man, he did not like to leave the harness lying there; so he took it off, and throwing it on his back, he set off home on foot, and consoled himself by thinking, "You have still two wishes left."

Sometimes he thought he had hit upon the best thing, but then afterwards it would appear too small and insignificant. Among other thoughts it occurred to him that his wife was just then having an easy time of it, sitting in a cool room enjoying her dinner. This made him feel very cross, and without thinking what he was doing he said, "I wish she was sitting on this saddle at home and was not able to get off, instead of my having to toil with it on my back." As he uttered the last word the saddle disappeared from his back, and he saw his second wish fulfilled. Now he began to feel very anxious, and set off running, for he wanted to get home and shut himself up quite alone in his room, to think of something grand for his last wish. But when he got home and opened the door, there he saw his wife sitting on the saddle, screaming and crying, for she could not get down. And he said to her, "Only sit there and be content; I will wish for all the kingdoms of the world." But she answered, "What will be the use of all the kingdoms of the world, if I have to sit on this saddle? You have wished me on, you must now wish me off again." So, whether he liked or not, he was obliged to make it his third wish that she should be able to get off the saddle again. This was immediately fulfilled; and when his wife was again on her feet, she put her arms on her hips and said, "Well, you are a silly. I should have done it better." So he got nothing but vexation, trouble, and abuse, and he lost his horse into the bargain; but the poor people lived happily and piously until their deaths.



*KING THRUSH-BEARD.*

A GREAT king of a land far away in the East had a daughter who was very beautiful, but so proud, and haughty, and conceited, that none of the princes who came to ask her in marriage were good enough for her, and she only made sport of them.

Once upon a time the king held a great feast, and asked thither all her suitors; and they all sat in a row, ranged according to their rank—kings, and princes, and dukes, and earls, and counts, and barons, and knights. Then the princess came in, and as she passed by them she had something spiteful to say to every one. The first was too fat: "He's as round as a tub," said she. The next was too tall: "What a maypole!" said she. The next was too short: "What a dumpling!" said she. The fourth was too pale, and she called him "Wallface." The fifth was too red, so she called him "Coxcomb." The sixth was not straight enough; so she said he was like a green stick, that had been laid to dry over a baker's oven. And thus she had some joke to crack upon every one: but she laughed more than all at a good king whose chin grew out rather too prominently. "Look at him," said she; "his chin is like a thrush's beak; he shall be called Thrush-beard." So the king got the nickname of Thrush-beard.

But the old king was very angry when he saw how his

daughter behaved, and how she ill-treated all his guests; and he vowed that, willing or unwilling, she should marry the first man, be he prince or beggar, that came to the door.

Two days after there came by a travelling fiddler, who began to play under the window and beg alms; and when the king heard him, he said, "Let him come in." So they brought in a dirty-looking fellow; and when he had sung before the king and the princess, he begged a boon. Then the king said, "You have sung so well, that I will give you my daughter for your wife." The princess begged and prayed; but the king said, "I have sworn to give you to the first comer, and I will keep my word." So words and tears were of no avail; the parson was sent for, and she was married to the fiddler. When this was over the king said, "Now get ready to go—you must not stay here—you must travel on with your husband."

Then the fiddler went his way, and took her with him, and they soon came to a great wood. "Pray," said she, "whose is this wood?" "It belongs to King Thrush-beard," answered he; "hadst thou taken him, all had been thine." "Ah! unlucky wretch that I am!" sighed she; "would that I had married King Thrush-beard!" Next they came to some fine meadows. "Whose are these beautiful green meadows?" said she. "They belong to King Thrush-beard; hadst thou taken him, they had all been thine." "Ah! unlucky wretch that I am!" said she; "would that I had married King Thrush-beard!"

Then they came to a great city. "Whose is this noble city?" said she. "It belongs to King Thrush-beard; hadst thou taken him, it had all been thine." "Ah! wretch that I am!" sighed she; "why did I not marry King Thrush-beard?" "That is no business of mine," said the fiddler "why





"LOOK AT HIM," SAID SHE; "HIS CHIN IS LIKE A THRUSH'S BEAK."





should you wish for another husband ; am not I good enough for you ?”

At last they came to a small cottage. “What a paltry place !” said she ; “to whom does that little dirty hole belong ?” Then the fiddler said, “That is your and my house, where we are to live.” “Where are your servants ?” cried she. “What do we want with servants ?” said he : “you must do for yourself whatever is to be done. Now make the fire, and put on water and cook my supper, for I am very tired.” But the princess knew nothing of making fires and cooking, and the fiddler was forced to help her. When they had eaten a very scanty meal they went to bed ; but the fiddler called her up very early in the morning to clean the house. Thus they lived for two days ; and when they had eaten up all there was in the cottage, the man said “Wife, we can’t go on thus, spending money and earning nothing. You must learn to weave baskets.” Then he went out and cut willows, and brought them home, and she began to weave ; but it made her fingers very sore. “I see this work won’t do,” said he : “try and spin ; perhaps you will do that better.” So she sat down and tried to spin ; but the threads cut her tender fingers till the blood ran. “See now,” said the fiddler, “you are good for nothing ; you can do no work : what a bargain I have got ! However, I’ll try and set up a trade in pots and pans, and you shall stand in the market and sell them.” “Alas !” sighed she, “if any of my father’s court should pass by and see me standing in the market, how they will laugh at me.”

But her husband did not care for that, and said she must work if she did not wish to die of hunger. At first the trade went well ; for many people, seeing such a beautiful woman, went to buy her wares, and paid their money without

thinking of taking away the goods. They lived on this as long as it lasted; and then her husband bought a fresh lot of ware, and she sat herself down with it in the corner of the market; but a drunken soldier soon came by, and rode his horse against her stall, and broke all her goods into a thousand pieces. Then she began to cry, and knew not what to do. "Ah! what will become of me?" said she; "what will my husband say?" So she ran home and told him all. "Who would have thought you would have been so silly," said he, "as to put an earthenware stall in the corner of the market, where everybody passes? But let us have no more crying; I see you are not fit for this sort of work, so I have been to the king's palace, and asked if they did not want a kitchen-maid; and they say they will take you, and there you will have plenty to eat."

Thus the princess became a kitchen-maid, and helped the cook to do all the dirtiest work; but she was allowed to carry home some of the meat that was left, and on this they lived.

She had not been there long before she heard that the king's eldest son was passing by, going to be married; and she went to one of the windows and looked out. Everything was ready, and all the pomp and brightness of the court was there. Then she bitterly grieved for the pride and folly which had brought her so low. And the servants gave her some of the rich meats, which she put into her basket to take home.

All on a sudden, as she was going out, in came the king's son in golden clothes; and when he saw a beautiful woman at the door, he took her by the hand, and said she should be his partner in the dance; but she trembled for fear, for she saw that it was King Thrush-beard, who was making sport of



her. However, he kept fast hold, and led her in; and the cover of the basket came off, so that the meats in it fell all about. Then everybody laughed and jeered at her; and she was so abashed, that she wished herself a thousand feet deep in the earth. She sprang to the door to run away; but on the steps King Thrush-beard overtook her, and brought her back and said, "Fear me not! I am the fiddler who has lived with you in the hut. I brought you there because I really loved you. I am also the soldier that overset your stall. I have done all this only to cure you of your silly pride, and to show you the folly of your ill-treatment of me. Now all is over; you have learnt wisdom, and it is time to hold our marriage feast."

Then the chamberlains came and brought her the most beautiful robes; and her father and his whole court were there already, and welcomed her home on her marriage. Joy was in every face and every heart. The feast was grand: they danced and sang: all were merry; and I only wish that you and I had been of the party.



*HANS IN LUCK.*

SOME men are born to good luck: all they do or try to do comes right:—all that falls to them is so much gain:—all their geese are swans:—all their cards are trumps:—toss them which way you will, they will always, like poor puss, alight upon their legs, and only move on so much the faster. The world may very likely not always think of them as they think of themselves, but what care they for the world? what can it know about the matter?

One of these lucky beings was neighbour Hans. Seven long years he had worked hard for his master. At last he said, "Master, my time is up; I must go home and see my poor mother once more: so pray pay me my wages and let me go." And the master said, "You have been a faithful and good servant, Hans, so your pay shall be handsome." Then he gave him a lump of silver as big as his head.

Hans took out his pocket-handkerchief, put the piece of silver into it, threw it over his shoulder, and jogged off on his road homewards. As he went lazily on, dragging one foot after another, a man came in sight, trotting gaily along on a capital horse. "Ah!" said Hans, aloud, "what a fine thing it is to ride on horseback! There he sits as easy and happy as if he were at home in the chair by his fireside; he trips against no stones, saves shoe-leather, and gets on he hardly knows how." Hans did not speak so softly



but that the horseman heard it all, and said, "Well, friend, why do you go on foot then?" "Ah!" said he, "I have this load to carry: to be sure it is silver, but it is so heavy that I can't hold up my head, and you must know it hurts my shoulder sadly." "What do you say to our making an exchange?" said the horseman. "I will give you my horse, and you shall give me the silver; which will save you a great deal of trouble in carrying such a heavy load about with you."



"With all my heart," said Hans: "but as you are so kind to me, I must tell you one thing—you will have a weary task to drag that silver about with you." However, the horseman got off, took the silver, helped Hans up, gave him the bridle into one hand and the whip into the other, and said, "When you want to go very fast, smack your lips loudly together, and cry 'Jip!'"

Hans was delighted as he sat on the horse, drew himself up, squared his elbows, turned out his toes, cracked his whip, and rode merrily off; one minute whistling a merry tune, and another singing,

"No care and no sorrow,  
A fig for the morrow!  
We'll laugh and be merry,  
Sing heigh down derry!"

After a time he thought he should like to go a little faster, so he smacked his lips and cried "Jip!" Away went the horse full gallop; and before Hans knew what he was about he was thrown off, and lay on his back by the road-side. His horse would have run off, if a shepherd who had passed by,

driving a cow, had not stopped it. Hans soon came to himself, and got upon his legs again, sadly vexed, and said to the shepherd, "This riding is no joke, when a man has the luck



to get upon a beast like this, that stumbles and flings one off as if it would break one's neck. However, I'm off now once for all: I like your cow, now, a great deal better than this smart beast that played me this trick, and has spoiled my best coat, you see, in this

puddle; which, by-the-by, smells not very like a nosegay. One can walk along at one's leisure behind that cow—keep good company, and have milk, butter, and cheese, every day, into the bargain. What would I give to have such a prize!" "Well," said the shepherd, "if you are so fond of her, I will change my cow for your horse; I like to do good to my neighbours, even though I lose by it myself." "Done!" said Hans, merrily. "What a noble heart that good man has!" thought he. Then the shepherd jumped upon the horse, wished Hans and the cow good morning, and away he rode.

Hans brushed his coat, wiped his face and hands, rested awhile, and then drove off his cow quietly, and thought his bargain a very lucky one. "If I have only a piece of bread (and I certainly shall always be able to get that), I can, whenever I like, eat my butter and cheese with it; and when I am thirsty I can milk my cow and drink the milk: and what can I wish for more?" When he came to an inn he halted, ate up all his bread, and gave away his last penny for



a glass of beer. When he had rested himself he set off again, driving his cow towards his mother's village. But the heat grew greater as noon came on, till at last, as he found himself on a wide heath that would take him more than an hour to cross, he began to be so hot and parched that his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth. "I can find a cure for this," thought he; "now I will milk my cow and quench my thirst;" so he tied her to the stump of a tree, and held his leathern cap to milk into; but not a drop was to be had. Who would have thought that this cow, which was to bring him milk and butter and cheese, was all the time utterly dry? Hans had not thought of looking to that.

While he was trying his luck in milking, and managing the matter very clumsily, the uneasy beast began to think him very troublesome; and at last gave him such a kick on the head as knocked him down; and there he lay a long while senseless. Luckily a butcher soon came by, driving a pig in a wheelbarrow. "What is the matter with you, my man?" said the butcher, as he helped him up. Hans told him what had happened, how he was dry and wanted to milk his cow, but found that the cow was dry too. Then the butcher gave him a flask of ale, saying, "There, drink and refresh yourself; your cow will give you no milk: don't you see she is an old beast, good for nothing but the slaughter-house?" "Alas, alas!" said Hans, "who would have thought it? What a shame to take my horse, and give me only a dry cow! If I kill her, what will she be good for? I hate cow-beef; it is not tender enough for me. If it were a pig now—like that fat gentleman you are driving along at his ease—one could do something with it; it would at any rate make sausages." "Well," said the butcher, "I don't like to say no, when one is asked to do a kind, neighbourly thing. To please you I

will change, and give you my fine fat pig for the cow." "Heaven reward you for your kindness and self-denial!" said



Hans, as he gave the butcher the cow; and taking the pig off the wheel-barrow, drove it away, holding it by the string that was tied to its leg.

So on he jogged, and all seemed now to go right with him: he had met with some misfortunes, to be sure; but he was now well repaid for all. How could it be otherwise with such a travelling companion as he had at last got?

The next man he met was a countryman carrying a fine white goose. The countryman stopped to ask what was o'clock; this led to further chat; and Hans told him all his luck, how he had made so many good bargains, and how all the world went gay and smiling with him. The countryman then began to tell his tale, and said he was going to take the goose to a christening. "Feel," said he, "how heavy it is, and yet it is only eight weeks old. Whoever roasts and eats it will find plenty of fat upon it, it has lived so well!" "You're right," said Hans, as he weighed it in his hand; "but if you talk of fat, my pig is no trifle." Meantime the countryman began to look grave, and shook his head. "Hark ye!" said he, "my worthy friend, you seem a good sort of fellow, so I can't help doing you a kind turn. Your pig may get you into a scrape. In the village I just came from, the squire has had a pig stolen out of his sty. I was dreadfully afraid when I saw you that you had got the squire's pig. If you have, and they catch you, it will be a bad job for you.



The least they'll do will be to throw you into the horse-pond. Can you swim?"

Poor Hans was sadly frightened. "Good man," cried he, "Pray get me out of this scrape. I know nothing of where the pig was either bred or born; but he may have been the squire's for aught I can tell:

you know this country better than I do, take my pig and give me the goose." "I ought to have something into the bargain," said the countryman; "give a fat goose for a pig, indeed! 'Tis not every one would do so much for you as that. However, I will not bear



hard upon you, as you are in trouble." Then he took the string in his hand, and drove off the pig by a side path; while Hans went on the way homewards free from care. "After all," thought he, "that chap is pretty well taken in. I don't care whose pig it is, but wherever it came from it has been a very good friend to me. I have much the best of the bargain. First there will be a capital roast; then the fat will find me in goose-grease for six months; and then there are all the beautiful white feathers. I will put them into my pillow, and then I am sure I shall sleep soundly without rocking. How happy my mother will be! Talk of a pig, indeed! Give me a fine fat goose."

As he came to the next village, he saw a scissors-grinder with his wheel, working and singing,

"O'er hill and o'er dale  
So happy I roam,  
Work light and live well,  
All the world is my home;  
Who then so blythe, so merry as I?"

Hans stood looking on for awhile, and at last said, "You must be well off, master grinder! you seem so happy at your work." "Yes," said the other, "mine is a golden trade; a good grinder never puts his hand into his pocket without finding money in it:—but where did you get that beautiful goose?" "I did not buy it, I gave a pig for it." "And where did you get the pig?" "I gave a cow for it." "And the cow?" "I gave a horse for it." "And the horse?" "I gave a lump of silver as big as my head for him." "And the silver?" "Oh! I worked hard for that seven long years." "You have thriven well in the world hitherto," said the grinder; "now if you could find money in your pocket when-



ever you put your hand into it, your fortune would be made." "Very true: but how is that to be managed?" "How? Why you must turn grinder like me, to be sure," said the other; "you only want a grindstone; the rest will come of itself. Here is one that is but little the worse for wear: I would not ask more than the value of your goose for it:—will you buy?" "How can you ask?" said Hans; "I should be the happiest man in the world, if I could have money whenever I put my hand in my pocket; what could I want more? there's the goose." "Now," said the grinder, as he gave him

a common whetstone that lay by his side, "this is a most capital stone; do but work it well enough, and you can make an old nail cut with it."



Hans took the stone, and went his way with a light heart : his eyes sparkled for joy, and he said to himself, " Surely I



must have been born in a lucky hour ; everything I could want or wish for comes of itself. People are so kind ; they

seem really to think I do them a favour in letting them make me rich, and giving me good bargains."

Meantime he began to be tired, and hungry too, for he had given away his last penny in his joy at getting the cow.

At last he could go no farther, for the stone tired him sadly; and he dragged himself to the side of a river, that he might take a drink of water and rest awhile. So he laid the stone carefully by his side on the bank; but, as he stooped down to drink, he forgot it, pushed it a little, and down it rolled, plump into the stream.

For awhile he watched it sinking in the deep clear water; then sprang up and danced for joy, and again fell upon his knees and thanked Heaven, with tears in his eyes, for its kindness in taking away his only plague, the ugly heavy stone.

"How happy am I!" cried he; "nobody was ever so lucky as I." Then up he got with a light heart, free from all his troubles, and walked on till he reached his mother's house, and told her how very easy the road to good luck was.









THE NIXIE OF THE MILL-POND. *Page 80.*



*THE NIXIE.*

THERE was once a rich and prosperous miller, who, with his wife, lived a very happy life. But ill-luck comes in a night-time ; the miller became poor, and at last he could hardly call the mill in which he sat his own. All day he went about sadly, and when he lay down to sleep he found no rest, but passed the whole night in sorrowful thoughts.

One morning he got up before daylight, and went out into the fresh air. There, thought he, my heart will perhaps be lighter. He was walking sadly up and down by his mill-dam, when he suddenly heard a rustling in the reeds, and on looking round, he saw the white figure of a woman rising out of the water. He knew she must be the Nixie of the pond, and was so frightened that he did not know whether to run away or stand still there. Whilst he thus hesitated the Nixie began to speak, and calling him by name, she asked him why he was so sad. The miller took heart on hearing her speak kindly to him, and told her how rich and happy he had been, and that he was now so poor that for want and anxiety he hardly knew what to do.

Then the Nixie spoke cheeringly to him, and promised that he should be richer and happier than he had ever been, if he would give her whatever creature was just then the youngest in his house.

The miller thought she wanted a puppy or a kitten, so he promised her what she asked, and went cheerfully back to his mill. But just outside the door the maid-servant came up smiling, and called out to him that his wife had given birth to a little boy. The poor miller stood still, he could not now feel any joy at the birth of his son, which he had not expected so soon. Sadly he entered the house and told his wife and the relations who were assembled there what he had vowed to the Nixie. "Oh, let all the good fortune which she has promised me go, if I can only save my child!" cried he. But none knew what to advise him, except that the child must always be carefully watched, so that it might not go near the pond.

The child grew fast; and the miller in the meantime got back his money and land by degrees, and it was not long before he was richer than he had ever been before. But he could not enjoy his good fortune thoroughly, for he was continually thinking of his vow, and he feared that the Nixie would sooner or later demand its fulfilment.

But year after year passed by, and the boy grew up and learnt woodcraft, and as he was a clever huntsman, the squire of the village took him into his service; and the huntsman soon took a young wife, and they lived very happily together. But once, when he was chasing a young roebuck, it ran out into the open field, whither he eagerly followed and soon shot it. He ran up to it directly to skin and dress it, not noticing that he was close to the pond which he had always carefully avoided from his childhood. He had soon finished skinning it, and went to the water to wash the blood from his hands; but hardly had he put them in the water when the Nixie rose up and clasping him with her wet arms, she dragged him down and the water closed over them.



When the huntsman did not come home, his wife grew very anxious, and when on making a search for him they found his game-bag by the mill-pond, she had no longer any doubt as to what had happened to him. Without pause or rest she wandered day and night round the pond crying and calling for her husband. At last from very exhaustion she fell into a sleep, and dreamed that she was going through a field covered with flowers and she came to a hut where a witch lived, who promised to get her husband back for her. When she awoke in the morning, she resolved to follow the indication and seek out the witch. So she set off and soon came to the field covered with flowers, and to the hut in which the sorceress lived. She told her about her sorrow, and said she had been sent to her by a dream for advice and help.

Then the witch told her she must go at the next full moon to the pond, and there comb out her black hair with a golden comb, and then lay the comb on the bank. The huntsman's young wife rewarded the witch handsomely and betook herself home.

The time went very slowly until the new moon, but when at last it came she went to the pond and combed her black hair with a golden comb, and when she had done she laid the comb on the bank and looked impatiently into the water.

Then there was a boiling and bubbling from the bottom of the pond, and a wave washed the comb off the bank, and a little while afterwards her husband's head appeared out of the water, and looked sadly at her; but another wave came directly and the head disappeared again without having been able to utter a word.

The pond lay calm again in the moonlight, and the huntsman's wife was no better off than before.

Again she watched night and day until she sank exhausted

into a sleep, and the same dream which had before sent her to the witch came to her once more. Again she went through the flower-covered field to the hut and told the witch of her distress. The witch told her this time to go again to the pond at full moon, and to play on a golden flute, and then lay it on the bank.

So when the full moon came, the huntsman's wife went to the pond and played on a golden flute, and then laid it down beside her. Then there was a boiling and a bubbling from the bottom of the pond, and a wave washed the flute off the bank, and immediately the huntsman's head appeared out of the water, and he rose higher and higher till his chest was quite out of the water, and he stretched out his arms towards his wife. Then another wave came over him and drew him in again.

His wife was standing on the bank full of joy and hope; but now, when her husband disappeared again in the water, she sank down in despair.

But again the dream came to comfort her, and sent her to the flower-covered field and the witch's hut. This time the witch told her she must go to the pond as soon as it was full moon, and spin with a golden spinning-wheel, and then set it on the bank. When the moon was full, the huntsman's wife did so; she went to the pond, and sat down, and spun with a golden wheel, and then set it on the bank.

Then there was a boiling and bubbling from the bottom of the pond, and a wave washed the golden wheel from the bank, and immediately the huntsman's head rose from the water, and he rose higher and higher till at last he stood on the bank and fell into his wife's arms.

Then the water boiled and bubbled and washed far over the bank, and carried them both in each other's arms along with



it. In her anxiety, the huntsman's wife called on the witch to help them, and suddenly she was changed into a tortoise, and he into a frog; they could not keep together, the water washed them away in different directions, and when the flood was over, they had both, it is true, turned into human beings again, but each was in an unknown place, and neither of them knew anything of the other.

The huntsman resolved to be a shepherd, and his wife, too, became a shepherdess; and they tended their flocks a long distance from each other for many years.

But it happened once that the shepherd went to the place where the shepherdess lived. The neighbourhood pleased him very much, and he saw that it was fruitful and well suited for pasturing his flocks, so he brought his sheep thither, and tended them as usual, and the shepherd and shepherdess became good friends, but they did not recognise each other.

But one evening as they were sitting together by moonlight, watching their flocks grazing, and the shepherd was playing on his flute, the shepherdess thought of that evening when she had played on the golden flute by moonlight beside the pond, and she could not restrain her tears, but began crying bitterly. The shepherd asked her why she cried so, and she told him all that had happened to her. Then it seemed as if scales fell from the shepherd's eyes and he recognized his wife, and told her who he was, and then they returned joyfully to their home again, and lived there quietly and happily together.

*MOTHER HOLLE.*

THERE was once a widow who had two daughters—one of whom was pretty and industrious, whilst the other was ugly and idle. But she was much fonder of the ugly and idle one, because she was her own daughter, and the other, who was a step-daughter, was obliged to do all the work, and be the Cinderella in the house. Every day had the poor girl to sit in the highway near to a well, and spin and spin till her fingers bled. Now it happened that one day the shuttle was marked with her blood, so she dipped it in the well, intending to wash the mark off; but it jumped out of her hand and fell to the bottom. She began to weep, and, running to her step-mother, told her of her mishap. But she scolded her sharply, and was so unpitying as to say, “Since you have let the shuttle fall in, you may go fetch it out again.”

So the girl went back to the well, and did not know what-  
ever she should do; and in the sorrow of her heart she jumped into the water, to get the shuttle. She lost all consciousness; but when she woke up and came to herself she was in a lovely meadow where the sun was shining and many thousands of flowers bloomed. Along this meadow she went, and at last came to a baker’s oven full of bread, and the bread cried out, “Oh, take me out! take me out! or else I shall burn; I was done long ago!” So she went up to it,



and took out all the loaves one after another with the bread-shovel. After that she went on till she came to a tree covered with apples, which called out to her, "Oh, shake me! shake me! we apples are all ripe!" So she shook the tree till the apples fell like rain, and went on shaking till there were no more left on; and when she had gathered them all into a heap, she went on her way.

At last she came to a little house, out of which an old



woman popped her head; but she had such large teeth that the girl was frightened, and was about to run away. But the old woman called out to her, "What are you afraid of, dear child? Stay with me; if you will do all the work in the house properly you shall get something good. You must only take care to make my bed well and to shake it thoroughly till the feathers fly—for then there is snow on the earth. I am Mother Holle."\*

\* In some parts of Germany when it snows they say "Mother Holle is making her bed,"

When the old woman spoke so kindly, the girl took courage—consented, and set about her work. She attended to everything to the satisfaction of her mistress, and shook her bed so vigorously that the feathers flew about like snow-flakes. Consequently she had a pleasant life; not an angry word; and boiled or roast meat every day.

She had now been some time with Mother Holle, when she became melancholy. At first she did not know what was the matter, but found at length that it was home-sickness: although she was a thousand times better off here than at home, still she had a longing to return. At last she said to the old woman, "I have a longing for home; and though I am so well off here, yet remain any longer I cannot; I must go back again to my own people." Mother Holle said, "I am pleased that you long for your home again, and since you have served me so truly I myself will see you off." Thereupon she took her by the hand, and led her to a large door. The door was opened, and as the maiden stood just beneath the doorway, a heavy shower of golden rain fell, and the gold remained hanging upon her, so that she was completely covered over with it. "This is because you have been so industrious," said Mother Holle; and at the same time she gave her back the shuttle which she had let fall into the well. Thereupon the door closed, and the maiden found herself upon the earth, not far from her mother's house. And as she came into the yard the cock stood upon the well-side, and cried

"Cock-a-doodle-doo !

Golden young lady, oh, welcome to you !"

So she went in to her mother, and since she was so decked out with gold she was well received, both by her and by her sister.

The girl related all that had happened to her; and as soon



as the mother heard how she had come by so much wealth, she was very anxious to obtain the same good luck for the other ugly and lazy daughter. She had to set herself down



by the well ; and in order that her shuttle might be stained with blood she pricked her finger and stuck her hand in a thorn bush. Then she threw her shuttle into the well, and jumped

in after it. She arrived, like the other, at the beautiful meadow and walked along the very same path. When she got to the oven the bread cried out again, "Oh, take me out! take me out! or else I shall burn; I was done long ago!" But the lazy thing answered, "Why should I wish to make myself smutty?" and on she went. Soon she came to the apple-tree, which cried out, "Oh, shake me! shake me! we apples are all ripe!" But she answered, "You are quite right; one of you might fall on my head," and so went on. When she came to the door of Mother Holle's house she was not afraid, for she had already heard of her big teeth; and she accordingly engaged herself to her. The first day she set herself to work diligently, and obeyed Mother Holle when she told her to do anything, for she was thinking of all the gold that she would give her. But on the second day she began to get lazy, and on the third day still more so, and she would not get up in the morning. Neither did she make Mother Holle's bed as she ought, and did not shake it so as to make the feathers fly out. Mother Holle was soon tired of this, and gave her notice to leave. The lazy girl was willing enough to go; and now, thought she, the golden rain will come. Mother Holle led her to the door; but as she stood there a big kettle full of pitch was upset over her. "That is the reward of your service," said Mother Holle, and shut the door. So home the lazy one went; but she was covered with pitch, and the cock on the well-side, as soon as he saw her, cried out—

"Cock-a-doodle-doo !

Oh, pitchy young lady, good morning to you!"

But the pitch stuck fast to her, and could not be got off as long as she lived.



*THE KING AND THE JOURNEYMAN.*

THERE was once a king who believed everything that he was told, and he promised to give his daughter's hand and his throne to anyone who would tell him something which he did not believe. A great many people came to him and told him all sorts of stories, but he believed them all. One day a journeyman was announced, who said, "Once I went out into my field and planted some hemp, and behold it came up directly and grew as high as the church tower. Then I tried to climb up the hemp, and I succeeded too, for it grew up into the air straight as a candle. But when I had got up to the top, I wanted to slide down again, but all of a sudden I tumbled and fell several feet deep into the ground. I was so frightened at this, that I ran quickly home and fetched a spade and dug myself out of the hole with it." "I believe that even," said the king. Then the journeyman went on. "After a few days I went again into the field, and climbed once more up the hemp, and soon arrived in heaven. Everything was beautiful up there, and shone wonderfully. Angels were flying about singing songs of praise. And there I saw my dear parents, dressed in golden clothes, and they were driving in a golden carriage, and nodded kindly to me as they passed. And when I went a little farther, your Majesty, I met your father and mother; they were dressed in rags, and asked me for a halfpenny."

"That is false," the king shouted out angrily. "It is not possible. I don't believe it."

"Good," said the journeyman. "You do not believe it; but I have seen it all, and now,—remember your promise."

And the king kept his word; the journeyman received the hand of the princess, and after a time became king too.





*THE MANIKIN.*

ONCE, many, many years ago, there lived a poor widow with her son, by the side of a large river. The son used to look after his little field very industriously, and took care of his cow, and fished in the river; what he caught he then took to the town to sell. Daniel, for that was the lad's name, was certainly not handsome, for he was deformed, and had a big hump on his back, but he was a very warm-hearted and true fellow.

Not far from the hut where Daniel and his mother lived, was the castle of the Baron Max Curth, a nobleman, who, by display and extravagance, had wasted his fortune so quickly that there was now no one in all the land who would lend him a farthing.

Max Curth was standing one beautiful day at the window with his pretty little daughter Mary, when Daniel, who had just caught a nice lot of fish, went past, politely taking off his cap. It may be that Max Curth happened just then to be in a particularly good humour, or perhaps Daniel's deformed figure attracted his attention; at any rate, he called to him, and asked him what he had there in his basket.

Daniel took the lid off his basket, and while Max Curth and his pretty daughter were looking at the fish, which were still jumping about, Daniel was quite lost in the beauty of

the lovely Mary, and answered he knew not what to their questions.

In the meantime Max Curth's steward came up, and as Max Curth and his daughter thought the fish so fine, he wanted to buy them; but unfortunately he had no money. But Daniel, quite bewitched by pretty Mary's beauty, said to the steward that it would be time enough to pay when he came again.

When Daniel had thus got rid of his fish, he went according to custom down to the river again; but, instead of throwing his net in, he wandered idly along on the bank — when all at once he heard a little tapping sound.

Daniel stole on tiptoe to the place whence the tapping came, and there he saw a little man, who scarcely reached up as high as his knees, with a yellow, wrinkled face and very old-fashioned clothes. He was sitting in a thicket on a little round stool, and was just then mending one of his shoes. Daniel knew that this little man could be nothing else but an elf or earth-manikin, and he was determined, cost what it would, not to let him get away.

"A fine day for your work, my little manikin," said he, and he walked straight up to the little shoe-mender.

"Indeed it is, Daniel, a beautiful day," answered the dwarf; who certainly looked a little frightened, but at the same time smiled very wickedly and spitefully.

"You seem to be a skilful shoemaker, my little man," continued Daniel.

"Pretty good," answered the dwarf. "But I am nothing at all compared with the man behind you there."

But Daniel was not so stupid as to turn round; he knew well enough that the dwarf said this only to make him look away, in order that he might escape.





"HE WAS SITTING IN A THICKET ON A LITTLE ROUND STOOL, AND WAS JUST THEN MENDING ONE OF HIS SHOES."

*Page 92.*





"I like watching you much better than the man behind me, my nice little fellow," replied Daniel.

"Who is that coming over the river?" asked the dwarf, pointing at the same time to the water.

"Look for yourself, you cunning little fellow," said Daniel, and he seized him by his neck. "Tell me directly where I can find a nice large treasure, or else I will stab you with my knife," and he took his penknife out, opened it with his teeth, and held the point to the dwarf's body.

"You surely will not kill me?" asked the dwarf.

"If you don't get me that money without any more fuss," replied Daniel, putting on his most determined look, "I will as sure as I am alive."

"Well, anything, only do not look so angry," stammered the little man. "I will tell you where you can find as much money as ever you want, but first of all take the knife away."

Daniel took the knife away.

"Do you know where the Giants' mount is, then?" said the dwarf.

"I have heard people talk of it," answered Daniel.

"Well, at the Giants' mount, under a large rock on which one solitary bush is growing, there is a large pot with enough money in it to buy a whole county."

"You are a cunning fellow," replied Daniel. "Do you think I am going to run to the other end of the world for nothing? You must tell me where I can get something nearer than that, or as sure as I am alive I will kill you."

"Oh, please do not get in such a rage," interrupted the dwarf. "Perhaps you know the Enchanted Mountain?"

"Only from hearsay," replied Daniel.

"There, on the west side of the mountain, is an old well ;

and at the bottom of it there is enough gold and silver to buy a whole kingdom. Does that please you better?" asked the dwarf.

"No, that will not help you a bit," answered Daniel. "Show me where the gold is, so that I can put my hand on it, or else I have got my knife ready for you."

"Oh, you stand here talking so pleasantly," said the dwarf, looking anxiously round, "and do not see that yonder a mad bull is coming running towards us."

"Where, where?" cried Daniel, turning quickly round, for he was not a quick runner, as he was deformed. In the same instant a shrill laugh sounded in his ear, and when he turned—there was his hand empty, and the manikin had disappeared.

"Oh, you rascal! you rogue!" cried Daniel, when he found himself so cheated. "But just wait; when I catch you again, you shall not get off so cheaply."

When Daniel came home, he told his mother about his meeting with the manikin. She understood the ways of the fairy-world thoroughly, and said to him, "You will be either a very lucky or a very unlucky man! If you should ever meet the dwarf again, do not wait to have a long conversation with him, but tell him to produce the money on the spot, for the dwarfs know of all the treasures that are buried in the earth, and they have very great power; set him with his back against a tree, and threaten to pin him fast to it with your knife, if he does not produce a treasure before you count twenty."

Daniel promised to follow his mother's advice, if fortune should ever so far favour him as to let him meet the manikin again. The next morning he went again, as usual, to his fishing, and had the good luck to catch a number of fine fish.



He was going to take them into the town to market, but as he went by Max Curth's castle, there stood Max Curth and his daughter again at the window. Daniel involuntarily stopped and took the cover off his basket. Then the steward came and bought the fish, but said at the same time that Daniel must still wait for his money. But Daniel was so absorbed in the beauty of the pretty Mary, that he quite forgot that there were such things as baskets and fishes in the world; and he gave them to the steward again without being paid. When he came home, and his mother asked him if he had got much for his fish, he gave her such confused answers that she could not but think that her son was charmed by the manikin, and had become mad, and she broke out into bitter crying and lamentations.

A few days afterwards, Daniel went again for a walk by the river-side. He had lately grown very thoughtful, poor fellow, for he could not help thinking always of the pretty Mary; he could not get her out of his head. As he was thus going along by the river, he suddenly heard just such a tapping noise as he had heard before when he met with the manikin.

"Ah, if that should be the manikin," thought he; and he crept softly to the place whence the noise came.

"Ah, ah, I have you at last," cried he, as he caught sight of the dwarf working at his shoe, just as he was doing the first time, and he seized him with a firm grasp.

"Aye, is it you, Daniel?" said the dwarf, and he smiled sneeringly at him. "How did you get rid of the bull last time?"

"Ah! just wait, you rogue," answered Daniel. "You won't escape me so easily as you did last time. I am not so silly now as to let myself be cheated by you."

"Only look at that fellow there," said the little man. "How he is laughing at your humpback and crooked legs."

"I will not have anything to say to you," answered Daniel. "But this I swear upon my honour, that your blood shall stain this spot where we are standing if you do not immediately produce as much pure and good gold as I can carry."

"Ugh! you seem to be very angry to-day," replied the dwarf. "But there comes Max Curth with his daughter, the pretty Mary."

On hearing these words Daniel sprang up, but he quickly bethought himself that it was only a new trick of the dwarf's; and he determined not to look round, even if Death himself should stand behind him.

"Be quiet," cried he, "not a single word more; but get me that money, for I mean to have it, and that before I count twenty, or else, I promise you, you have eaten your last piece of bread." And with this he held the dwarf with his back against a tree, and putting the knife to his chest, he began to count "one, two, three" as fast as he could.

As he counted fifteen, and the dwarf had not yet moved, so Daniel pressed the knife a little closer against his body.

"Stop! Stop!" cried the manikin. "You are a lucky fellow, for you have caught me, and I will give you more than you ask, at any rate more than you need."

And then he stamped on the ground, and immediately it opened, and a large deep tub full of nothing but gold and silver money stood before Daniel's eyes.

"And is that really genuine gold, which won't afterwards turn into mould?" asked Daniel, almost blinded at the sight of these riches.

"You have my word for it," answered the dwarf, "and we elves must always keep our word when we have once given it."

As he said this, the dwarf had wrenched himself with a jerk from Daniel's hand, and immediately changed himself



from a shrivelled old man into a young and beautiful but still quite a diminutive being.

"Daniel, you will be lucky—I tell you so," said the elf; and he tore a switch from an alder-tree close by and gave Daniel a cut with it across his face, so that for a few moments he was blind. When he was able to see again, the dwarf had disappeared, but the tub with the money was still there.

Daniel did not lose a minute in filling all his pockets with money; then he put the cover again on the tub, and hid his treasure carefully with earth.

When that was done, he ran home as quickly as he could to his mother. She started up when she saw him. "Goodness gracious!" cried she, "who ever are you? Your face is my boy's face, and your voice is his, but my son was humpbacked, and you are straight, and handsome, and slim."

In his joy over the quantity of money which had so suddenly become his, Daniel had not noticed the change which the dwarf had worked in his whole body when he gave him the blow with the alder switch. Now he was as pretty a fellow as ever ran about on two legs, and his joy was doubly great.

By degrees he brought the whole treasure to his home, and then he bought one piece of land after the other, and at last had the whole estate of the old Max Curth; and then he made love to the pretty Mary. She granted him her hand on the condition that he would build her a castle on the steepest rock in the whole land.

What cannot money do? Daniel had workmen sent from all parts of the world; and soon the magnificent building, whose ruins to this very day fill strangers with astonishment and admiration, was finished. And when it was ready Daniel married the pretty Mary, and lived with her many years in joy and happiness.

*TABLE-READY.*

THERE once lived in a little village an honest tailor, with his family ; they numbered five altogether, the father, the mother, and their three sons. These sons were not called by their proper names, either by their parents, or by any of the villagers ; but were simply, Longlegs, Fatty, and Stupid. This was the order they came in, according to their ages. Longlegs was a joiner, Fatty a miller, and Stupid a turner. Now when Longlegs had finished his apprenticeship, they tied up his bundle for him and sent him out into the world, and he strode with light heart out of the gate of his village. For a long time he went about from place to place, but could not get any work, and his money, of which he had at first only a scanty supply, began to come very near to an end, and as he had no cheering prospects of getting work and earning some more, he became sad, and went along slowly and despondingly. The road led him through a beautiful quiet wood, and when he had now got a little way into it, there met him a fat little man, who nodded to him in a friendly way, and stopping, said to him, " Ho ! young fellow, where are you off to ? You look rather dismal, what do you want ? " " I want work," said the lad simply, " that is all my trouble. I've been going about a long while ; I have no more money." " What sort of work can you do then ? " continued the man.



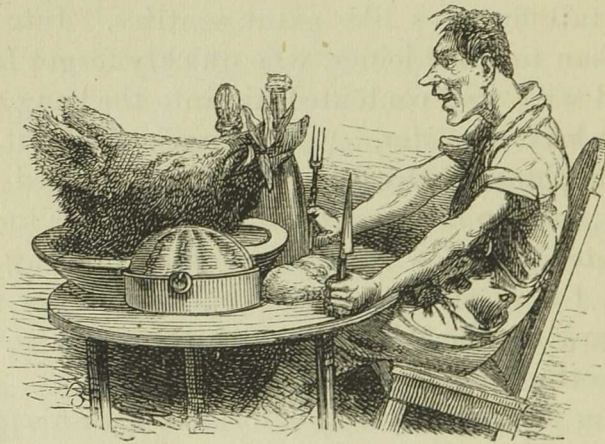
"I am a joiner." "Oh, then come with me," cried the little man gaily, "I will give you some work, I live here in this wood; yes, yes, come along with me, you'll see directly." And scarcely a hundred steps farther on, there stood a pretty house round which was a thick fir hedge, looking almost like a castle wall, and in front, at the entrance, there stood two tall fir trees like giant sentries. Into this house the little man took the joiner, who quickly forgot his sadness, and stepped with well contented air into the snug apartment of the quiet-loving master. "Welcome," called out a little old woman from the chimney-corner, and she tripped up to the young man, to help him to relieve himself of his knapsack.

The master talked a long while that evening with the youth, and the goodwife brought out supper for them, and set a tankard on the table, in which there was something a good deal better than water.

The young joiner was very comfortable with his master; he had not too much to do, he worked industriously, and behaved himself in other ways honestly and properly, so that none had anything to say against him. Nevertheless, after some months the little man said, "My man, I have now no further use for you, and must dismiss you; neither can I repay the work which you have done for me with money, but I will give you a handsome keepsake, which will be of more use to you than gold or silver;" and with this he gave him the nicest little table. "Whenever you set this little Table-ready down and say three times 'Table-ready,' it will provide for you a meal of whatever you like, and now good-bye; do not forget your old master."

The joiner was very sorry to leave the familiar workshop; he took the wonderful little table from his master's hand, sorry and glad at the same time, and thanking him over and

over again, he took his leave and turned his steps towards home. On the way the table supplied him with its dainties. As often as he said the magic words, there, in a trice, stood the choicest dishes, and the finest wines, and all the plates and dishes were made of silver.



The journeyman naturally thought a great deal of his Table-ready. At the last inn on his way home, he gave it to the landlord to take care of. But as he had not before had anything to eat at the inn, but had shut himself up with his little table, the landlord had watched through a chink in the door and had found out the secret of the table. Thus he was glad beyond all measure at receiving it into his keeping, and chuckled mightily over its wonderful properties. He let himself grow quite fond of the little table, and began to think what would be the best way to make it his own, and it occurred to him that he had a table which was just like it, although it was not a Table-ready. So the crafty landlord hid the real table and gave the false one next morning to the joiner, who took it without suspecting



anything, and hastened home with a light heart. The tall joiner gave them all at home a joyous greeting, and then told his father immediately of the valuable properties of his table. The father was very incredulous, so his son setting the table down before him, said three times, "Table-ready;" but it did not get ready, and the honest father said to his son, "You stupid, John, did you go out into the world for this, to learn to hoax your old father? Go away, and don't make a laughing-stock of yourself." Longlegs did not understand in the least why it all went wrong with the table. He tried it again and again; but it would not make itself ready, so he had to take to his plane again, and almost work his hands off.

In the meantime the fat miller had finished his apprenticeship, and went forth into the world. And it

so happened that he took just the same road as his brother, and fell in with the little man too, and was engaged by him; but the forest house was now a mill. When the young miller had served honestly and industriously for some time, his master gave him as a keepsake a mill donkey, saying to him, "Though I cannot repay your work with money,

take this, which will be much more serviceable to you than gold or silver, as a small parting gift. Whenever you say to



this donkey 'Stretch yourself, Donkey,' he will sneeze guineas for you."

Fatty now said, "Stretch yourself, Donkey," almost oftener than Longlegs had said "Table-ready," and the donkey stretched himself, and sneezed the guineas out, chinking and clinking. It was delightful—those bright golden guineas. But the miller, too, came to the crafty landlord's inn, and there he had a dinner set out, and he entertained anyone who liked to come. When the landlord asked to be paid he said, "Stop a minute, I must just get some money first," and taking the table cloth with him, he went to the stable and spread it out on the straw, where the donkey was standing, and cried, "Stretch yourself, Donkey," and the donkey stretched himself, and the guineas jingled into the cloth; but the landlord was standing outside, looking through a hole in the door, and he saw the whole affair. The next morning there was, it is true, a donkey there, but it was not the right one, and Fatty, not suspecting any deceit, mounted and rode off.

When he came home, he told his father of his good fortune, and as they were all standing round the donkey admiring it, he called out, "Now look out," and turning to the donkey, he said, "Stretch yourself, Donkey," and the donkey did stretch itself, but it gave no signs of dropping any guineas, it only gave a huge yawn. Poor Fatty got dreadfully laughed at by all of them, and he beat the donkey almost to death; but he did not beat any guineas out of it, for all that, and he had to go again to work, and earn his bread by the sweat of his brow.

Another year passed, and Stupid had now served his time too, and went out into the world as a finished turner. He purposely took the same road as his brothers, hoping to get



into employment with that little man, since, as his brothers had told him, he was skilled in all sorts of handicraft as well as in wisdom and learning, and had, moreover, such good things to give away. The turner in due time arrived at the wood, and found the little man's lonely dwelling, and he too was taken gladly as a workman. But after a few months it was once more, "My man, I cannot keep you any longer now, I must dismiss you." At parting the little man said, "I would very willingly give you a handsome keepsake as I did your brothers, but what good would it be to you, for they call you 'Stupid.' Your tall brother and your fat brother have lost their gifts through stupidity, what would then be the result in your case? Yet take this plain little bag, it may be very useful to you. Whenever you say, 'Cudgel, out of the bag!' a stout stick hidden in there will spring out to help and defend you, and it will go on beating until you give the order—'Cudgel, into the bag!'"

The turner thanked him and proceeded homewards with his bag; but he did not require its protection on the journey for a long while, for as he went gaily and merrily along, everyone let him pass unhindered. Only now and then he would give a cross-grained parish-beadle something out of the bag, or one of the village dogs, that ran out of the yards and barked at the traveller. At last he came to the inn where the wicked landlord had robbed his brothers. He was now living in splendour and pleasure; but he had a liking still for appropriating travellers' property. On going to bed, the turner gave the box into the landlord's keeping, and warned him, he must on no account say to it, "Cudgel, out of the bag!" for there was a special property connected with it, and anyone who used these words might get something by it. But the landlord was too well pleased with his table and

donkey not to be anxious to get a third wonder-working article, and he could hardly wait until his guest had laid himself down in bed, to say, "Cudgel, out of the bag!" Out flew the stick in a trice, and beat like a drum-stick on the landlord's back, and kept on and on, and beat him so



black and blue that he began to cry piteously, and called lustily to the joiner. But the joiner only said, "That just serves you right; I warned you, you know. It was you who stole my brothers' 'Table-ready,' and 'Stretchyourselfdonkey.'" The poor landlord could only cry out, "Help me, for goodness sake. I shall be killed!" (For the stick kept unceasingly at work on his back.) "I will give you all back—the table and the donkey. Oh, I shall be killed! I am dead." And now the turner gave the word "Cudgel, into the bag!" And the stick crept back in an instant. The landlord was glad enough to have got off with his life, and willingly restored



the table and the donkey. Then the turner packed his things together, and putting them on the donkey, he mounted and trotted off to his village. There was no little rejoicing among the brothers when they saw their priceless presents,



which still worked their wonders as well as ever, safe again, recovered by the brother whom they had always called the stupid one; but who for all that was cleverer than they were. And the brothers lived together with their parents, and they were not obliged to work any more for their daily bread.

*THE SEVEN RAVENS.*

A GREAT many wonderful things have taken place in this world, among others that a poor woman had seven baby-boys all at once, who all lived and throve. After a few years she got a little daughter, too. Her husband was a very industrious and hard-working man; and for this reason, people who wanted labourers were very glad to employ him, so that not only was he able to support his numerous family honestly, but also by careful management his good wife could lay by something. But just in the prime of his life the good father died, and the poor widow fell into great distress, for she could not get enough to feed and clothe her eight children. And to make the matter worse, the boys kept growing and required more and more, and to her great distress they also got naughtier and naughtier, till at last they became really quite unmanageable. The poor woman almost sunk under her cares and troubles. She wanted to bring up her children well and piously, but strictness and kindness alike were of no avail, the boys' hearts remained untouched. And so one day when she had lost all patience she cried out "O you naughty boys, would you were only seven birds, and would fly away that I might never see you again!" and immediately the seven boys became ravens, and flew out of the window and disappeared.



After this the mother and her daughter lived quietly and happily together ; they now earned more than they required ; and the daughter grew into a pretty, good, and well-behaved girl. But after some years both mother and daughter began to long for the seven brothers again : they often talked of them, and said, "Oh, if the boys were to come back again, and were fine fellows, how well we should be off, and what joy we should have together again !" And as the longing for her brothers grew stronger in the girl's heart, she said at length to her mother : "Dear mother, let me go and look for my brothers, and turn them away from their wicked life, and bring them back to you to be an honour and joy to your old age." The mother answered, "My good daughter, I cannot and do not wish to hinder you from doing this good deed—go, and may God guide you ;" and she gave her a little gold ring, which the girl had worn as a little child, when her brothers were changed into ravens.

Then the girl set out directly and walked on and on ; but for a long time she found no trace of her brothers : at length she came to a very high mountain, on the top of which stood a little house ; she sat down at the bottom to rest, and looked up at the house dreamily. Sometimes it appeared to her to be a bird's nest, for it looked grey, as if it was made of little stones and mud ; at others it looked like a house. Then she said to herself, "I should not be surprised if my brothers are living up there." And when at length she saw seven black ravens fly out of the house, her conjecture became strengthened ; so she set out joyfully to climb the mountain, but the path which led up it was paved with smooth glassy stones, so that always, when with a great deal of trouble she had climbed up a little way, she slipped and fell down again. While she was wondering how she was ever to get to the top, she saw a

beautiful white goose, and thought, "If I only had your wings I would soon be up there;" and then she thought again,— "Why should not I cut your wings off? Yes, then all would be easy enough; and she quickly caught the beautiful goose, and cut off his wings and his legs too, and sewed them on herself. And behold when she tried she found she could fly beautifully; and when she was tired with flying, she ran a little with her goose feet, and she did not now slip with them. And so she very soon arrived safely at the top, and then she went into the little house, and there she found seven tiny little tables, seven little chairs, seven little beds, and there were seven little windows too in the room; and in the oven there were seven little plates standing, on which there were little tomtits and boiled wrens' eggs. The girl was tired from her long journey, and was now very glad to be able to get a good rest; she was hungry too. So she took the seven little plates out of the oven, and she ate a little from each, and she sat a little on each chair, and she lay a little in each bed, and in the last bed she fell asleep, and remained lying there till the seven brothers came back home. They flew into the room through the seven windows, took their plates out of the oven, and were going to begin eating, when they noticed that some one had already eaten some; and afterwards when they were going to lie down to sleep, they found their beds rumpled, and one of the brothers gave a loud scream and said, "Whoever is this girl lying in my bed?" The others ran up immediately and saw with astonishment the sleeping girl. Then they began to say one to another, "Suppose it should be our sister!" and then they cried, "Yes, yes, it is our sister, that it is; she had just such hair, and just such a little mouth, and she used to wear just such a little ring on her middle finger as she now has on her little



one," and they all shouted for joy and kissed their little sister ; but she was sleeping so soundly that she did not wake for a long time.



At length she opened her eyes and saw the seven black brothers sitting round her bed. Then she said, "How do you do, dear brothers? I am so glad I have found you at last. I have travelled a long way to find you ; I have come to bring

you back again from your banishment, if you have repented of your conduct and will not trouble your good mother any more, and if you will work hard with us, and will be an honour and joy to us." While she said this the brothers cried bitterly and replied, "Yes, dear sister, we will be good now, and not be a disgrace to our mother any more. Oh, we have been so miserable since we have been ravens!" The sister wept tears of joy over her brothers' repentance, and cried out "All will now be well again. If you come home to our mother and tell her that you have repented, that you have grown better, she will forgive you heartily, and turn you into human beings again."

On the home journey, the raven brothers carried their little sister by turns on their wings, until they arrived at their mother's house, then they flew in at the window and begged her to pardon them, and promised to be good children to her; she was very glad to see them again and forgave them readily. Then they became human beings again, fine strong youths, one as tall and graceful as the other, and they embraced and kissed their mother and their dear little sister. So the good woman lived to have much joy in her children, and she was tenderly cared for and dutifully honoured by them until the end of her life.





*THE OLD WIZARD AND HIS CHILDREN.*

THERE once lived a wicked wizard, who some time before had stolen two tender little children, a boy and little girl, and he lived with them in a cave in a solitary and hermit-like manner. These poor children (heaven help them!) he had promised to the Evil One. He used to practise his wicked art out of a magic book which he guarded as his greatest treasure.

But whenever it happened that the old wizard was absent from the cave, so that the children were left there by themselves, then the boy, who had spied out the place where the magic book was hidden, used to read it; and learnt many charms and rules of the black art; and so he learnt to perform magic quite cleverly.

Now as the old man allowed the children to go only seldom out of the cave, and was anxious to keep them imprisoned until the day on which they were to become the victims of the Evil One, they longed all the more to be away, and consulted with one another how they might secretly escape. And one day when the magician had left his cave very early, the boy said to his sister, "Now's our time, little sister! the wicked man who keeps us such strict prisoners is away; let us escape now, and go away from here as far as our feet will carry us!" So the children did; they went out and wandered on the whole day.

Now when it was getting on towards midnight, the wizard returned home, and at once missed the children. He immediately opened his magic book, and read therein in what direction the children had gone, and he actually had nearly



caught them. The children already heard his angry growling voice ; and the sister, full of horror and anguish, cried out "Brother! brother! we are lost now, the wicked man is already quite close." Thereupon the boy made use of his magic which he had learnt out of the book ; he uttered a charm, and immediately his sister became a fish, whilst he became a large pond, in which the little fish swam merrily about.



When the old man came to the pond he saw at once that he was cheated. He growled angrily, "Wait a little! wait a little, I'll have you yet," and frantically ran straight back to his cave to fetch a net in which to catch the fish. But as soon as he had gone, the pond and fish immediately became brother and sister again, and they concealed themselves closely and had a good sleep, and the next morning they travelled on, and travelled again for a whole day.

When the wicked sorcerer came to the place which he had noted well, there was no longer any pond to be seen; but in its place there lay a green meadow, in which one might catch frogs, to be sure, but not a single fish. He was more enraged



than before, and throwing the net away, he again followed the track of the children, who did not escape him, for he carried a magic wand in his hand which showed him the right way.

By the time it was evening he had nearly caught up the

runaway children again. They heard him snorting and grumbling, and the sister cried out again, "Brother, dear brother! we are certainly lost, our wicked enemy is close behind us!"

Then the boy once more uttered a charm which he had learnt out of the book, and he became a chapel by the roadside, and his sister a lovely picture over the altar in the chapel.

When the wizard came to the chapel, he saw that he was a second time befooled. He ran round about it with frightful threats, but he dared not enter it, because it is an understood agreement between sorcerers and the Evil One that they shall never dare to enter a church or chapel.

"Well, though I may not enter you, I will set fire to you and burn you to ashes," cried the wizard, and ran off to fetch fire out of his cave.

Whilst he was running, almost the whole night through, the chapel and the beautiful picture again became brother and sister; they hid themselves and slept, and on the third morning went on and travelled the whole day. The wizard, who had a long way to go, set after them afresh. When he arrived with his fire at the place where the chapel had stood, he struck his nose against a great rock, which it was not possible to set on fire or burn to ashes. Then he again set off and ran with frantic leaps on the children's track.

Towards evening, he was again quite close to them, and a third time the sister despaired and gave herself up for lost. But the boy again said a magical charm, which he had learnt out of the book, and he became a hard floor on which people thresh corn, while his sister became a little grain of wheat which lay as if it had accidentally dropped on the floor.

When the wicked wizard came up, he saw that for the third



time he was mocked ; but this time he did not consider long, nor run back home again, but repeated a charm which he had learnt out of the book. Thereupon he became a black cock, and ran quickly up to the grain of corn to peck it up. But the boy once more said a sentence which he had learnt out of the book, and on the spot became a fox, seized the black cock before it had pecked up the grain of corn, and bit off its head, and so the wizard, like this little story, forthwith came to an end.



*THE GOLDEN ROEBUCK.*

ONCE upon a time there were two poor children, a boy and a girl, the girl's name was Margaret and the boy's Hans. Their parents were dead, and had not left them anything, so the children had to leave their home to get their living by begging. They were both too young and small to work, for Hans was only twelve years old, and Margaret was still younger. In the evening they would go to the first house they saw, and knock at the door and ask for a night's lodging, and they were often taken in by good kind people, and would get something to eat, and often some clothes as well. One evening they came to a house which stood alone; on their tapping at the window, an old woman looked out directly, and they asked her if they could stay there for the night? "As far as I am concerned you may come in," was her answer. But when they went in, she said to them: "I will keep you here for the night, but mind, if my husband gets to know of it, you are lost, for he is very fond of a joint of roast child, and so he kills all the children whom he falls in with." They were very frightened at this; but they could not now go on any farther, for it was already quite dark, so they got the woman to hide them in a tub, and there they lay quite quietly. But they were far from going to sleep; especially when after an hour they heard the heavy tread of a man's foot, who, they



thought, must be the man-eater. They soon felt certain of this, for he began directly to grumble and scold his wife, because she had not prepared him any human food. In the morning he left the house again, and made so much noise in doing so that he awakened the children, who had at last gone to sleep.

When the woman had given them some breakfast, she said to them, "Now, children, you must do something for me, here are two brooms, go upstairs and sweep out my rooms for me; there are twelve of them, but you are only to sweep eleven, you must not on any account open the twelfth one. I am going out in the meantime. Be industrious, and get done by the time I come back." The children swept away very busily, and had soon finished. And now Margaret thought she would very much like to know what there was in the last room that she was not to see, as she had been forbidden to open the door. So she peeped through the key-hole, and there she saw a beautiful little golden carriage, and a golden roebuck harnessed to it. She quickly called Hans up to peep in too. And when they had carefully looked round to see that the woman was not coming back, they quickly unlocked the door, and drawing out the carriage, they got into it and went out for a drive. But before long they saw the old woman and the man-eater in the distance coming along the road, towards them. Hans called out, "What are we to do sister, if they see us, we shall be lost." "Be still," said Margaret, "I know a magic rhyme which I learnt from our grandmother—

'Roses red, roses white—

Now I'm here, now out of sight !'

And immediately they were turned into a rose bush. Margaret was the rose, Hans the thorns, the roebuck the stalk, and the

carriage the leaves. The man-eater and his wife soon came up, and the latter thought she would pick the beautiful rose; but she pricked her fingers so much that they began to bleed, and she went away crossly. When the old woman and her husband had gone past, the children set off again immediately, and soon came to a baker's oven, which was full of bread. They heard a voice calling out from it, "Take out my bread, take out my bread!" So Margaret took the bread out quickly and put it in the carriage, and then they drove on farther. Soon they came to a large pear tree, which was laden with fine ripe pears, and a voice came out of it, "Shake down my pears, shake down my pears!" So Margaret shook the tree, and Hans picked up the pears and stowed them away in the carriage. After this they came to a grape vine, which was calling out, "Gather my grapes, gather my grapes!" So Margaret picked these too and put them in the golden carriage.

But, in the meantime, the man-eater and his wife had reached home, and found to their unbounded vexation, that the children had gone off with the golden carriage and the roebuck, just as they themselves had done some years before, except that they had committed a murder as well—for they had killed the rightful owner of the carriage. The roebuck and its carriage were valuable, not only on account of their intrinsic worth, but also because they possessed the wonderful property that wherever they went, gifts were showered in from all sides, from trees and bushes, ovens and vines. Thus the man-eater and his wife had the carriage for many years, and had acquired all sorts of dainties from it, and so lived sumptuously, although it did not lawfully belong to them. When they found that they had been robbed of their carriage, they set off instantly to overtake the children and get back the



valuable spoil. Moreover, the man-eater's mouth watered for human food, and he wished to catch the children and kill them. With huge strides they hurried on after the fugitives, and soon caught sight of them driving along in the distance. They had just arrived at a large river, across



which there was neither ford nor bridge—only a flock of ducks was to be seen swimming about. So Margaret enticed them to the shore by throwing them some bread, and then said,

“Little ducks, little ducks, swim up together,  
And make me a bridge to get over the river.”

And the ducks swam together directly, and made a bridge,

and the children with their roebuck and carriage got over safely to the other side. But close behind them came the man-eater, who growled out,

“Little ducks, little ducks, swim up together,  
And make me a bridge to get over the river.”

And the ducks came quickly up together and carried the wicked pair—right over do you think? No, into the middle, where the water was deepest, and then they swam apart, and let the man and his wife plump into the water and they were drowned. And Hans and Margaret became wealthy people, but they spent much of the wealth among the poor, and did a great deal of good, for they always remembered how bitter it had been for them when they were poor and had to go begging.





*LITTLE META.*

IN a small village which stood at the edge of a forest, there once lived an old widow woman, with only one little step-daughter, whose name was Meta. This cottage was in as pretty a place as can be imagined; spreading beech trees grew round it, and the grassy road near which it stood was generally bright with flowers. Squirrels and rabbits often ventured out from the wood to enjoy the food they found beneath the trees near the cottage, and Meta was always glad to see them, for she loved all animals, and never knowingly did harm to any. In return they seemed to treat her with confidence, and allowed her to walk amongst them without running away into the shelter of the thick wood. But Meta's chief companion was Roughskin, a large dog as big as a bear, which had belonged to her father. He, too, learned not to injure the little animals that his mistress protected; though, in their long walks in the forest, he was always ready enough to protect her from any of the more savage beasts which might otherwise have harmed her.

But little Meta was not always happy. Her step-mother was an ill-tempered and hard-hearted old woman; she had worried her husband to death in a year, and, having no children of her own, she disliked his orphan daughter all the more. She was very poor, though she had not always

been so. And though Meta did all she could to please her, and kept the house neat and did all the work, her step-mother was never content: avarice was one of her worst vices, and to gratify it she would make the girl spin and sew till often she fell asleep over her work, only to be awakened by a blow from her cruel task-mistress.

One day, when the step-mother was out, little Meta, who had been told to work till her return, fell asleep. Suddenly waking up, and thinking that the old woman must be returning, she began to work in great haste, but in doing so she pricked her finger to the bone; the pain was very great, but what made it worse was that it bled as if it would never cease. She put her work aside, and tried to stop it; but still it went on bleeding. Then she sat on the side of her bed and held her finger

in a basin of water; but still the blood flowed, until at last she felt quite faint.

Suddenly she heard a small voice call her by name, "Meta! little Meta!" It was not her step-mother's voice, for it was not harsh and loud, and besides, it came from quite close to her; and on looking down she saw a queer little man, so small that he had to climb up on to the edge of the basin, and when he got there he looked at her with sharp, but not unkind eyes. "Don't be afraid," he said,



sharp, but not unkind eyes. "Don't be afraid," he said,



rather unnecessarily, for Meta seemed to be more amused than frightened. "I am one of the Little Folk," he said. "We live underground; but I have heard from the animals in the forest how good-natured you are, and I have often watched you, and now when you want help I am glad to be able to offer it." So saying, he took from his pocket a small ring made of twisted gold, and went on, "If you put this round your finger the bleeding will stop; but you must be careful not to take it off until the scar is quite gone, otherwise it will bleed again and never stop until you have no more blood left. When the wound is quite healed you must come alone to the forest, and find the place, not far from here, where there is an old well, and say the lines,

"Let beast and bird  
Convey the word,  
And for the ring  
Its owner bring."

Then I will presently come and take back the ring, and you must tell me if I can do anything else for you. Do not forget this."

Little Meta gratefully promised; and just then, thinking she heard her step-mother, she looked out of the window, and there she was coming sure enough. But when she looked down again the manikin was gone.

The old woman soon spied out the traces of Meta's mishap, and questioned her about it. Then she saw the ring on her finger, and told her at once to take it off and give it to her. But Meta, remembering what the dwarf had said, implored her step-mother to let it remain, and told her all that had happened, and that she would die if the ring were taken off at once. Then the old woman said no more; but she saw at once that she might by means of the ring

become a rich woman, and determined that such a chance was not to be lost, even though her step-daughter's life should be sacrificed. So in an unusually kind voice she said, "You had better go to bed, my dear."

But as soon as little Meta was sound asleep, her wicked step-mother quietly took hold of the ring and drew it quickly from off her finger. Meta awoke and her finger bled terribly; but the old woman hurried out of the house, regardless of her cries, and was soon at the old well in the forest. She said the necessary words (for she had taken care to question Meta particularly on this point), and the little dwarf appeared without delay, climbing out of the well. His surprise at seeing the old woman was so great that she had time to seize him before it occurred to him that his ring must have got into wrong hands. The avaricious old woman, on her part, knew well enough that this was one of the little people who live underground, and who, knowing all the riches of the earth, are able to show where unlimited wealth is to be found by anyone who is lucky enough to make a bargain with them. She kept her eyes fixed on him lest he should vanish if she looked away for an instant, and at the same time holding him fast by the shoulders said, "Tell me where to find a treasure, or I shall not let you go." "You would like to kill me as you have killed your step-daughter, I suppose," said the dwarf; but he knew that she would not attempt to do this, lest all chance of getting rich should thus be thrown away. So, after much talking and dispute, the dwarf agreed that if she would bring the body of her step-daughter to that place he would in return tell her of a treasure. This the old woman agreed to, for she began to fear the discovery of her crime. She returned to the cottage and brought poor little Meta and laid her down by the old



well. At the same moment the dwarf appeared (for these little people always keep to a bargain once fairly made), and looking with joy at Meta, though she lay so cold and pale and still, said, "Go! wretched woman; dig beneath the large beech tree at the east end of your cottage, and you shall find what you want. And much good may it do you," he added, as the old woman quickly turned and hurried off.

She straightway went and dug beneath the tree, which was already well burrowed under by Meta's friends the rabbits, and soon came upon a large chest. It had been locked; but the metal was so corroded by damp that she easily forced open the lid, and her eyes glittered like a snake's as she saw rich vessels of gold and silver, some studded with precious stones, and gold coins, more than she could possibly carry away. She took the most valuable things, nearly filling several sacks, on the top of which she put a few potatoes and vegetables, and carefully closed up the hole, making the earth look as if it had not been turned. The next day she gave out in the village that Meta was lost, thinking that if her body were found in the wood it would be supposed that she had lost herself and died of hunger. Search was of course made, but, to the old woman's astonishment (which, however, she did not show, though she pretended to be deeply grieved), no traces of Meta were found. The wicked woman thereupon made this a pretext for leaving the village, from which she was seen to set out with a cart drawn by her dog, which apparently contained a few sacks of vegetables. But as she travelled she managed gradually to improve her dress, and to increase the importance of her appearance at every place at which she stopped, until at last she reached a large city, into which she drove in a carriage and

four. And as people with plenty of money never want friends while it lasts, she was soon living sumptuously with fine company, and enjoying rich fare, and was looked upon as little less than a princess.

But in the meantime, little Meta, who was not dead, came to herself, and found that she was lying on a magnificent bedstead made entirely of crystal, with hangings of amber silk. The walls of the room also were made partly of crystal and partly of silver, and everything was so bright that it seemed to be daylight, though there was no sun shining in, and, for that matter, no window through which it could have shone. By her bedside were six little dwarf women. The bed was low, so that they could just see Meta as she lay asleep; and no sooner did she show that she was awake, than they ran about getting hair-brushes, scented soap, perfumes, and whatever a lady might want for the most luxurious toilet.

From these attendants Meta learnt that she had been brought down to the underground regions inhabited by the dwarfs, and that there she must stay as long as her wicked step-mother, who had stolen the dwarf's ring from her finger, remained alive. When Meta heard this she could not help feeling sorry for her step-mother, though she had been treated so cruelly by her; and she wept very much to think that she perhaps should never see the cottage, and the beautiful sunshine, and her dear old Roughskin any more. But the little women comforted her by telling her that their dwarf-king himself wanted to see her, and that he had summoned a court on purpose to receive her, and that presently she would see more wonderful things than ever she had dreamt of.

As soon as she was ready they brought her a dress of most beautiful materials. The train was composed of cloth of gold,



and the mantle was of a delicate pale-coloured silk embroidered with emeralds. They then led the way through the arched entrance into a very long dark passage, at the end of which, however, Meta saw a brilliant light. Two little men came up and bore her train, whilst two others walked before and showed the way. Soon they came to the end of the passage, and then suddenly a magnificent scene presented itself to Meta's astonished eyes. She saw an immense hall, so large that the walls were hidden in the blaze of distant lights. Hundreds of columns of polished green stone supported a lofty roof, from which many brilliant lamps or large jets of flame were suspended on jewelled brackets, and shed a clear radiance like sunlight over the whole scene. But her attention was chiefly attracted by the thousands of little men, who sat at long tables, extending as far as she could see, and laden with wine and all the finest fruits. As she was conducted between these tables, all rose to their feet when she passed and saluted her by raising their glasses. Soon she approached a clear space, at the end of which sat the king on his throne. When she got near enough to see him distinctly, he looked such a strange old man, and was so diminutive, even for a dwarf, that she would have laughed if she had not been afraid of hurting his feelings; and besides, she was dazzled with the splendour of the place in which he sat. The throne itself was of pure gold, adorned with rubies and sapphires of enormous size, while the steps which led up to it were covered with crimson velvet. On these Meta had to kneel down as she was presented to the king, and she had to bend her face quite close to him as he said,

“Be thou welcome, stranger-maiden, from the sunlit realms of day;  
Peace and happiness attend you, whilst within our land you stay.”

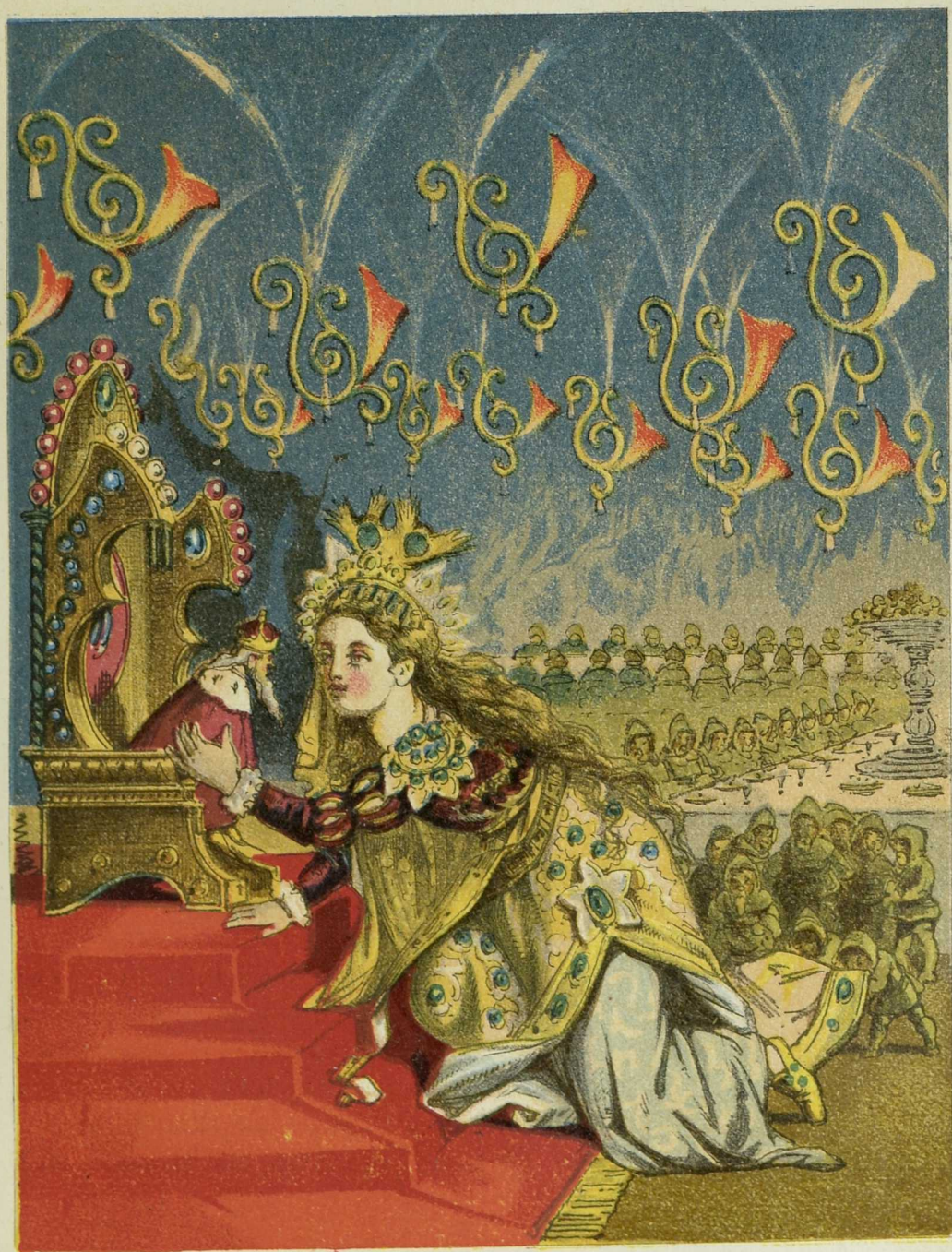
Meta was so overcome by her reception that she found herself

quite unable to reply to this kind greeting in rhyme, which was no doubt the proper thing to do, so she contented herself by saying, "I am very grateful to your majesty," and then at his bidding she sat down on the steps of the throne and watched the multitudes of dwarfs as they carried on the banquet in her honour, whilst some of them brought the most delicious fruits for her to eat. Then she watched them, when the banquet was over, march past the throne in an almost interminable procession, singing in clear and sweet but not loud voices. And at last the king took leave of her and she was led back to her chamber, where she quickly fell asleep. She had looked in vain for the little dwarf who had first befriended her, but she afterwards learnt that he could not come back until he recovered the ring which her step-mother had taken, for the safety of which he was responsible.

She lived very happily with the little people, who treated her almost like a queen. She occupied herself with fancy work in gold and silver thread, of which she could obtain any quantity. She made many journeys for miles and miles beneath the earth and sea, and visited the most extraordinary and unheard-of caverns, and mines of wealth never seen by mortal eyes, till she almost forgot the shining earth and flowery meadows, and only sometimes thought of her fellow-creatures with a passing regret.

But one day, when she had been there six years, a report was spread that an important messenger had arrived. When she next saw the king, he looked at her sorrowfully, and asked her whether, supposing it were possible, she would choose to return to the earth above, or whether she would like to stay there and become their queen. At that moment Meta saw amongst the dwarfs standing near the one who had given her the ring the day she hurt her finger in her step-mother's





LITTLE META.





cottage; and immediately all that was pleasant in the days of her childhood was recalled, and she had a great longing to see the sun again. And she called the dwarf to her and he explained that her step-mother was dead; that he had recovered the ring, and that she therefore was at liberty to return to the upper earth. So she turned to the king, and thanking him for all his kindness, showed him at the same time that her heart was fixed on going. So he was reconciled to it, and commanded a grand celebration in her honour, and the next day escorted her with much ceremony through many passages and corridors to a large hall, at the end of which there was a doorway leading to a high staircase. There she was left alone with her first little dwarf friend. He told her that the stairs led to a doorway which she could open herself, and this would bring her into a large cave on the side of a mountain, the slopes of which were covered with a thick wood. She was to go straight down through this wood till she met an old woman with a hooked stick, to whom she must speak, and say,

“ Dame, pray tell me whither I’m bound,  
I’ve come from the regions underground;  
The Little Folk there their greeting send,  
And look to you still to be their friend.”

Then the dame would tell her what to do. So Meta parted from her friend, and went up the steps and opened the door which led her to daylight. Who could describe her joy as she ran to the mouth of the cave and looked on the green trees once more! She sat down for two hours and gazed at them without speaking. Then she ran straight down through the wood, and presently spied an old woman with a hooked stick. She ran up to her, and though she looked very ill-tempered, Meta said, “ Good day, dame.” “ Who are you ? ” said

the old woman crossly. "I don't know," said Meta, who really did not know how to describe herself. "That is curious. Where are you going to, then?" said the woman. Meta was so dismayed by the surly tone of these questions, that she had almost forgotten what the dwarf told her; but the last question suddenly reminding her she answered in a hurry,

"Oh, dame, I know not whither I'm bound,  
But I come from the regions underground;  
And the Little Folk there their greeting send,  
And look to you still to be their friend."

"Oh, that alters the case," said the old woman. "Come along, my dear," she continued quite kindly; "come to my cottage, its not very far off."

So Meta accompanied her to the cottage, which stood on the outskirts of a populous city. The first thing she saw on entering was her old favourite Roughskin, the dog, who remembered her at once, and bounded round her, much to the old woman's astonishment; and the questions and explanations which followed enlightened Meta as to events which had happened in her absence.

It appeared that the dwarf had knowingly directed Meta to the very city to which her step-mother had come with her ill-gotten riches. That wicked old woman had spent her money with profusion, and, as her supplies became exhausted, had returned to her cottage and taken away more of the treasure which she had at first been obliged to leave behind. At last she had fallen a victim to her greed; for, on returning, as her custom was, disguised and alone, she had fallen in with robbers and been murdered. It was then that the dwarf had been able to recover the ring, and so allow Meta to return to the upper earth.

The old dame with whom Meta now lived had once like



her been befriended by the dwarfs. She was very rich, but she preferred to pass for a poor woman, and do good to her fellow-creatures whenever she had an opportunity. But as she was often laughed at and mocked, she was sometimes surly and harsh to those who did not seem to want her help ; but to animals, who never mocked her, she was always kind, and so it happened that Roughskin, after his wicked mistress's death, had come into her hands. She had lived in that town for long, and knew all that happened in it ; and though she had not heard from the little dwarf all Meta's previous history, she could gather it all from Meta's recollection, and the recognition of the dog was sufficient to prove that it was true. She had therefore little difficulty in establishing Meta's right to the property of which her wicked step-mother had died possessed, consisting of a fine house, carriages, horses, and rich dresses, which no one had hitherto come forward to claim.

It must not be imagined that the dwarfs had allowed Meta to leave them without making her rich presents. One of them, a diamond necklace, was alone worth a king's ransom. So she had now the means of living luxuriously, but she preferred still to stay with the old dame who had first taken her in, and who helped to remind her of her benefactors, the little people underground.

They did not, however, remain always together, for before long Meta's beauty attracted many distinguished admirers, and her goodness secured her a kind, noble, and wealthy husband. With him she lived happily for the rest of her days, without any such strange adventures as made the remembrance of part of her childhood so wonderful and enchanting.



THE DWARF'S GIFTS. Page 140.

### THE GRATEFUL DWARF.

IN a lonely hut among the hills lived quiet Sepp, the old miner. He and his wife Margaret led a life of almost continual want, for they could hardly earn enough to get even the bare necessities of life. The other miners were not more industrious, and they had more children too, and yet they were better off. Sepp often used to grumble about it to his wife, and at last became quite despondent. The good woman could not bear to see Sepp's secret unhappiness; she said to him one day, "I know what it is we want."—"So do I," replied Sepp. "We want money, for if we had that we



could buy what we want." "No," cried Margaret, "money is not everything. I have dreamed that children will bring us happiness, so let us pray to God to send us a son. 'Children,' my grandmother used to say, 'always bring a blessing into a house!'"

Sepp thought there might be some truth in this, so he always inserted this petition in his evening prayers, and from this time he became happier and worked with more spirit. One morning he left his hut as usual, and going to the silver-mine, he was let down the dark shaft and began his toilsome day's work. As he was hammering away with his pick at the hard ore beneath the earth, a little brown mountain-elf came up to him and said, "Sepp, in a year's time you will have more than you have wished for." Sepp was completely overcome, and before he had collected himself enough to speak, the little man had again disappeared. When he got home, his wife told him that she too had been down in the valley, and a little dwarf had appeared to her, and said just the same words. They were both very happy now, though they did not quite understand the words which had been so mysteriously communicated to them. They worked harder than ever, to get at any rate a little frock and a little bed for their son, and Sepp strained every nerve to be able to put by a few shillings to use when his wife would have to stay at home with her little boy.

The year was not quite over when Sepp one day, in returning from a journey beyond the mountain, entered the valley through which a deep stream ran. It was already growing dusk, and Sepp hastened on to reach his home, for walking about among the lumps of rock was no very pleasant occupation at night-time. He had been in the valley about a quarter of an hour, when he heard in the water a small voice crying out piteously for help. The cry went to his heart,

and immediately springing over a few large stones, he peered through the darkness, and saw a little creature—apparently a child about six years old—struggling in the water. Sepp quickly helped the child out, and asked it where it wanted to go. It muttered something about a rich nobleman and golden clothes and a great many servants, but Sepp could not make anything sensible out of its story; he said to himself, “Perhaps you are the little son who is to make me happy.” So he took the child on his arm, and made up his mind to carry it home to Margaret. He went on now more quickly than before, and arrived at his hut late in the night. As he entered he silently pictured to himself his wife’s joy when he should give her the child. But how much he was astonished when he found Margaret bustling about in their little room. During Sepp’s absence God had sent the good people two little boys. The mother in the midst of her joy was in great perplexity, for she did not know what to do with the two boys. She had dressed one in a little linen shirt, but the other she was obliged to put in bed, for she had no clothes for him. Sepp made a long face, for he saw directly that his arrival with a third boy was not very opportune. Margaret looked at the boy with astonishment, and noticing that he looked rather old in the face, she gave a loud cry and pushed her husband to the door, crying out, “Go, go, it is a dwarf; take him away!” Then she sprang back to her two little boys and leant over them, to protect them. Sepp stood at the door in amazement, and when he looked carefully at his foundling child, he saw that it really was not a child at all. The dwarf sprang out of his arms, dropping a little packet as it did so, and then ran out of the door. Margaret still looked anxiously round and bade her husband see that the door was really shut close.



When Sepp had reassured her she called him to the bedside and said, "Just look at the little fat-cheeks; God has given us two: that one has not got any clothes yet; but I would not part with one of them, even if we shall have to work all night and day for them. I am glad at any rate that the dwarf has gone; why ever did you bring him in, Sepp? Do not you know that the dwarfs steal little children and put poor, sickly, little miserable things in bed instead of them. Just look there at our little fellows; oh! if that dwarf had taken one I should never have been happy again."

"You must not be so troubled about it," replied Sepp, as he picked up the packet which was lying on the floor. "What is this?" continued he. Margaret too was surprised, and bade him open the packet and see. He did so, and found in it six little shirts, and six white handkerchiefs, and six little jackets and two pearl necklaces, on each of which hung a charm.

"That's what the dwarf has brought," cried Sepp, and Margaret silently thanked the good little fellow, and gently asked pardon for her motherly anxiety. "And a charm, too," she cried out, as she took the strings of pearls, and hung them round the children's necks. "There, my boys, now the black dwarfs cannot hurt you, the charm will protect you until the clergyman comes and baptizes you."

At the end of a week the clergyman was to come for the christening, and three of the mine people in the neighbourhood were to be god-parents. But the day before, Sepp was still in perplexity as to how he should provide something to set before his guests. In his trouble he went to his wife and said, "Yes, if I thought I could catch the dwarf again, I would run down into the valley directly; he would certainly help us. But I fear it would be in vain, for the dwarfs are

only to be seen when they have lost their little hats or invisible caps—this was how it was with my little foundling in the river ; but I have an idea ! ”——

Sepp had no time to say any more, for the door suddenly opened, and in flew three hams ; four loaves came rolling after them ; then two large sacks brought up the rear ; and the door shut itself again. There was no one to be seen who could have pushed the things in. The worthy pair were beside themselves for joy. “ There,” said Sepp, “ see what a good thing it is to have some feeling for others. If I had not helped that good dwarf, we should have been sitting here still in sorrow and anxiety.”

“ Quite right,” said his wife, “ but just look what there is in the sacks.” So Sepp opened them, and pulled out sundry packets of meal, vegetables, and meat, and a lot of other things enough to last a whole family for weeks. He took some of them up and ran to the door with them to put them in an old cupboard outside, but he could not get the door open. When he pushed steadily against it, it gave way at last, and Sepp found a large cask of beer standing behind it.

The couple, once so poor, now felt themselves rich beyond belief, and were quite relieved from all care about provisions. But they were still anxious about the means of cooking and serving the feast ; however, when they were talking this over, Sepp said he would find a way out of the difficulty. He told her that he had heard of the cave where the dwarfs live in beautiful large rooms, where gold lies like sand on the sea-shore, and precious stones sparkle on the walls, and where the dwarfs hold their sports and grand banquets. “ I will go there to-day,” said Sepp, joyfully. “ I know the place where the good little men dance of an evening in the moonlight, with their invisible caps on, so that they cannot be seen by men ; the



entrance to their cave is there too; I will knock at the door and present my petition."

Towards evening Sepp did actually go; he arrived at the lonely spot he had mentioned, knocked at the door of the cave, and said what he wanted. The door opened itself, and Sepp could see down a long dark passage at the end of which a crystal hall was visible, from which some beautiful music was heard. The miner in his astonishment had not noticed that the same little dwarf whom he had saved from the water had come up to him. Only when he held up his torch did the man recognise him. The dwarf told Sepp to come again next morning, and then throwing his invisible cap on his head again, he disappeared in a moment. The door of the cavern also closed at the same instant.

The next morning before dawn Sepp was there again. When he was still a long way off he saw it shining and sparkling; and when he came nearer, he saw all sorts of bright utensils, dishes, plates, glasses, and so on. He took as many as he thought he should want and went home with his load, and now everything was ready for the christening-feast. The guests came soon, and were much better entertained at the poor miner's than they had expected. When the clergyman had christened the babies he said he had not seen such fine boys for a long time, and that they might be something some day; and when he and the god-parents were going away chatting together, they agreed that they had never taken part in a pleasanter christening. Sepp and his wife went thankfully to bed that night, and early next morning she got up and cleaned the things and polished them up, and then Sepp took them all back and laid them before the dwarfs' cave. He would gladly have made the dwarfs a present, too, but he knew that they take anything

of this sort ill from men ; they do not return it, but look upon it as a sign of dismissal, and keep away in future. So Sepp left them with thankfulness in his heart and returned home. The two little boys grew fast, and when they were a year old, and their mother went to wish them many happy returns of their birthday, she found six beautiful gold-pieces lying on their bed. The kind dwarf had brought them in the night ; and afterwards, too, he did not forget his little favourites, for he came every birthday and gave them a similar present, until they were twelve years old. In the night of their thirteenth birthday, Sepp heard one of the boys, whom he had named Job, coughing dreadfully, so he struck a light and got up to make him some gruel. When he went to the door with the candle and opened it the dwarf ran in, but seeing the light he started back and ran off, and never came again, for dwarfs cannot bear our earthly lights.









“THEN HE SET HIS WIFE AND CHILD ON HIS HORSE, AND WALKED BY  
THEIR SIDE TILL THEY REACHED HIS CASTLE.” *Page 149.*



*THE KNIGHT AND HIS WIFE.*

THERE once lived in riot and revelling a very rich and distinguished knight; and he was proud and tyrannical towards the poor. God punished him for this by placing him under a curse. One side of his body became rusted like iron—the left arm, the left leg, and also half his body; his face only was left untouched on both sides. So the knight put a glove on his left hand and had it tightly sown on to his wrist, and day and night he never took it off, so that no one might see how discoloured his hand was. And he repented and tried to begin a new life; he left his old friends and drinking companions, and married a beautiful and good wife. She had, perhaps, heard a good deal that was bad about the knight, but as his face had remained handsome, she only half believed it, even when she was alone and thought about the matter; and when he was with her and spoke kindly to her, she did not believe it at all; and so she married him.

But after the wedding she could not repress some suspicion, for he never took the glove off the left hand; and she was in great fear. She did not, however, make any remark, but merely said next morning to her husband that she wanted to go into the wood, to pray in a little chapel which stood there. Now near the chapel there was a cell in which an old hermit lived, who had before dwelt for a long time in Jerusalem,

and who was so good that people made pilgrimages to him from far and wide. Of him she determined to ask advice.

Now when she had told the monk everything, he went into the chapel and prayed for a long time; and when he came out again he said, "You can still redeem your husband, but it will be difficult. If you begin it and do not accomplish it, you yourself will become like him. Your husband has done much wrong in his life, and has been proud and cruel towards the poor. If you will go begging for his sake, barefoot and in rags, like the poorest beggar-woman, until you have begged a hundred golden pieces, he will be saved. Then you must take his hand, and go with him to the church, and drop the hundred gold pieces in the box for the poor. If you do that, God will forgive your husband his sins, the rust will disappear, and his body will again be as pure as before."

"I will do it," said the young wife, "however hard it may be, and however long it may last. I will save my husband, for he is only rusted outwardly, that I firmly believe."

Then she left him and went deep into the wood, and before long she met with a little old woman, who was looking for sticks. She had a ragged dirty gown on, with a cloak over it, which was made of as many different pieces put together as the Holy Roman Empire consisted of in old times; but what sorts of colours these pieces had had one could hardly tell, for the rain and sun had been at work with them. "Will you give me your gown and cloak, mother," said the lady, "and I will give you all the money that I have with me and my silk dress as well, for I want to be poor."

The old woman looked at her in surprise and said, "I'll do it; I'll do it, my daughter, if you really mean it. I've seen much of the world, and found many people who want to be rich, but any one who wanted to be poor I never met



with before; but it will suit ill with your smooth little hands, and your sweet little face." But the knight's wife had already begun to take off her things, and she looked so sad and serious in doing so, that the old woman saw directly that she was in earnest. So she handed her gown and cloak, and helped her to take off her clothes, and then said, "And what are you going to do now, my pretty daughter?"

"Beg, mother," answered the lady.

"Beg? Well, you need not mind doing that, it is no disgrace. Many a one will have to do it at the gates of heaven, who has not learned to do it down here. But I'll teach you first the beggar's song:—

'Begging and wandering  
Early and late;  
Hungry and thirsty  
Is beggars' fate.

'Have not you anything—  
Soup or dry bread?  
Anything, everything  
To take are we glad.

'In wallets and rags  
We gather our treasures,  
And when we have got them  
We spend them in pleasures.'

"That is a pretty song, is not it?" asked the old woman. And with these words she threw the silken mantle round her, sprang into a thicket, and disappeared in a moment.

Then the lady wandered on through the wood, and after a time she met a farmer, who had come out to look for a peasant girl, for it was harvest time and there was a scarcity of labourers. The lady stopped and held out her hand, saying, "Have not you anything; anything, everything to

take am I glad." She did not say the other lines of the song, for she did not like them. The farmer looked at her, and as he saw that, in spite of her rags, she was strong and healthy, he asked her if she would not work for him.

"I will give you a cake at Easter, a goose at Martinmas, and at Christmas a crown piece and a new dress. Are you satisfied with that?"

"No," answered the lady, "I must go begging; it is heaven's will." The farmer was angry at this, and abused and laughed at her, and said mockingly, "It is heaven's will, is it? Oh yes! I dare say you have been there to-day? or perhaps you have an aunt up there, since you seem to know so well what goes on in heaven. A fine lazy hussy you are. Good for the flail—too bad for the jail!" So he went on his way, leaving her standing there none the better off; then the lady saw well that begging was very hard.

But she went on farther, and after a while she came to a place where the road forked, and there stood two stones; on one of them sat a beggar with a crutch, and as she was now tired, she thought she would sit for a little time on the other, and rest herself. But she had hardly sat down when the beggar, striking her with his crutch, called out, "Take yourself off, you lazy baggage; are you going to play the spy with your rags and your milk-and-sugar face? I have taken this corner here. Just be nimble, or you shall see what a nice fiddle-bow my crutch makes, and what a fiddle your back will be."

Then the lady sighed and got up, and went on as long as her feet would carry her. At last she came to a large unknown town. Here she stayed, and sat in the church pathway and begged, and at night she slept on the church steps. So she lived from day to day; now some one would



give her a penny, now a halfpenny, and there were a good many, too, who did not give her anything at all, and even abused her as the farmer had done. The hundred gold pieces took a long time in coming, for when she had begged for three quarters of a year, she had only saved one. And just when the first gold piece was complete she had a beautiful little baby boy, and she called him "Savedyet," for she hoped yet to be able to save her husband. Then she tore a piece from the bottom of her gown a yard broad, so that now it only reached down to her knees, and wrapped the child in it, and took it in her lap and went on begging. And when the child would not go to sleep she used to rock it and sing—

"Slumber upon my breast,  
My little beggar child;  
Thy father sits within his tower,  
Nor hears the wind so wild.

"He's clothed in satin cloth,  
Drinks wine and eats good bread,  
Yet if he saw us two, I trow  
He'd wish that he were dead.

"For us he need not grieve,  
My babe all warmly lies;  
Far poorer he! for Heaven itself  
Against his wrong-doing cries."

Then the people would stop and look at the poor young beggar-woman with her beautiful baby, and would give her more than before. And she was comforted and wept no more, for she knew that she would certainly save her husband, if she only persevered.

Now the knight was very sad when his wife did not come back to him, for he said to himself, "She has perceived all, and therefore has left me." Then he went to the hermit in

the wood, to ask him if she had been in the chapel to pray. But the monk was short spoken and stern with him, and said, "Have you not lived in revel and riot? Have you not been proud and hard towards the poor? Has not God let your flesh grow rusty as a punishment? Your wife is quite right if she has left you. One must not put a good and a bad apple together in one chest, or the good one will soon become bad too."

Then the knight threw himself down on the ground, and took off his helmet and wept bitterly.

When the monk saw this, he was kinder and said to him, "As I see that your heart has not yet grown rusty, I will give you some advice: Do good, and go to all the churches, and you will find your wife again."

Then the knight left his castle and rode far and wide into the world. Wherever he found any poor people he gave them something, and whenever he saw a church he went into it and prayed. But he did not find his wife. In this way almost a year passed by, and then he came to the town where his wife was begging, and he went first of all to the church. His wife recognised him while he was still a long way off, for he was tall and stately, and wore a golden helmet with a falcon's claw on the top, which glittered from afar; and she was very frightened, for she had only collected two gold pieces, and so could not release him yet. So she pulled her cloak right over her head, so that he might not recognise her, and crouched down as closely as she could, that he should not see her snow-white feet; for her gown only reached down to her knees since she had cut off the strip for her child. But when the knight went past her he heard her sob gently, and seeing her tattered and patched clothes, and the beautiful child upon her bosom, which, nevertheless, was also wrapped.



up in rags, his heart bled for them. He went up to her and asked what was the matter. But his wife did not answer; she only sobbed all the more, however much she tried to refrain. Then the knight took out his purse, in which he had much more than a hundred gold pieces, and laid it in her lap, saying, "I will give you all that I have left, even if I have to beg my way home again." Then the cloak by chance fell from his wife's head, and the knight saw that it was his own faithful wife to whom he had given the money. In spite of her ragged clothes he fell on her neck and kissed her, and when he heard that the child was his son, he embraced and kissed it too. Then the wife took her husband by the hand and led him into the church, and laid the money in the almsbox, while she said to him, "I wanted to save you, but you have saved yourself."

And so it was really; for when the knight came out of the church the curse was taken off him, and the rust which covered the whole of his left side had vanished.

Then he set his wife and child on his horse, and walked by their side till they reached his castle, where he lived happily with her many long years, and did so much good that everyone praised him.

But the ragged clothes which his wife had worn were hung in a costly shrine; and every morning when he got up he went to the shrine and looked at them, and said, "This is my morning devotion. God thinks not wrong of me for it, for He knows what I mean by it, and after this I go to the church."

*THE GLASS MOUNTAIN.*

THERE once stood a castle of pure gold on a high glass mountain, and before the castle was an apple tree, on which golden apples grew. Whoever picked a golden apple could get into the golden castle, and there, in a silver room, was the enchanted princess, of wonderful grace and beauty. She had unheard of treasures. The cellars were full of precious stones, and whole chests of the purest gold were standing about in all the rooms.

A great many knights had already come there from far and near, but they strove in vain to climb the mountain. Many a one had begun to climb up on his rough-shod horse, but half way up the steep slippery mountain he had fallen heavily down again. Some broke their arms, some their legs, and many a one his neck. The beautiful princess saw from her window how many knights tried in vain to reach the summit on their beautiful horses. The sight of the princess inspired them always with fresh courage. They came from all the four quarters of the world; and the princess had already waited many years for her deliverer.

A number of bodies, both of knights and horses, lay round about the mountain; many a dying one was lying groaning, unable with his broken limbs to drag himself away. The whole neighbourhood looked like a churchyard.

Three days before the end of the seventh year, a knight in



golden armour, on a spirited horse, rode towards the mountain. He first made his horse take a run, and to the astonishment of every one climbed half way up the mountain and came safely down again. The next day, as his first attempt had



been successful, he galloped his horse again at the mountain. The steed pranced on the glass as if it had been the level ground, and the sparks flew out from his hoofs. All the knights looked on amazed—he was already quite close to the summit. Again they looked up, and now he stood by the apple tree. At that moment there arose an immense falcon flapping its

huge wings, and striking the horse in the eyes with them. The horse was frightened, and, snorting and tossing its mane, it reared up, its hind feet slipped, and it fell down to the bottom of the steep mountain with its rider. Of both of them only the bones were left, which rattled in the crushed-up armour like dry beans in a bag.

There was now only one day before the end of the seventh year. Then up came a student, a jolly fellow, a big, strong and handsome youth. He saw how all these knights broke their necks to no purpose, so he went up to the slippery mountain, and began to climb up without a horse at all.

A year before, when he was at home with his parents, he had heard a great deal about the princess who lived in the golden castle at the top of the glass mountain. So he went into the wood and killed a lynx, and fastened its long sharp claws on his hands and feet.

Armed with these, he climbed boldly on the glassy surface. The sun was going down, the scholar stopped when he had got half way, he could hardly breathe for exhaustion, and his mouth was quite dry with thirst. A black cloud came floating over, but in vain he begged and implored it to drop, if it were only a single drop of water. In vain he held his mouth open, the black cloud floated by, nor would even a little dewdrop come to moisten his parched lips.

His feet were very sore and bleeding; he could now hold on only by his hands. The sun sank; he looked upwards to see the mountain top again, but he had to turn his head up so much that his cap fell off behind. Then he looked downwards. Oh, what a precipice! There was certain unavoidable death! The dead bodies of horses and men tainted the air; these were the remains of the brave youths who had tried, like him, to climb the mountain side.



Now it was getting quite dark, only the stars shone on the glass mountain, and the young student hung, as if nailed on by his bleeding hands. He did not get any higher, for he had exhausted all his strength. He did not know what to do, and hanging thus he awaited his death. Quickly sleep closed his eyes. He forgot his dangerous position, and soon slept soundly. He had thrust the sharp claws so deeply into the glass, that he slept quietly until midnight without falling down.

The falcon which had thrown down the knight with his horse guarded the apple tree. He always flew round the glass mountain at night-time to keep guard, and hardly had the moon come out from behind the clouds when he flew up out of the apple tree, and, circling round in the air, caught sight of the student.

Eager for some flesh, and certain that this was a new body, the bird quickly flew down and alighted. But the lad was not asleep now; he saw the falcon, and made up his mind directly to make use of it to save himself. The falcon dug his sharp claws into the lad's flesh, but he bore the pain bravely and seized hold of the bird's feet. It flew up with him, terrified, high into the air, and began to circle round the castle tower. The student held on fast all the while; he saw the high windows, which glittered with many colours, and there on the balcony sat the beautiful princess absorbed in sad thoughts. Then he saw the golden apple tree close to him, and he pulled a small knife out of his girdle, and cut off the falcon's feet. The bird flew straight up in the air in pain, until it was lost in the clouds, and the youth fell into the broad branches of the apple tree. Then he pulled out the falcon's feet, which had remained in his flesh, and laid the skin of a golden apple on the wounds, and immediately

they were all healed. Then he picked his pocket full of these golden apples, and laden with such a treasure he went boldly into the castle. At the door a large dragon stopped him, but no sooner had he thrown it an apple, than it sprang into the moat and disappeared.

A huge door then immediately opened itself, and he saw a court-yard full of beautiful flowers and trees, and on the balcony sat the enchanted princess and her attendants. When she saw the youth she ran towards him and greeted him as her lord and husband. She delivered all her treasures up to him, and the young student became a powerful rich lord. But he never came down again to the ground, for only the large falcon, which was the guardian of the princess and the castle, could carry the immeasurable treasures to the ground on his wings. But the falcon had lost his feet, and his body was soon afterwards found in the wood near the glass mountain.

Once when the student was taking a walk with the princess, his wife, he looked down and saw to his surprise that a great crowd had assembled down below. So he blew on his silver whistle, and the swallow, which served as messenger in the golden castle, came flying to him.

"Fly down, and ask what is going on," said he to the little bird, and the swallow flew off quickly, and soon came back, saying :

"The blood of the falcon has brought the bodies down there to life again. All who have died under this mountain wake up to-day as if from a sleep and mount their horses, and all the people, astounded, are looking on at this unheard of miracle."



*THE INVISIBLE KINGDOM.*

IN a little house, which was perhaps a quarter of an hour's walk from the rest of the village, there lived with his father a young countryman named George. There was just so much land belonging to the house, that both had enough to live comfortably. At the back of the house there was a wood of oak trees and beeches, so old that the grandchildren of those who had planted them had died more than a hundred years ago. And in front of it there lay an old broken millstone—who knows how it had come there? When one sat on it, one had a beautiful view down into the valley, of the river which ran through it, and the mountain which rose up on the other side of the river. Here George would sit of an evening for hours together and dream, when he had done his work in the fields, with his head upon his hands, and his elbows resting on his knees; and because he troubled himself very little about the people in the village, and generally went about silently, and wrapped up in himself, like one whose thoughts are far away, they nicknamed him “Dreamy George.” But that did not matter a bit to him.

And the older he got the quieter he grew, and when at last his father died, and he had buried him under one of the old oak trees, he became quite silent. When he sat on the old broken millstone, as he did now much oftener than before,

and looked down into the beautiful valley, whilst the evening mist crept in at one end and slowly wandered along the mountains, and while it grew darker and darker, till at last the moon and the stars in all their splendour shone forth in the sky, a most wonderful feeling would come over him. For then the waves began to sing in the river, at first very quietly, but soon quite audibly; and they sang about the mountains, whence they came, and the sea, whither they were going, and about the Nixies who live deep down at the bottom of the river. Then the wood would begin to rustle quite strangely and relate the most wonderful things; especially the old oak tree, which stood by his father's grave; he knew much more than all the other trees. And the stars, high up in the sky, twinkled and trembled as if they really were about to fall down into the green valley and the blue river.

It was a wonderful valley! But only Dreamy George saw and heard all this. The people who lived in the village had no idea of it, for they were quite ordinary people. Now and then they would fell one of the old wood-giants, and saw him and cut him up, and when they had made a nice woodstack, they would say, "Now we shall be able to boil our tea again for a time." And they used to wash their clothes in the river; that was something quite to their taste. But about the stars, when they sparkled so, they would say nothing more than, "It will be very cold to-night. I only hope our potatoes will not get frost-bitten."

If poor Dreamy George ever tried to bring them over to another opinion, they only laughed at him. They were quite ordinary people.

Well, as he was sitting one day on the old millstone, and thinking that he was really quite alone in the whole world, he fell asleep. Then he dreamt that a golden swing hung down





"AS HE WAS SITTING ONE DAY ON THE OLD MILLSTONE, AND THINKING THAT HE WAS REALLY QUITE ALONE IN THE WHOLE WORLD, HE FELL ASLEEP." *Page 156.*





on two silver ropes. Each rope was fastened to a star, and on the swing there sat a wonderfully beautiful princess, and she swung herself so high that she flew from the sky down to the earth, and again from the earth up to the sky. Each time, when the swing came down to the earth, the princess clapped her hands for joy, and threw him a rose. But suddenly the rope broke, and the princess flew far into the sky, farther and farther, until at last he could see her no more.

Then he woke up, and when he looked round there lay by him on the millstone a large nosegay of roses.

The next day he fell asleep again, and had the same dream. And when he awoke, there sure enough lay the roses again. So it went on for a whole week. Then Dreamy George said to himself that there must be some truth in the dream, as he dreamt it over and over again. So he locked up his house, and set out to look for the princess.

After many days' journeying, he saw afar off a country where the clouds hung down to the earth. He made bravely for it, but came into a large forest; there he suddenly heard a groaning and crying, and when he had come to the place whence the cries came, he saw a venerable looking old man with a snowy beard lying on the ground. Two horribly ugly men were kneeling on him, and trying to strangle him. George looked round him to see if he could not find some sort of weapon to attack the ruffians with, and as he saw nothing else, in his anxiety he tore a large branch off a tree. Scarcely had he grasped it, when it changed in his hand into a large halbert, and with this he rushed at the two monsters, and ran them through the body with it, so that they left the old man and ran off yelling.

Then he lifted the old man up, and comforted him, and asked him why the two villains had wanted to kill him.

Then he told him that he was the King of Dreams ; and that by mistake he had gone a little out of his way and come into the kingdom of his greatest enemy, the King of Reality. As soon as the king had noticed this, he had ordered two of his servants to lie in wait for him.

“ But had you done him any harm ? ” asked George.

“ Not the least,” answered he. “ But he always is very apt to get angry—it is in his nature, and he has a particular dislike to me. But now as you have saved my life, I will prove myself grateful to you, and will show you my land. It is the most splendid in the world ; and the dreams are my subjects.”

Then the Dream King went on a little in front, and George followed him. When they came to the place where the clouds hung down to the earth, the king pointed to a trap-door, which was so hidden in the bushes that it was impossible to find it, if one did not know where it was. He lifted it up, and led his companion down five hundred steps into a brightly lighted grotto, which extended for miles. It was unspeakably beautiful. There were castles on islands in the middle of large lakes, and the islands floated about like ships. If one wanted to go into one of these castles, one had only to stand on the shore and call out—

“ Castle, castle, float to land,  
On thy walls I want to stand,”

and then it would come by itself to the shore. And besides these there were other castles on clouds, which floated slowly about in the air. But if one said,

“ Castle in the air descend,  
Grant admittance to a friend,”

they would slowly come down. And there were gardens too with flowers, which smelt sweetly in the daytime, and in the



night shone brightly; and glittering, brightly coloured birds, which used to tell stories; and many other wonderful things. Dreamy George was quite overcome with surprise and admiration.

"Now I will show you my subjects, the dreams," said the king. "I have three sorts. Good dreams for good people, bad dreams for wicked people, and goblin dreams. With the last I often have fun, for even a king, you know, must have his fun sometimes."

So he took him first into one of the castles, which was so strangely constructed that it had quite a comical appearance.

"The goblin dreams live here," he said; "they are little impudent roguish people. They don't do any one any harm, but they like teasing. Come here, little one," he called out to one of them, "and be serious just for one moment." Then he continued speaking to George. "What do you think the rascal does when now and then I let him go upon the earth? He runs to the nearest house, and the first person he finds in a nice sound sleep, he pulls out of bed, and carries upon the church steeple, and throws him head over heels down again. Then he scampers quickly down the stairs, so that he comes to the bottom first, and catches the man and carries him home again, and there throws him into bed so that it gives a creak, and he wakes up. Then he rubs his sleepy eyes, and looks round him bewildered and says, 'Oh goodness me; I thought I had fallen from a church steeple. It is a good thing it is only a dream.'"

"Is that he?" cried Dreamy George. "Ah, he came to me once; but if he ever comes again and I catch him, it will go hardly with him." He had scarcely said this, when another goblin sprang out from under the table. He looked almost

like a little dog, for he had a shaggy little coat on, and his tongue hung out of his mouth.

"He is almost as bad," said the Dream King. "He barks like a dog, and moreover he has the strength of a giant. When people get terrified in their dreams, he holds them tight by their hands and feet, so that they cannot get away."

"I know him too," put in Dreamy George. "When one wants to get away one feels benumbed and stiff like a piece of wood. If one wants to lift up one's arm, it won't go, and when one tries to move one's leg one cannot do that either. But sometimes it is not a dog, but a bear or a robber, or something else horrid."

"I will not allow them to trouble you any more, Dreamy George," said the king, kindly. "Now come to the bad dreams; but do not be afraid, they will not do you any harm; they are only for wicked men." And then they entered an immense room which was surrounded by an old wall, and shut by a huge iron door. It was full of the most horrible creatures and fearful monsters. Some were like men, some half men and half animals, and others were altogether animals. George shrunk back frightened; but the king spoke kindly to him, and said, "Would you not like to see more closely what wicked men have to dream?" And he made a sign to one of the dreams, a hideous giant, who had a mill-wheel under each arm.

"Tell us what you are going to do to-night," said the king to him. Then the monster drew up his shoulders, extended his mouth from ear to ear, while his back shook with delight, and said with a grin, "I am going to the rich man who let his father die of hunger. One day, when the old man was sitting on the stone steps before his son's house begging for bread, the son came and said to his servant, 'Drive that



harlequin away !' I go to him now in the night and grind him between these two mill-wheels, until all his bones are broken up nice and small. Then when he is limp and soft, I take him by the neck and shake him and say : ' See how nicely you dance now, my harlequin.' Then he wakes up, with chattering teeth, and calls out : ' Wife, bring me another blanket, I am cold.' And when he has got to sleep once more I do it again."

When Dreamy George heard this, he ran hurriedly out, pulling the king after him, and crying, " I will not stay another moment with the bad dreams—it is frightful."

Then the king took him into a beautiful garden, where the paths were made of silver, the beds of gold, and the flowers were polished precious stones. The good dreams were taking a walk there. The first which he saw was a dream like a pale young wife, who had a Noah's Ark under one arm, and a box of bricks under the other.

" Who is that?" asked Dreamy George.

" She goes every evening to a little sick boy, whose mother is dead. During the day he is quite alone, and nobody troubles about him; but towards evening she goes to him, and plays with him, and stays the whole night. He always goes to bed very soon, that's why she goes so early. The other dreams go much later. But come on now; if you want to see all, we must make haste." And then they went farther into the garden, in the midst of the good dreams. There were young men and women, and old men and children, all with lovely and good faces, and in the most beautiful clothes.

All of a sudden Dreamy George stopped and cried out.

" What is the matter?" asked the king.

" Why! there is my princess, the one who has appeared to

me so often, and given me the roses," cried out Dreamy George with delight.

"Yes, yes," answered the other. "There she is; I have always sent you a nice dream, have I not? It is almost the nicest that I have."

Then Dreamy George ran up to the princess, who was sitting on her little golden swing, swinging herself. As soon as she saw him coming she sprang down into his arms. And he took her by the hand, and led her to a golden seat, and there they both sat down, and told one another how nice it was to see each other again. And when they got to the end of it all, they always began at the beginning again. The King of Dreams in the meantime walked up and down the large walk which went right through the garden, with his hands behind him, and every now and then he pulled out his watch to see what time it was, for Dreamy George and the princess seemed as though they would never be done talking to each other. At last, however, he went to them and said, "Now, children, that is enough. You, Dreamy George, have a long way to go home, and I cannot keep you here for the night, for I have not a bed, because you know the dreams do not sleep; but always have to go up to the men on the earth at night; and you, my princess, you must get yourself ready. Dress yourself to-day all in pink, and afterwards come to me, and I will tell you whom you are to go to, and what you must say to him."

When Dreamy George heard this, he felt bolder than he had ever felt before in his life. He stood up and said in a decided voice, "Your Majesty, I am not going to forsake the princess on any account. Either you must let me stay down here, or else you must give me her to take up with me on to the earth. I cannot live without her; I love her far too much for that."



"But George, George," said the king, "it is the very nicest of all my dreams. Yet you have saved my life, so let it be so. Take your princess and go up to the earth with her. As soon as you get up there, take the silver veil off her head, and throw it down to me through the trapdoor. Then your princess will become flesh and blood, a human being, for at present she is only a dream."

Then Dreamy George thanked him most heartily, and said, "Dear king, since you really are so exceedingly good, might I dare to make one more petition? Look! I have got a princess, but I have not yet got a kingdom; and it is quite impossible to have a princess without a kingdom. Cannot you get one for me, even if it is only quite a little one?"

Then the king answered him, "I have not any visible kingdoms to give away, only invisible ones; you shall have one of them, and that one of the largest and most splendid which are left."

Then George asked what sort of things invisible kingdoms were; and the king told him he would learn all in good time, and be very much astonished, everything to do with them was so beautiful.

"You know," said he, "in the ordinary visible kingdoms very unpleasant things often happen. For example: You are the king in an ordinary kingdom, and your Prime Minister comes early in the morning to your bedside and says, 'Your Majesty, I want a hundred pounds for the kingdom.' Then you open your state money-box, and find not a single halfpenny there. What can you do then? Or, again: You have a war and are beaten, and the other king who has conquered you marries your princess, and shuts you up in a castle. Things of this kind cannot happen in an invisible kingdom."

"But if we cannot see it," said Dreamy George, still rather puzzled, "what can be the use of our kingdom?"

"You funny person," said the king, and he held his forefinger to his forehead. "You and your princess can see it; you will see the castles and gardens and meadows and woods which belong to the kingdom. You can live there, and go for walks, and do just what you like with it all, only other people can't see it."

Then Dreamy George was highly delighted, for he had begun to be rather afraid that the people in the village would look at him shyly when he went home as a king with his princess. He took leave of the King of Dreams sadly, mounted the five hundred steps with his princess, and then took off her silver veil and threw it down. Then he was going to shut the trapdoor, but it was too heavy. He could not hold it, and let it fall, and it made a tremendous bang, and for a moment he was stunned. When he came to himself again he was sitting on the old millstone, in front of his house, with the princess by his side, and she was real flesh and blood like an ordinary person. She held his hand and stroked it as she said, "You dear, good, silly fellow, why did you hesitate so long before you told me how you loved me? Were you afraid of me?" And the moon rose and shone on the river, the waves beat on the shore, and the trees rustled, but they sat on and on, and talked together. Then suddenly it seemed as if a small black cloud came in front of the moon, and all at once something fell down at their feet, like a large napkin folded up. And then the moon became quite bright again. They picked up the napkin and opened it out. This took a very long time to do, as it was very thin, and was folded up together many hundred times. When at last they had quite unfolded it, it looked like a large map. There was a river in the middle,



and at each side were towns and woods and lakes. Then they saw that it was a kingdom, and that the good Dream King had dropped it down from heaven for them. And when they looked at their little cottage, behold it had become a wonderful castle, with glass steps, and marble walls, and the carpets were made of velvet; and it had towers at the corners, and blue sloping roofs. Then they took hold of hands and went into the castle, and when they entered, the servants bowed respectfully; trumpets sounded, and page boys went in front of them and strewed flowers in the way. There they were the king and queen.

And next morning it went through the village like lightning that Dreamy George had come back, and had brought a wife with him.

"I saw her this morning," interrupted one of the countrymen, "as I went to the wood. She was standing with him at the door. She is nothing out of the common, a quite ordinary person, little and thin. And she was not well dressed either. But, after all, why should it be otherwise? He has nothing, so I suppose she will have nothing, too."

So they talked, these stupid people, for they could not see that she was a princess. And they did not notice either that the cottage had changed into a wonderful castle, for it was an invisible kingdom which had fallen down from the sky to Dreamy George. But he did not bother himself about the stupid people; but lived with his princess very happily in his kingdom. And they had six children, each one more beautiful than the last, and they were all princes and princesses. But no one in the village knew it, for they were quite ordinary people, and were much too simple to see it.

*THE UGLY DUCKLING.*

It was beautiful in the country; it was summer-time; the wheat was yellow, the oats were green, the hay was stacked up in the green meadows, and the stork paraded about on his long red legs, discoursing in Egyptian, which language he had learned from his mother. The fields and meadows were skirted by thick woods, and a deep lake lay in the midst of the woods. Yes, it was indeed beautiful in the country! The sunshine fell warmly on an old mansion, surrounded by deep canals, and from the walls down to the water's edge there grew large burdock leaves, so high that children could stand upright among them without being perceived. This place was as wild and unfrequented as the thickest part of the wood, and on that account a duck had chosen to make her nest there. She was sitting on her eggs; but the pleasure she had felt at first was now almost gone, because she had been there so long, and had so few visitors, for the other ducks preferred swimming on the canals to sitting among the burdock-leaves gossiping with her.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The great egg burst at last. "Tchick! tchick!" said the little one, and out it tumbled—but, oh! how large and ugly it was! The Duck looked at it. "That is a great, strong

creature," said she; "none of the others are at all like it; can it be a young turkey-cock? Well, we shall soon find out; it must go into the water, though I push it in myself."

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

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

So they came into the duck-yard. There was a horrid noise; two families were quarrelling about the remains of an eel, which in the end was secured by the cat.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

And accordingly they made themselves at home.

But the poor little Duckling, who had come last out of its egg-shell, and who was so ugly, was bitten, pecked, and teased by both Ducks and Hens. "It is so large!" said they all. And the Turkey-cock, who had come into the world

with spurs on, and therefore fancied he was an emperor, puffed himself up like a ship in full sail, and marched up to the Duckling quite red with passion. The poor little thing scarcely knew what to do; he was quite distressed, because he was so ugly, and because he was the jest of the poultry-yard.

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

“You are really uncommonly ugly!” said the Wild Ducks; “however, that does not matter to us, provided you do not marry into our families.” Poor thing! he had never thought of marrying; he only begged permission to lie among the reeds, and drink the water of the moor.

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

“Hark ye,” said they, “you are so ugly that we like you infinitely well; will you come with us, and be a bird of



passage? On another moor, not far from this, are some dear, sweet wild geese, as lovely creatures as have ever said 'hiss, hiss.' You are truly in the way to make your fortune, ugly as you are."

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

There was a grand hunting-party: the hunters lay in ambush all around; some were even sitting in the trees, whose huge branches stretched far over the moor. The blue smoke rose through the thick trees like a mist, and was dispersed as it fell over the water; the hounds splashed about in the mud, the reeds and rushes bent in all directions—how frightened the poor little Duck was! he turned his head, thinking to hide it under his wings, and in a moment a most formidable-looking dog stood close to him, his tongue hanging out of his mouth, his eyes sparkling fearfully. He opened wide his jaws at the sight of our Duckling, showed him his sharp white teeth, and, splash, splash! he was gone, —gone without hurting him.

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

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

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

Towards evening he reached a wretched little hut, so dilapidated that it knew not on which side to fall, and therefore remained standing. The wind blew violently, so that our poor little Duckling was obliged to support himself on his tail, in order to stand against it; but it became worse and worse. He then remarked that the door had lost one of its hinges, and hung so much awry that he could creep through the crevice into the room, which he did.

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

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

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

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

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

"Can you lay eggs?" asked she.

"No."



“Well, then hold your tongue.”

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

“No.”

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

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

“What ails you?” said the Hen. “You have nothing to do, and therefore brood over these fancies; either lay eggs or purr, then you will forget them.”

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

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

“You do not understand me,” said the Duckling.

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

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

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

"Well, go," answered the Hen.

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

One evening, just as the sun was setting with unusual brilliancy, a flock of large, beautiful birds rose from out of the brushwood; the Duckling had never seen anything so beautiful before; their plumage was of a dazzling white, and they had long slender necks. They were swans; they uttered a singular cry, spread out their long, splendid wings, and flew away from these cold regions to warmer countries, across the open sea. They flew so high, so very high! and the little ugly Duckling's feelings were so strange; he turned round and round in the water like a mill-wheel, strained his neck to look after them, and sent forth such a loud and strange cry, that it almost frightened himself. Ah! he could not forget them, those noble birds! those happy birds! When he could see them no longer, he plunged to the bottom of the water, and when he rose again was almost beside himself. The Duckling knew not what the birds were called, knew not whither they were flying, yet he loved them as he had never before loved anything; he envied them not, it would



never have occurred to him to wish such beauty for himself ; he would have been quite contented if the ducks in the duck-yard had but endured his company—the poor, ugly animal !

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

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

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

The woman screamed, and struck at him with the tongs, the children ran races with each other trying to catch him, and laughed and screamed likewise. It was well for him that the door stood open ; he jumped out among the bushes into the new-fallen snow—he lay there as in a dream.

But it would be too melancholy to relate all the trouble and misery that he was obliged to suffer during the severity of the winter : he was lying on a moor among the reeds, when the sun began to shine warmly again, the larks sang, and beautiful spring had returned.

And once more he shook his wings. They were stronger than formerly, and bore him forwards quickly, and before he

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

"I will fly to them, those kingly birds," said he. "They will kill me, because I, ugly as I am, have presumed to approach them; but it matters not, better to be killed by them than to be bitten by the ducks, pecked by the hens, kicked by the girl who feeds the poultry, and to have so much to suffer during the winter!" He flew into the water, and swam towards the beautiful creatures; they saw him and shot forward to meet him. "Only kill me," said the poor animal, and he bowed his head low, expecting death; but what did he see in the water? He saw beneath him his own form, no longer that of a plump, ugly, grey bird—it was that of a Swan.

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

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

Some little children were running about in the garden; they threw grain and bread into the water, and the youngest exclaimed, "There is a new one!" The others also cried out, "Yes, there is a new swan come!" and they clapped their hands, and danced around. They ran to their father and



mother, bread and cake were thrown into the water, and every one said, "The new one is the best, so young and so beautiful!" and the old Swans bowed before him. The young Swan felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wings; he scarcely knew what to do, he was all too happy, but still not proud, for a good heart is never proud.

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



*LITTLE THUMB.*

THERE was once a woman who had a very strong desire to have a little child of her own, but did not at all know how it was to be managed, and therefore went to an old witch, to whom she said, "I do so heartily desire to have a little, little child; will you not tell me how I am to come by one?"

"Yes, that is easily done," the witch said; "there is a barley-corn, in no way like what the farmers sow, or is given to chickens to eat; set that in a flower-pot, and then you shall see what you shall see."

"I thank you," the woman said, and giving her a shilling, went home, where she set the barley-corn, and immediately there sprang up a magnificent, large flower, which looked like a tulip, but the leaves of the flower were closed, as if it were only in bud.

"That is a pretty flower," the woman said, and kissed the red and yellow leaves, but just as she did so the flower opened with an explosion. It was a real tulip, as now could easily be seen, but seated in the middle of the flower was a quiet little girl. She was so pretty and delicate, and not being above the length of one's thumb, she was called Little Thumb.

She had a neat lacquered walnut-shell for a cradle, blue violet leaves were her mattress, and a roseleaf her covering. There she slept at nights, but during the day she played on the



table, on which the woman placed a plateful of water, with flowers all round the edge, and a lilyleaf floating in the middle. On this Little Thumb could sit and row herself from one side to the other, which looked very pretty. She could sing too, and so sweetly, that the like had never been heard.

One night, as she was lying in her beautiful bed, an ugly toad came hopping through the window, one of the panes of glass being broken. The toad was a big, wet, and frightfully ugly creature, and happened just to hop on to the table on which Little Thumb was asleep, under her rose leaf.

"That would be a charming wife for my son," the toad said, and taking up the walnut-shell, in which Little Thumb was lying, hopped with it through the broken window, down into the garden.

There flowed a broad river, the banks of which were muddy and marshy, and it was here the toad lived with her son. Oh, dear! how ugly and disgusting he was too, exactly like his mother. "Koar, koar, croak, croak!" was all that he could say when he saw the pretty little girl in the walnut-shell.

"Do not speak so loud, or she may wake up," the old toad said, "and might escape us, for she is as light as swan's-down. We will put her on one of the water-lily leaves out in the river; for, to her, who is so light, that will be just like an island, and from there she cannot get away, whilst we are busy preparing the state-room under the marsh where you are to live."

In the water grew a quantity of water-lilies, with their broad green leaves, which seemed to be floating on the top of the water, and the one which was the farthest out from the banks was also the largest. To this the old toad swam, and placed Little Thumb, with her walnut-shell upon it.

The little thing awoke early in the morning, and when she saw where she was, she began to cry bitterly, for there was water on all sides of the large green leaf, and there was no reaching the land.

The old toad was busy, down in the marsh, decorating her room with rushes and yellow flowers, for she wanted all to be very smart for her new daughter-in-law; and when she had finished, she swam, with her ugly son, out to the leaf, where Little Thumb stood, for she wanted to fetch the pretty bed to place it in the bridal-chamber. The old toad bowed low to her and said, "Here you see my son, who is to be your husband, and you will live splendidly together, below under the marsh."

"Koar, koar, croak, croak!" was all the son could say.

Then they took the pretty little bed and swam away with it, but Little Thumb sat all alone on the green leaf and cried, for she could not bear the idea of living with the disgusting old toad, or of having her ugly son for a husband. The little fish that swam about in the water, had seen the toad and heard all she said, so they popped up their heads to see the little girl, and finding her so pretty, they grieved to think that she should have to live with the ugly toads. "No, that must never be." So they assembled together, round the green stalk of the leaf on which Little Thumb stood, and bit it through, so that the leaf floated down the river, far away, where the toads could not reach it.

Little Thumb floated past many cities, and the little birds, as they sat in the bushes, saw her and sang, "What a lovely little girl!" The leaf swam on with her, further and further, and they got into another country.

A pretty little white butterfly fluttered round her constantly, and at last settled down on the leaf, for Little



Thumb pleased him. She was very happy, for the toad could now not reach her, and it was very beautiful all around, the sun shining on the water, so that it glittered like the brightest gold. She now took her girdle, tied one end of it round the butterfly, whilst she fastened the other to the leaf, which glided on much faster, and she as well, for she was standing upon it.

Then came a large cockchafer, and seeing her, instantly



caught hold of her slender body with its claws, and flew with her into a tree. The green leaf swam on down the river, and

the butterfly too, for it was tied to it and could not get away.

Oh! how frightened poor Little Thumb was when she found herself carried away by the cockchafer, but she felt still more sad, on account of the beautiful white butterfly, which she had fastened to the leaf, for it could not get away and must starve. But the cockchafer did not care a pin about that. He seated himself with her upon the largest leaf of the tree, gave her honey out of the flowers to eat, and said that she was very pretty, though not a bit like a cockchafer. Later, all the other cockchafers that lived in the tree, came to visit her, and the young ladies, turning up their feelers, said, "What can any one see to admire in her! Why, she has only two legs, how ridiculous that looks!" "She has no feelers," another said, "and how small she is in the waist. Oh my! she is like a human being." "And how ugly she is!" all the young ladies joined in. Now Little Thumb was exceedingly pretty, which the cockchafer that had carried her off knew well enough; but as all the others said she was ugly, he began to believe it himself at last, and would have nothing to do with her, so he carried her down from the tree, and placed her on a daisy. There she sat and cried, because she was so ugly that even the cockchafers would have nothing to do with her, and yet she was the prettiest and most delightful girl that can be imagined, as clear and blooming as the most beautiful rose leaf.

During the whole summer poor Little Thumb lived all alone in a large forest. She plaited herself a bed of grass, and hung it up under a burdock leaf, where she was sheltered from the rain. She ate the honey out of the flowers, and drank the dew that lay every morning upon the leaves. In this manner passed summer and autumn; but now came



winter—the cold, long winter. The birds that had sung so sweetly to her flew away: the flowers died and the trees lost their leaves; the large burdock leaf, under which her dwelling was, rolled up, and nothing remained but a yellow, withered stalk, and she was dreadfully cold, for her clothes were worn out, so that she was nearly frozen to death. It began to snow, and each flake that fell upon her was as if a whole shovelful were thrown upon one of us, for she was so little, not more than an inch in height. She wrapped



herself up in a dry leaf, but that did not warm her, and she shook with cold.

She wandered out of the forest with difficulty, and came to a cornfield, but the corn had long gone, and only the short

dry stubble stood out of the frozen earth, which to her was like another forest. Oh! how she shook with cold. At length she reached the door of the dwelling of a field-mouse. There the mouse lived warm and well, having a whole room full of corn and every comfort. Poor Little Thumb stood inside the door, just like any other poor beggar-girl, and begged for a small piece of a barley-corn, for she had not eaten a morsel of anything for two days.

"You poor little being," the field-mouse said, for at heart she was a good old field-mouse, "come into my warm rooms and dine with me."

Now, as Little Thumb pleased her much, she said, "You may remain with me here all the winter, but you must keep my room tidy and clean as well as tell me stories, of which I am very fond;" and Little Thumb did what the good old field-mouse desired, and in return was made uncommonly comfortable.

"We shall now soon have a visitor," the field-mouse said; "my neighbour is in the habit of visiting me once a-week. He is still better off than I, has large rooms, and wears the most beautiful black fur coat. If you could only get him for a husband, you would be well provided for, but he cannot see. You must tell him the very prettiest stories that you know."

But Little Thumb was not at all anxious to see the neighbour, for he was a mole.

He came, however, and paid his visit in his black fur coat. The field-mouse said he was so clever and so rich; that his house was more than twenty times larger than hers, and that his learning was very great; but the sun and the beautiful flowers he could not bear, and had little to say of them, for he had never seen them.

Little Thumb had to sing to him, and she sang, "Lady



bird, lady bird, fly away home," and, "Sir Frog he would a-wooing go," and he fell in love with her on account of her sweet voice, but he said nothing, for he was a very prudent man.

He had lately dug himself a walk underground, from his own house to the field-mouse's, in which she and Little Thumb received permission to walk as much as they liked, but he warned them not to be frightened at the dead bird which lay there, in the walk he had made, for that it was a perfect bird with feathers and beak and all, which could only lately have died and got buried there.

The mole then took a piece of rotten wood in its mouth, for that shines in the dark like fire, and went on in front to light them in the long dark passage. When they came to the place where the dead bird was, the mole, thrusting its broad nose into the roof of the passage, began throwing up the earth till it had worked a large hole, through which the light shone. In the middle of the walk lay a dead swallow, with its beautiful wings pressed close to its sides, and its feet drawn in under the feathers. The poor bird had evidently died of cold. That grieved Little Thumb so much, for she was very fond of all little birds, they having chirped and sung so beautifully to her all the summer; but the mole pushed it on one side with its short legs and said, "He'll sing no more; how miserable it must be to be born a bird! Thank goodness that will not happen to any of my children. What has a bird but its twittering and chirping, and in winter it dies of hunger?"

"Yes, a sensible man like you may well say so," the field-mouse said; "what does a bird get by all its twittering when the winter comes? It must die of cold and hunger; and yet how proud they are!"

Little Thumb said nothing, but as soon as the other two had turned their backs upon the bird, she bent down and dividing the feathers that covered the head, kissed it on the closed eyes.

"Perhaps it was he who sang so beautifully to me in the summer," she thought. "What pleasure has he not caused me, the dear, beautiful bird!"

The mole now filled up the hole which let in the light, and accompanied the two ladies home. But that night Little Thumb could not sleep; so, getting up, she plaited a beautiful large mat with hay, which she carried with her, and covered up the bird, laying some soft wool, which she had found in the mouse's room, at both its sides, so that it might lie warm in the cold earth.

"Farewell, you beautiful little bird," she said; "farewell, and many thanks for the delightful songs during the summer, when the trees were green, and the sun shone warm down upon us." She then laid her head upon the bird's breast, but was frightened, for it was just as if there were some noise within. It was the bird's heart beating, for he was not dead, but only benumbed by the cold, and being now warmed, had come to life again.

In autumn all the swallows fly away to warmer countries; but if one remains by chance till it is too cold, it falls down like dead, and lies there, where it fell, till the cold snow covers it.

Little Thumb trembled violently, she had been so frightened, for the bird was big, very big compared with her, who was only an inch in height; but she mustered courage, and laid the wool still closer to the bird's sides, fetching, besides, the mint-leaf, which had served her as a bed-covering, and laid it over the bird's head.



The next night she stole away to him again, and found him quite alive, but very weak, so that he could only for a moment open his eyes, and look at Little Thumb, who stood before him with a piece of rotten wood in her hand, for that was the only lantern she had.

"I thank you, my pretty little girl," the invalid said; "you have warmed me so nicely, that I shall soon get my strength back, and shall then be able to fly about again outside in the warm sunshine."

"Alas!" she said, "it is very cold, it snows and freezes; so you must still remain in your warm bed, and I will nurse you."

She then brought some water in the leaf of a flower, and the swallow drank, and told her how it had wounded one of its wings in a thorn-bush, so that it could not fly so well as the others, which had gone off to a warmer country, and that at last it had fallen to the ground, when it could remember no more, and did not know at all how it had got there, where it was.

The whole winter the swallow remained under ground, and Little Thumb attended to it with the utmost care, without the mole or the field-mouse knowing anything about it, for they could not bear the swallow.

As soon as spring came and warmed the earth, the swallow said farewell to Little Thumb, who opened the hole which the mole had made above. The sun shone so beautifully down upon them, and the swallow asked, "Will you not go with me, for you can sit on my back, and we will fly far away into the green woods?" But Little Thumb knew that the old field-mouse would feel much hurt if she left in that manner, so she said,—

"No, I cannot go with you."

"Farewell, then, farewell, you good, charming girl," the swallow said, and flew out into the sunshine. Little Thumb looked after it, and the tears came into her eyes, for she was very fond of the swallow.

"Quiwit, quiwit!" the bird sang, as it flew away into the wood, and Little Thumb was very sorrowful. The poor little thing could get no permission to go out at all into the warm sunshine, though all was so beautiful; and the corn, which grew over the field-mouse's house, had shot up so high, that it was quite like a forest of tall trees to her who was only an inch high.

"Now, in the summer you must work at your wedding outfit," the field-mouse said to her; for their neighbour, the tedious old mole, with the black fur coat, had proposed for her. "You must have a good stock of woollen, as well as linen clothes, for there must not be anything wanting when you are the mole's wife."

Little Thumb had to work at her spindle, and the field-mouse hired four spiders as well to spin and weave day and night for her. Every evening the mole visited her, and his constant theme was, that, when the summer should be over, the sun, which now baked the earth as hard as a stone, would not be nearly so hot, and that then they would be married. The prospect of this did not afford Little Thumb much pleasure, for she could not bear the tedious mole. Each morning, when the sun rose, and each evening when it set, she stole out, outside the door; and when the wind separated the ears of corn so that she could see the blue sky, she thought how light and beautiful it was out there, and wished with all her heart that she could see the dear swallow again; but it did not come back, and was, no doubt, far away in the beautiful green wood.



When autumn came, Little Thumb's wedding outfit was all ready.

"In four weeks' time your wedding will take place," the field-mouse said to her. But Little Thumb cried and said that she would not have the tedious mole.

"Fiddlededee," the old mouse said. "Don't be perverse, or I'll bite you with my white teeth. Your future husband is a handsome man, and the queen herself has not such a fur coat. His kitchen and cellar are well stored, so, bless your stars that you make such a match."

The time for the wedding had now come. The mole had arrived to fetch away Little Thumb to live with him deep under ground, and never to come up to the warm sunshine, which he was not at all fond of. The poor child was very sad, for she was now to bid the beautiful sun good-bye, which she had had permission to look at, from the door at any rate, whilst living with the field-mouse.

"Farewell, you bright sun!" she said, raising up her hand towards it, and she went a few steps outside the door, for the corn was carried, and there was now only the dry stubble. "Farewell! farewell!" she again said, and flung her arms round a little red flower which stood there, "Remember me to the little swallow, when you happen to see it."

"Quiwit, quiwit!" sounded at that moment from above, and when she looked up she saw the little swallow just flying over her head. When it perceived Little Thumb, it was much rejoiced: and she told her story, how unwillingly she was about to marry the ugly mole, when she would have to live under ground, where the sun never shone, and she could not help crying.

"The cold winter is now coming," the swallow said, "and I am about to fly off to a warmer country. Will you go with

me? You can sit on my back; only tie yourself fast with your girdle, and we will fly away from the ugly mole and his dark room, far, far away to a warmer country, where the sun shines more brightly than here; where it is always summer, and there are the most beautiful flowers. Come with me, you dear little girl, you who saved my life, when I lay frozen and buried."

"Yes, I will go with you," Little Thumb said, and seating herself on the bird's back, she tied herself fast with her girdle to one of the strongest feathers, when the swallow flew up high into the air, over forests and seas; high up over mountains that are always covered with snow, and she shivered in the cold air, but she crept under the bird's warm feathers, only having her head out, that she might admire the wonders and beauties below.

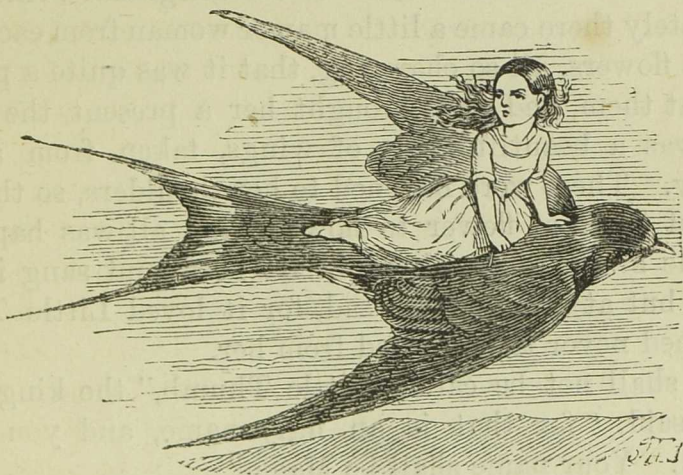
They at length reached a warmer country, where the sun shines much more brightly than here, where the sky is twice as deep a blue, and where the most beautiful grapes grow in the hedges. There were forests of orange and citron trees, and the air was sweet with the scent of myrtles and mint, whilst on the roads there were charming children, playing with the most beautifully tinted butterflies. The swallow, however, flew on still farther, and it grew more beautiful and more beautiful, till they came to a delightful blue lake, where there stood a marble palace, from olden times surrounded by sweet-scented trees. The vine wound round the high columns, and at the top there were many swallows' nests, one of which belonged to Little Thumb's companion.

"This is my house," the swallow said; "but if you choose yourself one of the most beautiful of the flowers that grow there below, I will place you in it, and you may be as happy as the day is long."



"That will be delightful," she cried, and clapped her little hands with joy.

There lay a large white marble column, which had fallen to the ground and broken into three pieces, and from between these grew up the most beautiful large white flowers. The swallow flew down with Little Thumb, and placed her upon



a broad leaf of one of these, but how astonished she was when in the flower she saw a little man sitting, so white and transparent, as if he were of glass. He wore a beautiful gold crown upon his head, and had the most lovely gauzy wings, being scarcely bigger in body than Little Thumb herself. This was the Spirit of the Flowers. In each flower there lived a like little man or woman, but this was the king of them all.

"Oh, how beautiful he is!" Little Thumb whispered to the swallow.

The little Prince was greatly frightened at the swallow for, compared with him, it was a monstrous bird; but, when he

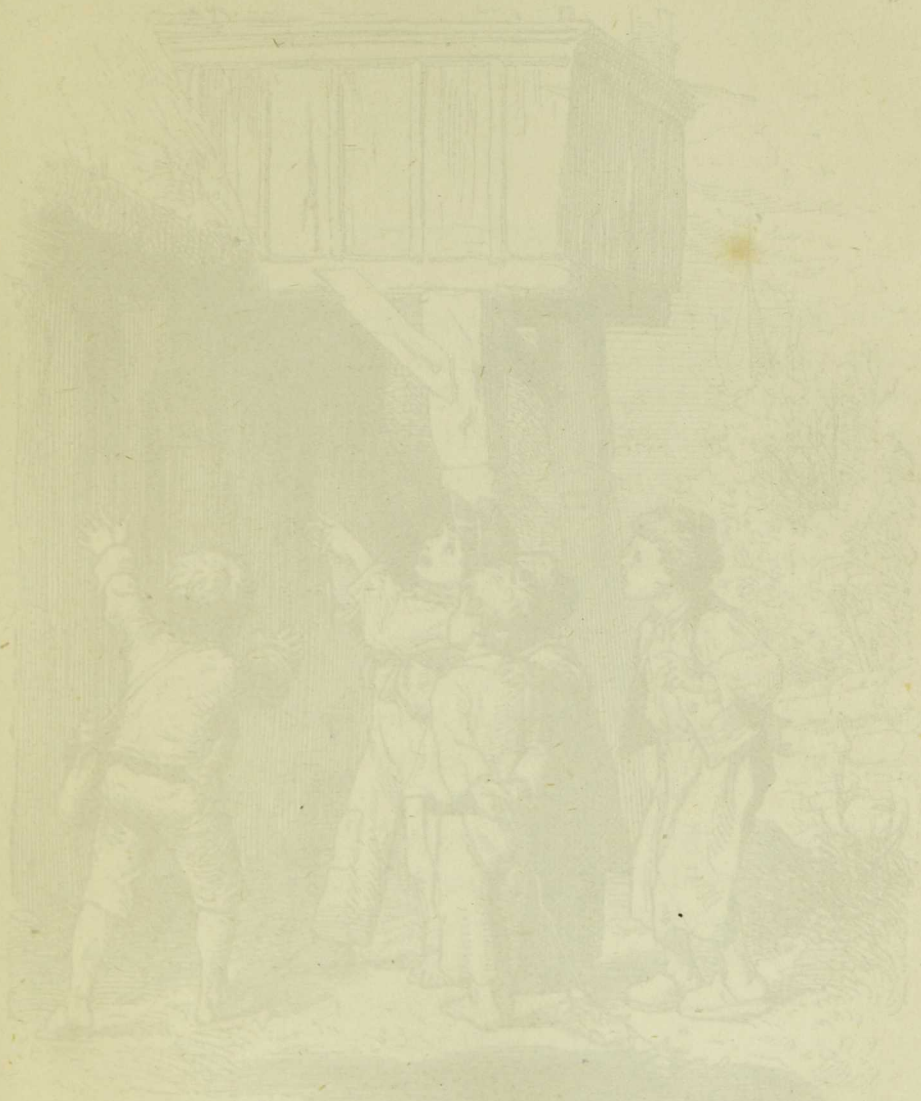
saw Little Thumb, he was as much rejoiced, for she was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. He took off his crown, and placed it upon her head, asking, at the same time, what her name was, and if she would marry him, when she should be queen over all the flowers? This was, indeed, a very different being to the toad's son, and the mole with his fur coat; so she answered "Yes" to the delightful Prince; and immediately there came a little man or woman from each of the different flowers, all so charming, that it was quite a pleasure to look at them, and each brought her a present, the best of which was a beautiful pair of wings, taken from a large white fly. These were fastened to her shoulders, so that now she could fly from flower to flower; and all was happiness. The little swallow sat above in its nest, and sang its best to them, but at heart it was sad, for it loved Little Thumb, and wished never to be parted from her.

"You shall not be called Little Thumb," the king of the flowers said, "for that is an ugly name, and you are so beautiful. Your name shall be *Maga*."

"Farewell, farewell!" the little swallow said, and flew away from the warm country again back to Denmark. There it had a nest, above the window of the man who tells stories, and there it sang, "*Quiwit, quiwit!*" and that is how we know the whole story.









W. LUTHERMANN. SC.

"ALL TOGETHER, SANG THE OLD RHYME ABOUT THE STORKS."

Page 197.



*THE STORKS.*

ON the last house in a village was a stork's nest. The stork-mother sat in the nest with her four little ones, which stretched out their heads with the little black beaks, for they had not yet become red. A little way off, on the ridge of the roof, stood the stork-father, quite stiff and rigid, with one leg drawn up under him, so that, at any rate, he might have some trouble in standing as he kept watch. It seemed almost as if he were carved in wood, he stood so still. "It must certainly look quite grand that my wife should have a guard near the nest," he thought, "for no one can know that I am her husband, but they will surely think that I have been ordered to stand here. It looks well!" and he continued to stand on one leg.

In the street below a troop of children were playing; and when they saw the storks, first one of the boldest of them, and afterwards all together, sang the old rhyme about the storks, but they sang it just as it came into the first singer's head:—

"Stork, stork, fly home, I beg,  
And don't stay idling on one leg.  
There's your wife sits in her nest,  
Rocking all her young to rest;  
The first he will be hung,  
The second roasted young,  
They'll come and shoot the third,  
And stab the fourth I've heard."

"Just listen to what the boys are singing," said the little storks; "they say we shall be hanged and roasted."

"You need not mind that!" said the mother; "don't listen to them, and it matters not what they say."

But the boys went on singing, and made game of the storks, pointing at them with their fingers; only one of them, whose name was Peter, said it was wrong to laugh at the poor things, and he himself would not join in. The stork-mother, in the meantime, consoled her young ones, saying, "Do not mind them; just look how unconcerned your father stands there, and on one leg too."

"We are so afraid!" said the young ones, and they drew back their heads into the nest.

On the following day, when the children met together again to play, and saw the storks, they sang their rhyme,—

"The first he will be hung,  
The second roasted young."

"Must we be hanged and roasted?" the young storks asked.

"No, certainly not!" said the mother; "you shall learn to fly, which I'll teach you, and then we'll fly out into the meadows and pay the frogs a visit as they sing 'croak, croak!' then we'll eat them up, and that will be fun."

"And what next?" asked the little ones.

"Then all the storks of the whole country will meet together, and the autumn manœuvring begins, when you must be able to fly well. That is of the greatest importance, for whichever of you does not fly properly, the general will pierce through with his beak, and kill; so take care that you attend to the exercising when it begins."

"So we shall be stabbed after all, as the boy said: and there! listen!—they are singing it again."



"Attend to me, and not to them," said the stork-mother. "After the grand manoeuvres we fly away to a warmer country, far, far from here, over mountains and forests. To Egypt we fly, where there are three-cornered stone houses, which rise up into a point above the clouds: these are called pyramids, and are older than a stork has any notion of. In that country is a river, which, overflowing its banks, turns the whole land into slime, and all one has to do is to pick up the frogs."

"Oh, how nice!" cried all the young ones.

"Yes, that is a glorious life! One has nothing to do all day but to eat; and during the time we are living there in such luxury, in this country there is not a single green leaf on the trees: it is so cold here that the clouds freeze, and break to pieces in white flakes." She meant snow, but did not know how to express it better.

"Do the naughty boys, then, freeze and break into pieces too?" the young storks asked.

"No, they do not break into pieces, but are very cold and miserable, and have to huddle together in their dark rooms, whereas you can fly about in a foreign country, where there are flowers, and where the sun gives warmth."

Some time had now passed by, and the young ones had grown so big that they could stand up in the nest, and watch their father from afar, as he brought them beautiful frogs and small snakes, and such-like delicacies. Then what fun it was to watch his tricks! His head he would bend right back, laying it upon his tail, and with his beak he made a noise like a rattle, and told them besides such stories, all about the swamps.

"Listen to me: you must now learn to fly," said the stork-mother one day; and then all the four young ones had to get

out of the nest on to the ridge of the roof. Oh, how they waddled! how they balanced themselves with their wings, and yet were near falling down!

"Now watch me," said their mother; "this is the way you must hold your head, and place your feet thus! One, two; one, two; that's the way to get on in the world." Then she flew a little way, and the young ones gave an awkward jump, when, plump, down they went, for their bodies were too heavy.

"I'll not fly," said one of them, and crept back into the nest; "what do I care about going into a warmer country?"

"Do you wish to freeze to death when winter comes? And shall the boys come to hang and to roast you? Well, then, I'll call them."

"No, no!" cried the young stork, and hopped out of the nest again to the others.

On the third day they began to be able to fly a little, and then thought they could float in the air; but, when they tried that, over they went, and were obliged to move their wings again pretty quickly. Then came the boys again, down below in the street, and sang,—

"Stork, stork, fly home, I beg."

"Shall we not fly down and peck out their eyes?" said the young storks.

"No, leave that alone," said the mother. "Attend to me, which is much more important. One, two, three; now we'll fly to the right. One, two, three; and now to the left, round the chimney. Now, that was very well done, particularly the last turn, so that to-morrow you may be allowed to fly with me to the marsh. There we shall find several nice stork families; and mind you show that my children are the



best. You may strut about as proudly as you like, for that creates respect."

"But are we not to be revenged on the naughty boys?" they asked.

"Let them say what they like; you'll fly up into the clouds, and go to the land of the pyramids, whilst they are freezing here, and haven't a green leaf nor a sweet apple."

"We'll be revenged for all that," said they to each other, and then they went on with their exercising again.

Of all the boys in the street, not one was worse with the mocking than just he who had begun the rhyme, and he was quite a little fellow, not more, perhaps, than six years old. The young storks, indeed, thought he must be a hundred years old, for he was so much bigger than their father or mother: and what should they know of the age of human beings, old or young? All their revenge should fall upon this one, for it was he who had begun. The young storks were much enraged, and as they grew bigger the less they could bear it, so that at last their mother was obliged to promise that they should be revenged, but not till the last day of their being in the country.

"We must first see how you get on at the great manœuvre. If you come off badly, so that the general runs you through with his beak, then the boys are right, at least in one respect. Now let us see how you get on."

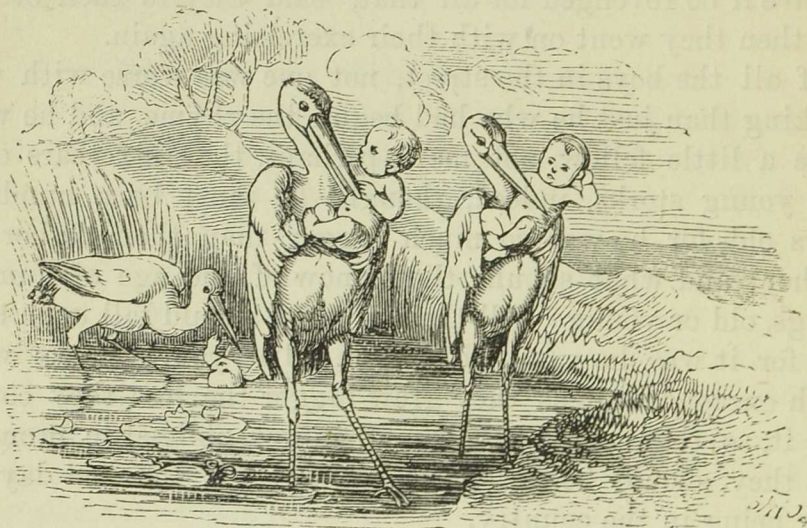
"Yes, that you shall," they answered, and took particular pains. They practised so diligently every day, and flew so straight and lightly, that it was a pleasure to look at them.

Now came autumn; and the storks began to meet together, preparatory to migrating to a warmer climate during our winter. Then there was a grand manœuvre. They had to fly over forests and villages, in order to see how they got on, for

it was a serious journey that was before them. The young storks managed so well, that they received a reward of a frog and snake, which they lost no time in eating.

"Now we ought to take our revenge," said they.

"Yes, certainly," said their mother; "and what I have planned is just the very best thing to do. I know where the pond is, in which the children lie till the stork comes and



takes them to their parents. The dear little children sleep, and have such delightful dreams as they never have in after life. All parents are anxious to have such a child, and all children wish to have a brother or a sister. Now, we will fly off to the pond, and fetch a child for each of those that did not sing that naughty song about the storks."

"But what are we to do to him—to that bad, ugly boy who began the song?" cried out the young ones.

"In the pond there lies a dead child, which has dreamed itself to death. That one we will fetch for him, and then he



will have to cry, because we have brought him a dead brother; but for the good boy, whom I hope you have not forgotten—the one who said it was wrong to make game of the birds—for him we will fetch a brother and a sister; and as his name is Peter, so shall all storks be called Peter.”

What she said was done, and all storks were called Peter, as they are up to this day.





### *THE FLYING TRUNK.*

THERE lived once, in a certain town, which you would now look for in vain on a map, a merchant, who was so rich that he could have paved the whole street in which his house stood with silver money, and perhaps the little street that ran into it as well ; but he did nothing of the sort, for he knew how to make better use of his money. If he parted with a shilling it came back to him a pound ; that is the sort of merchant he was ; but he died at last.

Now his son inherited all this money, and he led a merry



life, going every night to masquerades, and making kites with bank-notes, besides amusing himself with throwing ducks and drakes on the glassy surface of the lake, just below his window, with gold pieces instead of stones. By such means the money might well disappear; and so it did, till at last he possessed no more than four shillings, and had no other clothing but a pair of slippers and an old dressing-gown. His friends now naturally took no notice of him, since they could no longer walk in the streets together; but one of them, who was particularly good natured, sent him an old trunk, with the well-meant advice, "To pack up as soon as possible." That was all very well; but the poor spendthrift had nothing to pack up, so he put himself in the trunk.

A most curious piece of furniture it was. When the lock was pressed the trunk could fly. So it happened, to the no slight astonishment of the young man, who now flew up the chimney, high above the clouds, as if in a balloon. Farther and farther he flew, the bottom of the box giving an occasional crack, as if it would break in pieces; and the venturesome traveller was dreadfully frightened, for in that case he would have a pretty fall. That, however, did not happen, and at length he reached the country of the Turks. The trunk he carefully hid in the forest, under some dry leaves, and went straightway to the city, near to the gates of which he had arrived in so extraordinary a manner. There was no impropriety whatever in this, for the Turks all go about in slippers and dressing-gowns, like himself. On his way he met a nurse with a little Turkish child in her arms.

"Listen to me, you Turkish woman," he said, "what castle is this, close to the city, with the high windows?"

"The king's daughter lives there," she answered. "It has been prophesied that a lover will cause her much heart-ache,

and therefore no one is allowed to go near her, unless accompanied by the king and queen."

"Many thanks," said the merchant's son, and hastened back into the forest, seated himself in his trunk, and flew up on to the roof of the castle, whence he crept through a window into the room where the Princess was.

She was lying on a sofa asleep, and she was so wonderfully beautiful, that the young man could not resist kissing her on the instant. She awoke quite frightened, but he said he was the God of the Turks, who had flown through the air down to her, to honour her with his company, and to this she had nothing to object.

So they sat side by side, in confidential conversation, and he told her stories of her eyes, how they were the most beautiful dark lakes, in which the thoughts swam about like alluring mermaids! he told her stories of her forehead, how it was a proud mountain of snow with magnificent chambers and paintings! and he told her of the storks, how they brought the pretty little children.

These were, indeed, delightful stories! and then, in well-chosen words, he besought the Princess to marry him, to which she immediately said "Yes."

"But you must come again next Saturday evening," she said. "Exactly at six o'clock the king and queen are here to tea, and they will certainly feel highly flattered to have the God of the Turks for a son-in-law. But be prepared, my friend, to tell us a really pretty story, for my parents doat on such. For my mother, it must be moral and exalted, but to suit my father it must be merry—something very laughable."

"Well, I will bring a story, and that will be my only wedding present," he answered, embracing her. Herewith they parted, the Princess having buckled a magnificent sabre



round his loins, the sheath of which was adorned with gold coins, and gold coins were particularly useful to him.

He now flew away, bought himself a new dressing-gown, and a few hours later was seated in the forest composing a story to be ready by Saturday, which was no such easy matter.

After much thought and consideration it seemed to be in a fair way, and was ready on Saturday exactly at six o'clock.

The king, the queen, and the whole court were waiting for their tea at the Princess's, and they received the strange suitor most civilly.

After tea the queen begged he would tell them a story. "I pray," she said, "let it be very profound and instructive."

"But let us have a good hearty laugh, too," the king put in.

"Most certainly," the stranger assured them, and he began, after hemming only three times.

Now listen attentively.

"There was once a bundle of Matches, and they scarcely knew what to do with themselves for very pride, for they considered themselves of remarkably high descent. The head of the family, that is, a mighty pine tree, of which they were small splinters, had been formerly a large old tree in a northern forest. The Matches were now lying on a rather bare hearth in the kitchen, between a Tinder-box and an old Iron-pot, to whom they were telling the most remarkable events of their youth. 'You may believe us,' they said, 'whilst we were still a green branch—we were, in fact, a green branch—every morning and evening we had diamond tea,' that was the dew, 'and the whole day we had sunshine, when the sun shone, and all the little birds had to sing to us, or amuse us with interesting stories. We could plainly see that we were rich, for the other trees had decent clothing only during the summer, whereas our whole family wore, even

during the hardest winter, a beautiful green dress, which neither wind nor frost could rob us of. At last, however, in the midst of this pleasant life, the woodcutters came—that was the dreadful revolution that cut up our family. The head of the family was appointed to the post of main-mast on a magnificent ship, which could sail round the world if it would. The branches were otherwise disposed of, and it is our tedious, though undoubtedly honourable, employment to give light to the lower orders, on which account we are banished here into the kitchen, away from the society of the great.’

“‘Well, it has been different with me,’ said the Iron-pot, next to which the Matches lay. ‘From the very beginning of my life I have been first put on the fire, and then scoured. The solids are my care, and I am, in fact, the first person in the house. My only pleasure is after dinner to stand neat and clean upon the shelf, and have some sensible conversation with my comrades. With the exception of the Pail, which sometimes gets out into the yard, we, however, lead a more secluded life here than in a convent. Our only news-purveyor is the Market-basket; but he talks too freely of the government and of the people. Why, it was only yesterday, I think, that an old jug fell off the shelf from sheer fright, and broke into pieces.’

“‘You chatter too much,’ the Tinder-box interrupted her, and the flint and steel came in such violent contact that sparks followed. ‘Let us now have a merry evening of it.’

“‘Let us discuss which of us is of the noblest birth,’ the Matches said.

“‘No, I do not like talking about myself,’ a Dish said. ‘Let us rather have a general friendly conversation. I will make a beginning, and tell things such as every one has experienced, for then one can enter so thoroughly into the story,



and it becomes really amusing. Well, on the coast of the German Ocean, under the shade of the Danish beech forests—'

" 'What a delightful beginning!' the Plates exclaimed with one voice. 'That will certainly be a story after our own hearts!'

" 'Well, there I spent my youth in a quiet family. Each piece of furniture was dazzlingly bright, so that one might see oneself in it. Every morning the floor of hard, white wood, most tastefully laid down in a pattern, was scoured clean, and regularly every fortnight clean curtains were put up.'

" 'My gracious! how interestingly you do tell the story!' the Broom interrupted. 'One can see at once that it is a lady who is talking, for there is something so neat and tidy in it all.'

" 'Yes, indeed, one feels that without a doubt,' the Pail asserted; and it gave a little hop of delight, that it went splash on the floor.

" 'The Dish now went on with its story, and the end was in no way inferior to the so much promising beginning.'

" 'All the Plates rattled with delight, whilst the Broom fetched some dry flowers out of the dust-hole and crowned the Dish with a wreath, for she knew it would vex the others; and she said to herself, 'If I crown her to-day she will crown me to-morrow.'

" 'Now I'll dance,' the Tongs said, and she did dance. Oh dear, how she lifted up one leg in the air, nearly as high and much more gracefully than Mademoiselle Elsler! The old chair-cover in the corner split with staring at her—'Am I not to be crowned too?' the Tongs asked, and she was crowned.

" 'They are only low people,' the Matches thought.

" 'Now the Tea-urn was asked to sing, but she excused herself, saying she was cold, and could only sing when very hot,

which, however, was her pride, for she would only sing when she was grand, standing on the drawing-room table.

"In the left hand corner of the window there lay an old Pen the cook was in the habit of writing with, and in which there was nothing particularly remarkable, excepting that it had gone down too deeply in the inkstand, but just this it was proud of. 'If the Tea-urn won't sing,' it said, 'she is quite welcome to leave it alone. Outside, in a cage, there is a Nightingale, who is a little musical too. It is true that she hasn't a note of school-learning, but this evening we will be particularly lenient.'

" 'Well, I think it highly improper that a stranger should be heard,' the Tea-kettle said, who was the kitchen-singer, and half-brother to the Urn. 'Is that patriotic? I appeal to the Market-basket, who is a man of experience; let him decide.' 'What a rage it puts me in to hear all this nonsense, the grumbling old Market-basket said; 'would it not be more sensible to turn the house topsy-turvy, and then, perhaps, some of us would get into their proper places? That would be another sort of fun.'

" 'Yes, let us have a regular row,' all cried together; but at that very moment the door opened and the servant came in, when all were immediately as quiet as mice. Not a syllable was uttered, but there was not one of them, the smallest or the meanest, that did not feel what he or she could do. 'Yes, if I had wished,' they thought, 'it would certainly have been a merry night.'

"The servant lighted the Matches. Oh, how they fizzed, and with what a blue flame they burned!

" 'Now,' they thought, 'every blockhead amongst them can see that we are the first. What splendour! what a light! and then all was over, for they were burned out.'



"That was a delightful story," the Queen said. "I felt exactly as if I were in the kitchen with the Matches. You shall certainly have my daughter."

"That, as a matter of course," the King said, nodding approval. "Monday next you shall have our daughter; so now, my friend, you may consider yourself one of the family."

The wedding-day was fixed, and the night before the whole city was illuminated. Biscuits and cracknels were showered down upon the eager crowd; the boys climbed into the trees shouting "Hurrah!" and whistling through their fingers, so that altogether it was a scene of splendour.

"Well, I must see whether I cannot do something to add to the general festivity," the merchant's son thought, so he bought some rockets, wheels, and serpents, not forgetting a good supply of squibs and crackers. In short, he provided all that belongs to the most splendid fireworks, and, having laid all in his trunk, he ascended into the air.

What a cracking and whizzing there was!

The Turks all sprang up in the air with excitement at the enchanting sight, till their slippers flew about their ears. Such an aerial spectacle they had never witnessed. There could not now be the shadow of a doubt that it was the God of the Turks himself who was to have the Princess.

As soon as the merchant's son had got back into the forest with his trunk, he thought, "I must go into the city just to ascertain what effect it produced!" Was it not perfectly natural that he should have this fancy?

And what wonders he heard!

Every one whom he asked had a different account to give, but all agreed that it was incomparably beautiful.

"I saw the God of the Turks himself," one said, "and he had eyes like sparkling stars, and a beard like the foaming sea."

"He floated on a fiery mantle," another asserted, "and the heads of blessed cherubs peeped forth from the folds."

All these accounts he received from the enthusiastic people, and the next day his marriage was to take place.

He now hurried back into the forest, to seat himself in his trunk; but what had become of it? The trunk was burned. A spark from the fireworks had, through his carelessness, remained in it, so that the dry wood took fire, and the trunk lay there in ashes. The poor lover could no longer fly, and therefore could not get to his future bride.

She stood the whole day on the roof waiting for him. She is waiting still, whilst he wanders homeless about the world telling stories, which, however, are nothing like as good as the story of the Matches.





*THE SWINEHERD.*

THERE was once a Prince who was poor, for his kingdom was very small, but still it was large enough for him to think of getting married, and think of it he did.

It was certainly rather bold of him that he ventured to say to the Emperor's daughter, "Will you have me?" But he ventured for all that, for his name was celebrated far and near, and there were hundreds of Princesses who would readily have said "Yes;" but did she say so?

Now we shall hear.

On the grave of the Prince's father there grew a rose-tree, —oh, such a beautiful rose-tree!—for, though it blossomed only every fifth year, and then bore but one rose, that was a rose with such a delicious scent that whoever smelt it forgot all care and trouble. He also had a nightingale, which sang as if all the most beautiful melodies were congregated in its little throat. This rose and this nightingale the Princess was to have, and they were therefore put in silver boxes and sent to her.

The Emperor had them carried before him into the great hall, where the Princess was playing at "puss in the corner" with her ladies in waiting, and when she saw the large boxes with the presents she clapped her hands with delight.

"I hope it's a little kitten," she said; but the rose-tree with the beautiful rose appeared.

"Oh, how pretty it is done!" all the ladies cried.

"It is more than pretty; it is beautiful," the Emperor said.

"Faugh, papa!" the Princess cried, "it is not artificial, it is natural."

"Faugh!" all the ladies cried, "it is natural."

"Let us first see what is in the other box before we grow angry," the Emperor said; and then the nightingale made its appearance, singing so beautifully that nothing could be said against it.

"Superbe, charmant!" all the ladies cried, for they all jabbered French, one worse than the other.

"How the bird reminds me of the musical box of the late Empress," an old courtier said. "It is exactly the same tone—the same execution."

"Yes," the Emperor said, and he cried like a little child.

"I hope that at least is not natural," the Princess said.

"Yes, it is a natural bird," those who brought it answered.

"Then let the bird fly," the Princess resumed; and she would by no means listen to the Prince's coming.

But he came for all that. He painted his face with brown and black, pulled his cap down over his eyes, and knocked at the gate.

"Good day, Emperor," he said. "Can I not meet with some employment here in the palace?"

"Yes, certainly," the Emperor answered. "I want some one to look after the pigs, for we have a great many."

So the Prince was appointed imperial swineherd. He had a miserable little room down below, near the pigsty, and there he had to live; but the whole day he sat working,



and when night came he had made a pretty little iron pot, with bells all round, and as soon as the pot boiled they rang so prettily, and played the old tune, "Home, sweet home." But the most curious part was, that by holding one's finger in the steam of the boiling pot, one could immediately smell what food was being prepared in every house in the town. Now, that was a very different thing from the rose.

The next time the Princess went out with her ladies she heard the beautiful melody, and was quite delighted, for she, too, could play "Home, sweet home,"—it was the only thing she could play, and that she played with one finger.

"That is the very same tune that I play," she said; "and he must be a very well-informed swineherd. Just go down, one of you, and ask him the price of the instrument.

So one of the ladies had to go down, but she put on wooden clogs.

"What do you want for the iron pot?" the lady asked.

"I must have ten kisses from the Princess," the swineherd answered.

"Heaven forbid!" the lady cried.

"I cannot take less," he replied.

"He is a rude fellow," the Princess said, and she went on, but had not gone many steps when the bells sounded so prettily, "Home, sweet home."

"Go again, and ask him whether ten kisses from my ladies will not do."

"I am very much obliged," he answered; "they must be ten kisses from the Princess herself, or I keep my instrument."

"What rubbish all this is!" the Princess said. "Now you must all stand round me, so that no one may see it."

Then the ladies stood round her, spreading out their

dresses; and the swineherd got the ten kisses, and the Princess the iron pot.

Never did anything give so much pleasure. The whole evening, and the whole of the following day, the iron pot had



to keep boiling, so that there was not a single hearth in the whole town that they did not know what had been cooked on it—at the Prime Minister's as well as at the shoemaker's. The ladies danced about, clapping their hands.

“We know who will have sweet soup and omelets for dinner, and who will have broth and sausages. Oh, how interesting that is!”



"Yes; but you must not blab, for I am the Emperor's daughter."

"Heaven forbid!" all cried.

The swineherd, that is, the Prince—but no one knew he was anything more than a real swineherd—did not pass his time idly. He had now made a rattle, which, when swung round, played all the waltzes and quadrilles that had been heard from the beginning of the world.

"Oh, that is superb!" the Princess said as she passed. "I have never heard a more beautiful composition. Go and ask him how much the instrument costs; but I will not kiss again."

"He asks a hundred kisses from the Princess," the lady said who went in to ask.

"I believe he is mad," the Princess said, and she went on, but had not got many yards when she stopped. "The arts must be encouraged," she continued; "and am I not the Emperor's daughter? Go and tell him that he shall have ten kisses from me, the same as the last time, and the rest he can have from my ladies."

"Oh, but we had much rather not!" the ladies cried.

"What rubbish that is!" the Princess said. "When I can kiss him I should think you can, too; and remember that I feed you and pay you wages."

So what could they do but go again?

"A hundred kisses from the Princess," he said, "or let each keep his own."

"Stand there," she said. The ladies stood round her, and the kissing began.

"What is all that commotion at the pigsty?" the Emperor cried, as he stepped out on the balcony. He rubbed his eyes, and put on his spectacles. "Why, it is the court ladies, who

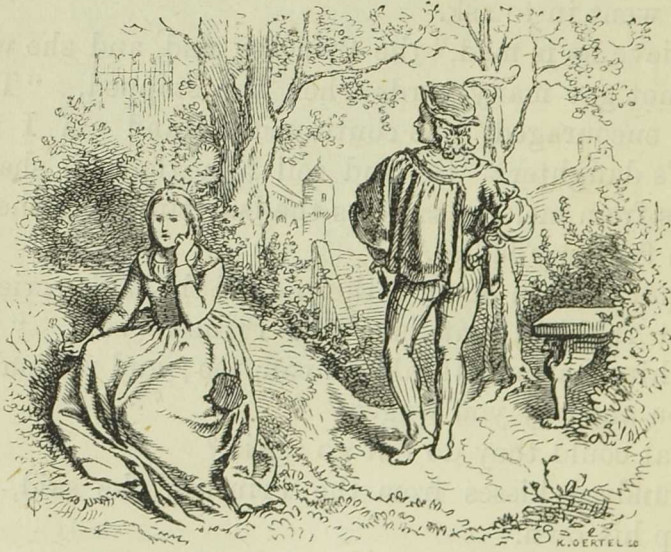
are up to some of their tricks! I suppose I must go and look after them." So he pulled his slippers up at the heel, for they were shoes the heels of which he had trodden down.

What haste he did make to be sure!

When he reached the yard he walked quite softly, and the ladies were so busily engaged counting the kisses, to make sure all was fair, that they did not notice him. He stood on tiptoe.

"What's this?" he cried when he saw them kissing, and he hit them on the head with his slipper, just as the swineherd was receiving the eighty-sixth kiss.

"Get out with you!" he said, for he was very angry;



and the Princess, as well as the swineherd, was banished the empire.

There she now stood crying; the swineherd grumbled, and the rain came pouring down.



"Oh, miserable wretch!" the Princess cried. "Had I but accepted the handsome Prince! Oh, dear, how unhappy I am!"

The swineherd now went behind a tree, washed the black and brown from his face, threw off the shabby clothes, and appeared in his Prince's costume, so handsome that the Princess courtesied to him.

"I only despise you now," he said. "You refused an honest Prince, and did not understand the value of the rose and the nightingale, but were ready enough to kiss the swineherd for a plaything. Now you see what you get for it all."

He then went into his kingdom, and shut the door in her face. Now she might well sing, "Home, sweet home."





### *THE BRAVE TIN-SOLDIER.*

THERE were once twenty-five Tin-soldiers, who were all brothers, for they were born of the same old tin-spoon. They looked straight before them, shouldering their muskets in military style, and their uniforms were blue and red, of the most splendid description. "Tin-soldiers" was the very first word they heard in this world, when the lid was taken off the box in which they lay. That was the exclamation of a little boy who had received them as a birth-day present; he clapped his hands, and stood them up on the table. One soldier was the very image of the other, with the exception of one single one, who had only one leg, for he had been cast last, when there was not tin enough remaining; but he stood as firmly on his one leg as the others on their two; and it is just he whose adventures we have to relate.



On the table on which they were placed there were several other playthings; but that which attracted the eye the most was a pretty castle made of card-board. One could see through the windows into the rooms, and in front there were several small trees, standing round a piece of looking-glass, which represented a lake, reflecting the wax swans that swam upon it. It was all pretty, but the prettiest of all was a little girl, who stood in the middle of the open door. She was also made of card-board, but had a dress of the thinnest muslin, and a piece of blue ribbon across her shoulders for a scarf, fastened at the neck with a brooch quite as big as her whole face. The little girl held both her arms stretched out, for she was a dancer, and one leg was raised so high, that the Tin-soldier could not discover it, so that he thought she, like himself, had only one leg.

“That would be just the wife for me,” he thought; “but she is rather grand, living in a castle, whereas I have only a box, and that I have to share with twenty-four others. That is no place for her; but yet I must try to make acquaintance with her.” So he laid himself down flat behind a snuff-box that was upon the table, from whence he could watch the pretty little lady, who continued to stand on one leg without losing her balance.

At night all the other Tin-soldiers were put in their box, and the people of the house went to bed. Now the playthings began to play on their own account, at all manner of games, and the Tin-soldiers made a commotion in their box, for they wanted to share the fun, but they could not raise the lid. The Nut-crackers turned somersaults, and the Pencil had fine sport on the slate, so that there was such a noise that the canary woke up, and began to join in. The only two that did not move from their places were, the Tin-soldier and

the little Dancer. She stood still on the tip of her toe, with her two arms stretched out, and he did not turn his eyes from her for one instant.

It now struck twelve, and all of a sudden the lid flew off the snuff-box, but it was not snuff that was in the box, no! it was a little black imp, such as children call a "Jack-in-the-box."

"Tin-soldier," the Imp said, "keep your eyes to yourself!"

But the Soldier pretended not to hear him.

"Well, just wait till to-morrow," the Imp said.

The next morning, as soon as the children were up, the Tin-soldier was stood in the window, and it was either the black Imp's doing or the draught,—anyhow, the window flew open, and the Soldier went over head and heels from the second story down into the street. That was a dreadful fall, and he reached the ground head first, so that the bayonet stuck in the ground between two paving-stones.

The servant and the little boy came running down immediately to look for it, but though they were near treading upon it, they could not find it. If the Soldier had cried out, "Here I am!" they would have found him, but he did not think it becoming to call out, as he was in uniform.

It now began to rain, and the drops fell faster and faster, till it came down in torrents.

When the rain was over, two boys came that way, and one of them exclaimed, "Look! here lies a Tin-soldier, he shall have a sail down the gutter."

So they made a boat of a piece of newspaper and put it, with the Soldier standing in the middle, into the water, which after the heavy rain rushed down the street. The paper-boat was tossed about, and occasionally whirled round and round, so that the Soldier quite shook, but yet he did not



move a feature, looking straight before him and shouldering his musket, and the boys ran by the side clapping their hands.

All at once the gutter turned under the pavement, which thus formed a stone bridge, and here the Soldier was as utterly in darkness as if he were in his box.

"Where am I going to now?" he thought. "This is certainly the black Imp's doing, but if only that dear little girl were here in the boat with me, it might be twice as dark, for aught I should care."

Now a large Water-rat suddenly appeared, for it lived under the bridge.

"Have you a pass?" it cried. "Come, show your pass!"

But the Tin-soldier was silent, holding his gun still firmer.

The boat rushed on, and the Rat after it. Oh, how it showed its teeth, and shouted to the wooden beams and to the pieces of straw, "Stop him! stop him! for he has not paid toll; he has not showed his pass."

The rushing of the water grew stronger and stronger, and already could the Soldier see light at the farther end, but at the same time he heard a noise which might have frightened the bravest man. Only imagine, where the bridge ended, the gutter emptied itself into a canal, a descent as dangerous to him as it would be to us were we carried down a high waterfall.

He was so near upon it that there was no help, and down the boat rushed, the poor Soldier holding himself as steady as he possibly could. No one should be able to say that he as much as blinked his eyes. Four times the boat was whirled round and round, and was filled with water nearly up to the top, so that it was evident it must sink. The water already reached up to the Soldier's shoulders, and momentarily the

boat sank deeper and deeper, and more and more the paper became unfastened. The water was now over his head, and he thought of the pretty little Dancer, whom he should see no more. Then the paper tore and he fell through, but at the very moment he was swallowed by a large fish.

Oh, how dark it was! worse than under the bridge, and there was no room to move; but the Tin-soldier's courage did not forsake him, and he lay there his full length with his musket in his arm.

Soon after, the fish made the most frightful contortions and struggling, and was then quite quiet. Suddenly light appeared, and a voice exclaimed, "The Tin-soldier!" The fish had been caught, and taken to market, where it was bought and carried into the kitchen, and the cook cut it open with a large knife. With two fingers she laid hold of the Soldier round the body and carried him into the room for all to see the extraordinary man who had been swallowed by a fish, but the Soldier was not at all proud. He was placed upon the table, and, wonders of wonders! the Tin-soldier was in the same room he had been in before, where he saw the same children and the same playthings on the table. The beautiful castle was there, and the pretty little Dancer, still standing on one leg, with the other raised high up in the air. He could have cried if it had been becoming, and he looked at her and she at him, but neither spoke a word.

Then one of the boys took the Soldier and threw him into the fire, without giving any reason for doing so, but no doubt the Jack-in-the-box had something to do with it.

The Tin-soldier stood there in the midst of flames, and the heat was something dreadful, but whether it was the heat of the fire or of his love he did not know. His colour had clean gone, but whether caused by his travels or by grief, no one



could tell. He looked at the little girl, and she looked at him, when he felt that he was melting, but still he stood firmly with his musket at his shoulder. A door was then opened suddenly, and, carried away by the draught, the little Dancer flew like a sylph into the fire, to the Tin-soldier. She blazed up and was gone. The Soldier now melted down into a lump, and the next morning, when the servant cleared out the ashes, she found a tin heart. Of the little Dancer nothing remained but the brooch, which was burnt quite black.



*THE LITTLE MATCH-GIRL.*

It was dreadfully cold, it was snowing fast, and almost dark ; the evening—the last evening of the old year—was drawing in. But, cold and dark as it was, a poor little girl, with bare head and feet, was still wandering about the streets. When she left her home she had slippers on, but they were much too large for her—indeed, properly, they belonged to her mother—and had dropped off her feet whilst she was running very fast across the road, to get out of the way of two carriages. One of the slippers was not to be found ; the other had been snatched up by a little boy, who ran off with it, thinking it might serve him as a doll's cradle.

So the little girl now walked on, her bare feet quite red and blue with the cold. She carried a small bundle of matches in her hand, and a good many more in her tattered apron. No one had bought any of them the live-long day—no one had given her a single penny. Trembling with cold and hunger she crept on, the picture of sorrow : poor little child !

The snow-flakes fell on her long, fair hair, which curled in such pretty ringlets over her shoulders ; but she thought not of her own beauty, or of the cold. Lights were glimmering through every window, and the savour of roast goose reached her from several houses ; it was New Year's eve, and it was of this that she thought.



In a corner formed by two houses, one of which projected beyond the other, she sat down, drawing her little feet close under her, but in vain—she could not warm them. She dared not go home, she had sold no matches, earned not a single penny, and perhaps her father would beat her; besides, her home was almost as cold as the street—it was an attic; and, although the larger of the many chinks in the roof were stopped up with straw and rags, the wind and snow often penetrated through. Her hands were nearly dead with cold; one little match from her bundle would warm them, perhaps, if she dared light it. She drew one out, and struck it against the wall: bravo! it was a bright, warm flame, and she held her hands over it. It was quite an illumination for that poor little girl—nay, call it rather a magic taper—for it seemed to her as though she were sitting before a large iron stove with brass ornaments, so beautifully blazed the fire within! The child stretched out her feet to warm them also: alas! in an instant the flame had died away, the stove vanished, the little girl sat cold and comfortless, with the burnt match in her hand.

A second match was struck against the wall; it kindled and blazed, and wherever its light fell the wall became transparent as a veil—the little girl could see into the room within. She saw the table spread with a snow-white damask cloth, whereon were ranged shining china dishes; the roast goose stuffed with apples and dried plums stood at one end, smoking-hot, and—which was pleasantest of all to see—the goose, with knife and fork still in her breast, jumped down from the dish, and waddled along the floor right up to the poor child. The match was burnt out, and only the thick, hard wall was beside her.

She kindled a third match. Again shot up the flame;

and now she was sitting under a most beautiful Christmas-tree, far larger, and far more prettily decked out, than the one she had seen last Christmas-eve through the glass doors of the rich merchant's house. Hundreds of wax-tapers lighted up the green branches, and tiny painted figures, such as she had seen in the shop-windows, looked down from the tree upon her. The child stretched out her hands towards them in delight, and in that moment the light of the match was quenched; still, however, the Christmas candles burned higher and higher—she beheld them beaming like stars in heaven: one of them fell, the lights streaming behind it like a long, fiery tail.

“Now some one is dying,” said the little girl, softly, for she had been told by her old grandmother—the only person who had ever been kind to her, and who was now dead—that whenever a star falls an immortal spirit returns to the God who gave it.

She struck yet another match against the wall; it flamed up, and, surrounded by its light, appeared before her that same dear grandmother, gentle and loving as always, but bright and happy as she had never looked during her lifetime.

“Grandmother!” exclaimed the child, “oh, take me with you! I know you will leave me as soon as the match goes out—you will vanish like the warm fire in the stove, like the splendid New Year's feast, like the beautiful large Christmas-tree!” and she hastily lighted all the remaining matches in the bundle, lest her grandmother should disappear. And the matches burned with such a blaze of splendour, that noon-day could scarcely have been brighter. Never had the good old grandmother looked so tall and stately, so beautiful and kind; she took the little girl in her arms, and they both flew



together—joyfully and gloriously they flew—higher and higher, till they were in that place where neither cold, nor hunger, nor pain, is ever known—they were in Paradise.



But in the cold morning hour, crouching in the corner of the wall, the poor little girl was found—her cheeks glowing, her lips smiling—frozen to death on the last night of the Old

Year. The New Year's sun shone on the lifeless child; motionless she sat there with the matches in her lap, one bundle of them quite burnt out.

"She has been trying to warm herself, poor thing!" the people said; but no one knew of the sweet visions she had beheld, or how gloriously she and her grandmother were celebrating their New Year's festival.





## SUNSHINE STORIES.

“Now I am going to tell a story,” said the Wind.

“No ; with your permission,” said the Rain, “it is my turn now. You have been standing at the corner of the street, howling with all your might and main quite long enough.”

“Is that all the thanks I get,” said the Wind, “after having turned so many umbrellas inside out in your honour ; yes, snapped them in two when people wanted to keep you at a distance ?”

“I will tell a story,” said the Sunshine, suddenly beaming :

“Silence !” And it was said with so much majesty, that the Wind laid himself down at his full length ; but the Rain drizzled in the wind and said : “And we must endure it ! She is always breaking in, this Madam Sunshine. But we won’t listen. It is not worth our while to listen.”

And the Sunshine began as follows :—

“There was once a swan who flew out over the rolling sea ; every feather on his body shone like gold. One feather fell down upon a great merchant-ship that was gliding along beneath under full sail : the feather fell upon the curly hair of the young man who had to look after the freight—the supercargo, they called him. This feather of the Bird of Good Fortune touched his forehead, and turned to a pen in his hand ; and he soon became a rich merchant, able to buy

him spurs of gold, and transform his golden platters to a nobleman's escutcheon. I have shone full upon it," said the Sunshine.

"On flew the swan over a green meadow, where the little shepherd-boy, a child of seven years, had laid himself down under the shade of the solitary old tree out there. And the swan in his flight kissed one of the leaves of the tree, and it fell down into the boy's hand; and the one leaf grew to three, then to ten, then to a whole book; and he read in it all about the wonders of nature, about his mother-tongue, about faith and knowledge.

"At bed-time he laid the book under his pillow that he might not forget what he had read; and the book bore him on to the school-bench, on and on to the Professor's chair. I have read his name among those of the learned," said the Sunshine.

"Away flew the swan into the deep forest solitudes, and rested himself there upon the still dark lakes, where the water-lily grows, where the wild wood-apples grow, where the cuckoo and the wood-dove have their homes.

"A poor woman was gathering fuel—fallen branches; she bore them upon her back, and carried her little child at her breast, and was now on her way home. She saw the golden swan, the Swan of Good Fortune, spring up from the rushy banks. What was that gleaming there? A golden egg; it was still warm. She laid it in her bosom, and the warmth remained; there was certainly life in the egg. Yes, there was a pecking inside the shell; she heard it; and thought it was her own heart that was beating.

"At home in her poor chamber she took out the golden egg. 'Tick, tick,' it said, as if it were a costly gold watch; but it was an egg with quick life within. The egg split, a little





"WHAT WAS THAT GLEAMING THERE? A GOLDEN EGG." *Page 232.*





cygnet covered with feathers like pure gold put out his head ; it had round its neck four sparkling rings, and as the poor woman had just four boys, three at home, and the fourth the one she had carried with her into the forest solitudes, she understood at once that here was a ring for each of the children ; and as soon as she understood it, the little golden bird flew away.

“She kissed all the rings in turn, and let every child kiss one of the rings : then she laid the ring he had kissed upon each child’s heart, and at last placed it upon his finger. I saw it,” said the Sunshine ; “and I saw what followed.

“The first boy set himself down in the clay-pit, took a lump of clay in his hand, turned it about with his fingers, and it grew into a figure of Jason, who had fetched the golden fleece.\*

“The second of the boys ran straight out into the meadow, where the flowers were growing of all imaginable colours. He plucked a handful, grasped them so tight that the flower-juices spurted into his eyes, and wetted his ring ; there was a yearning in his thoughts, and a yearning in his hand, and after many days all the great town was talking about the great painter.

“The third of the boys held the ring so fast in his mouth that sounds issued from it, echoes from the bottom of his heart ; feelings and thoughts rose up in musical tones, soaring on high like singing swans, and diving down, like swans, into the deep sea, the deep, deep sea of thought. He grew to be a master of musical tones. Every land may now think, ‘He belongs to me !’

“The fourth little fellow—why, he *was* a shrivelled atomy !

\* It was a plaster cast for a statue of Jason that first brought fame to the great Danish sculptor, Thorwaldsen.

He had the pip, they said, he must have pepper and butter, like the sick chickens. And they said the words with a peculiar accent of their own, 'Pepper-r-r and butter-r-r.' And that is what they gave him. But I gave him sunbeam-kisses," said the Sunshine. "I gave ten kisses to his one. His was a poet-nature; he was both thumped and kissed. But he had the ring of Good Fortune, from the golden Swan of Good Fortune. His thoughts flew out like singing butterflies, the symbol of immortality."

"It was a long story, that," said the Wind.

"And tiring," said the Rain. "Blow on me, that I may come to myself again."

And the Wind blew, and the Sunshine went on with her stories.

"The Swan of Good Fortune now flew away over a deep bay, where the fishermen had spread their nets. The poorest of them was thinking of marrying, and he did marry.

"The swan brought to him and his wife a piece of amber. Amber attracts—and this attracted human hearts to their house. Amber is the most delightful incense—and a fragrance rose around them there like that in church, a fragrance from God's sweet nature. They had a deep feeling of domestic happiness, and enjoyed real Good Fortune; they were contented in their lowly lot, and so their life became one whole Sunshine Story."

"Shall we leave off now?" said the Wind. "The Sunshine has been telling stories quite long enough. I am tired."

"I too," said the Rain.

And what, my friends, shall we who have heard the stories say?

We will say, "Now they are all over."



*THE OLD BACHELOR'S GRAVE.*

THE churchyard in which the two little children, about whom I am now going to tell you, were playing, lay high up on the green mountain slope. The little village to which it belonged was itself so high up above the woody valley, that the clouds often quite hid it from any one who was ferrying over the blue river down below. But the churchyard was still higher up above the village, so high that its black crosses seemed to touch the blue sky. It was not at all easy for the people to carry their dead friends from the village to the churchyard; for the road up to the green meadow where the churchyard lay was steep and stony. Nevertheless, they liked to do it, for the mountaineers cannot bear a valley; it is as damp and oppressive to them as a deep cellar is to us; and still less do they like it for their dead. They must be buried high up on the mountains, so that they can see far out into the country and down into the valley, where the boats are sailing.

Quite in the corner of the churchyard there was a neglected grave. There was only grass growing on it; and quite hidden in the grass a few little white and blue wild flowers, which no man had planted. For in the grave there lay an old bachelor, who had left behind him neither wife nor child, nor indeed any one at all who cared for him. He had come from a foreign land, whence nobody knew. Every morning he had climbed to the mountain-top, and had sat

there for hours. But before long he died, and they had buried him. A name he must certainly have had ; but what it was, nobody knew, not even the sexton. In the church register there were only three crosses, and after them the words, "Died on such and such a day in the year of our Lord so and so, an old bachelor stranger." Now that is very little, to be sure ; but the sexton's two little children, of whom I was just going to tell you, had a particular liking for that old neglected grave in the churchyard corner ; for they were allowed to play on it and to run round about it as much as they liked, while they might not touch the other ones. They were all very carefully kept in order ; the grass was freshly mown and as thick as velvet, and all sorts of flowers bloomed on them. The sexton watered them with great care every day, and he had to bring the water all the way up from the village well.

"Kätchen," said the little boy, who was kneeling before the uncared-for grave, and viewing very contentedly the hole which he had dug out with his little hands in the side of it, "Kätchen, our house is ready. I have paved it with little coloured stones, and strewed flower leaves over them. I am the father and you the mother. Good morning, mother, what are our children doing?"

"No, Hans," said the little girl, "you must not be in such a hurry. I have not got any children yet, but I will get some directly ;" and then she ran about among the graves and bushes, and came back with both hands filled with snails.

"I say, father, I have got seven children already—seven fine snail-children."

"Then let us put them to bed at once, for it is getting late."

So they picked some green leaves, and laid them in the hole, with the snails on the top of them, and then covered each with another leaf.



"Now, Hans, you must be quiet a bit," cried the little girl. "I must sing my children to sleep, and I must do it alone ; the father never sings lullaby. You can go about



your work in the meantime." And Hans ran away, while Kätchen sang in a low voice :

"Sleep together, little ones,  
Seven little baby sons,  
In your crib so cosy.  
Gently slumber, sweetly sleep,  
And mind no little leggies peep  
From underneath the clothes."

But the leaf began to move, and one of the snails stretched

out his head with his sharp horns from under it. Then the little girl tapped him on his head with her finger, and said, "Take care, Gus; you are always the naughtiest! This morning, you know, you would not have your hair combed. Go again directly to bed." And she sang again,

"Gently slumber, sweetly sleep,  
And mind no little leggies peep  
Out underneath the clothes."

When she had done singing, the seven snails had all really gone to sleep, at any rate they lay quite still; and as Hans had not yet come back again, the little girl ran about in the churchyard and looked for more snails. She collected a great many in her pinafore, and came back to the grave with them. There she found Hans sitting waiting.

"Father," she called out to him, "I have got a hundred more children."

"I say, wife!" replied the little man, "a hundred children is a great many. We have only got one doll's plate and two forks. What are the children to eat with? And besides, nobody has a hundred children. And there are not a hundred names either. How shall we christen our children? Take them away again."

"No, Hans," said the girl, "a hundred children is very nice. I want them all."

Just then came the sexton's young wife with two large slices of bread and butter, for it was already evening. She kissed her two children, and lifted them on to the grave, while she said, "Be good, and take care of your new pinafores." And there they sat eating, as quiet as two little sparrows.

But the old man in the lonely grave had heard all; for dead people hear quite plainly everything that people say



by their graves. He thought of the time when he was a little boy. He, too, had known a little girl then, and they had played together, and had built houses and been husband and wife. And then he thought of the time afterwards, when he had seen the little girl again after she had grown up. He had never again heard anything about her, for he had gone his own way, and that could not have been a very nice way, I suppose, for the more he thought of it and the more the children chattered on his grave, all the more sad he grew. He began to cry, and then kept on crying more and more. And when the sexton's wife set the children on his grave, and they sat just over his breast, he cried more than ever. He tried to stretch out his arms; for he felt as if he must press the children to his heart. But he could not do it, for six feet of earth lay on him; and six feet of earth is heavy, very heavy. Then he cried again more; and he was still crying a long while after the sexton's wife had fetched the children and put them to bed.

And when the sexton was going through the churchyard the next morning, a spring of water was flowing from the neglected grave. It was the tears which the old man had



wept. It rippled brightly up out of the mound, and came out just at the hole where the children had dug their little house. The sexton was glad, for now he would not have to bring the water for the flowers any more up the steep path out of the village. He made a proper channel for the stream, and paved it with big stones. And afterwards he always watered the graves in the churchyard with the water from the spring, and the flowers bloomed on them now more beautifully than ever before. Only the grave, where the old man lay, he did not water; for, you know, it was an old, neglected grave that no one cared for. But in spite of this, the wild mountain flowers grew on it more luxuriantly than in any other place, and the two children often sat by the stream and built mills and sailed little paper boats on it.







### *THE NUTCRACKER.*

Two boys had been gathering nuts in a wood and sat down under a bush to eat them, but neither of them had a knife in his pocket, and they could not crack the nuts with their teeth, so they began to grumble and said, "Oh! if some one would come and break our nuts for us!" Hardly had they uttered these words, when a little man came trotting out of the wood.

And what a curious little man he was ! He had a great big head with a long, stiff pigtail reaching down to his heels, and a golden cap, and a red jacket and yellow knickerbockers. As he came trotting along he hummed this song :—

“ Snick snack,  
Crick crack.

I love to roam the greenwood round,  
When the ripe nuts strew the ground,  
And crack and crunch the long day through,  
Just as the merry squirrels do.”

The two boys could not help laughing at the queer little fellow, whom they took for a wood-dwarf. They called out to him : “ If you can crack nuts, come here and crack these for us to eat.” Then the little man muttered through his long white beard :—

“ My name is Jack,  
Hard nuts I crack.  
Now if I set to work for you,  
And crack a good round dozen through,  
Just one or two of them I'll claim  
As fair repayment for the same.”

“ Yes, yes,” cried the boys, “ you may help us to eat them only crack them quickly.”

Then the little man came and stood before them—he could not sit down because of his pig-tail—and said :—

“ Lift up my pigtail long and thin,  
And pop the nut my jaws within ;  
Then press it downwards, one, two, three,  
Soon in pieces all will be.”

So the boys did so, and laughed every time they lifted up his pigtail, and saw a nut jump out of his mouth after each



crack. The nuts were soon all broken, and then the little man growled :—

“ Snick snack,  
Crick crack ;  
For my task  
The pay I ask.

One of the boys was going to give the little man his promised reward, but the other, who was a bad boy, stopped him, saying : “ What are you going to give him our nuts for ? We will eat them ourselves. Go away, you nutcracker, and look for some nuts for yourself ! ”

The little nutcracker grew very angry at this, and growled :—

“ If not one nut for me you’ll keep,  
You soon will feel my anger deep ;  
I’ll seize your throat just like a vice,  
And bite your head off in a trice.”

But the naughty boy laughed at him, and said : “ You will bite my head off, will you ? I think you will be wiser if you take yourself off, or you will feel my hazel-switch,” and he threatened to beat him with his little stick. The nutcracker got quite red with anger, and lifting up his head with one hand, he snapped like a jack-fish in the water and snapped off the boy’s head.

This is the story of the first nutcracker. Take care, children, that your heads, or at any rate your little fingers, do not get bitten off, for in the nutcracker family the great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren do not stand on ceremony with naughty children any more than their great-great-grandfather did.

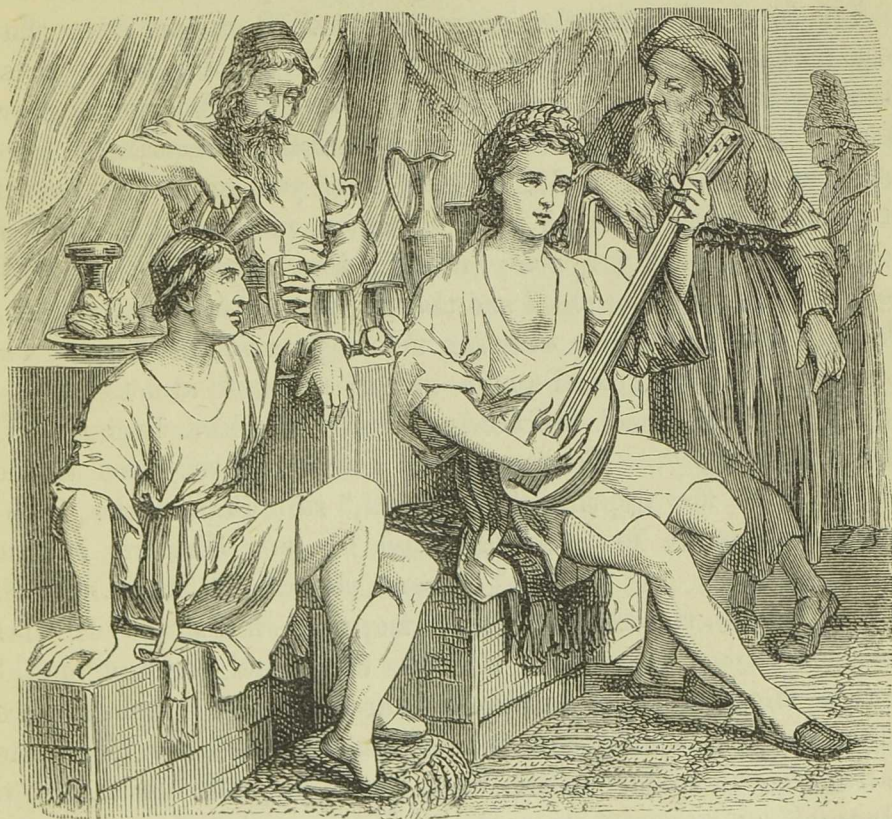
*PADMANABA AND HASSAN.*

IN the city of Damascus there once dwelt a vendor of lemonade who had a step-son named Hassan. He was eighteen years old, and as lovable a youth as ever was. His face was beautiful as the day, his figure slim and strong, like the palm-trees of the grove, and when he touched the lute and joined in with a song, his voice sounded so sweet and melting that every one was enchanted. His father's shop was, therefore, always full of guests, who conversed with Hassan, and amused themselves with the witty answers and merry songs of the young man. One day Hassan happened to be singing a pretty song, which he was accompanying tastefully on the lute, when an old and reverend grey-haired man, the renowned and wise Brahmin, Padmanaba, entered the shop. He demanded some lemonade, and listened with enjoyment to Hassan's song, at the conclusion of which he conversed for some time with this clever youth, with whom he was much pleased. At length he took his departure; but only to reappear again on another day. From that time he visited the shop day after day, and for a glass of lemonade, which he habitually ordered, he each time paid a zechin. This at last troubled young Hassan not a little, and he told his step-father of it. "If the old man comes again,"



said he, "just bring him here, and let me see what sort of a man he is."

They had not to wait for Padmanaba long, and Hassan



forthwith respectfully and politely asked him to pay a visit to his father, who was anxious to make his acquaintance. The Brahmin was ready to do so, and, following the youth, was conducted into a pretty chamber, in which Hassan's father was already expecting him with a tastefully laid breakfast. Hassan withdrew. The old man, in his conversation with Padmanaba, was so taken with the Brahmin that he

requested him to remain and dwell with him, and, if he had time, to impart to his son Hassan a share of his great wisdom.

"I will gratify your wish," said Padmanaba, "for to be constantly amongst dear friends is paradise upon earth."

The Brahmin brought his property thither, and from that day forth lived with Hassan's father. At all hours must Hassan be with him, and from day to day the youth grew dearer to him. One day he said to him, "Hassan, I have long watched you, and I believe that you are fit to receive the lessons with which I wish to enrich your mind. Put on your clothes and prepare yourself: first we will take a walk before the city; you shall see things which will astound you." Hassan lost no time in obeying this injunction, and soon was proceeding at his friend's side out of the gate and towards a small wood, the cool enlivening shade of which beckoned to them invitingly. They came to a well full of water to the brim. "In the depths of this well," said Padmanaba, "immense treasures lie concealed, and for you, Hassan, I have designed them, and to you I present them." "Here, beneath the water, do the treasures lie?" inquired Hassan. "In that case your treasures will be of little use to me, for how shall I obtain them?" The Brahmin laughed, took a small piece of paper, and having traced two letters thereon, he threw the leaf upon the surface of the well. In a moment the water, to Hassan's amazement, seemed to fall; it vanished completely, and a stair was discovered, by which both descended into the well. A brazen door with a lock of steel stopped their way. Padmanaba wrote down a prayer, and touched the lock therewith; it unlocked, the door sprang open, and a wide hall received the astonished Hassan and his companion. In the hall stood a gigantic negro, who had his hand resting on a shining white block of marble. At their entrance he lifted up the



block with his hand, as if he wished to annihilate the audacious intruders therewith. Padmanaba spoke only one word, breathed on the Moor, and he fell to the ground. Without delay they went on and emerged from the hall into a large courtyard. Here, just in the middle of the wide space, stood a magnificent church, with glittering cupolas and transparent towers, for it was built entirely of crystal, and shone like a jewel. Before the entrance lay two fire-breathing dragons. "Let us escape!" cried Hassan, horror-struck at the sight of them. "They will burn us to ashes if they see us!" "Not so," said Padmanaba laughing; "have no fear." He murmured an incantation, and the dragons vanished.

Immediately the door of the church sprang open, they entered, and Hassan was again astounded, for inside the crystal temple he beheld a second smaller one, made all of rubies, and instead of the pinnacle of the minaret, a carbuncle stone shone up above, six feet long and two feet thick, from which streamed a light brighter than that of the sun. The door, formed of a single emerald, stood open; they could see into the interior of this ruby temple, and there they beheld a magnificent hall. At the entrance they were received by six lovely young ladies, who welcomed them with song and with the sounds of harps. They walked past them into the hall, and Hassan was beside himself with astonishment as he looked round about. The ceiling of the hall was of porphyry inlaid with pearls and diamonds, which shone like stars; the floor was of gold, and the walls of rubies. Out of the hall they walked into a smaller, but no less brilliant, chamber. Here there lay in one corner a heap of gold, in the second a heap of rubies, in the third a silver jug, and in the fourth a small heap of black earth. But in the middle of the chamber was a golden canopy, under which lay a silver coffin, open

at the top. In it lay stretched, as if in slumber, a man with a gorgeous diamond crown upon his head. Above his feet was suspended from the roof a tablet, on which was written in letters of flame, "The life of man is sleep, and his awakening is death." "See," said Padmanaba to Hassan, "this is the body of the most powerful prince of the earth, who once ruled over the whole of Asia, and the nations of Africa. He it was who, a thousand years ago, caused these subterranean buildings to be excavated, and betook himself here when he felt his end approaching. In all magic was he skilled, and was the wisest man who has ever lived; and yet he must die, for all human power is but weakness, and in the sight of Allah sinks hence into the dust." Thereupon he showed him the treasures round about. He stopped at the heap of earth in one of the corners. "Look at this little heap of earth," said he; "of this common material consist all the treasures which you see here. If you moisten this earth with the water contained in yonder silver jug, and take but a handful of it, you can transform all the metals of Egypt into gold, and all its pebbles into precious stones of every sort." "Wonderful! wonderful!" stammered Hassan. "I have not yet told you all the virtues of this earth," continued Padmanaba. "It has still more; to its power yield all diseases, the plagues of mankind. If you lie at the point of death, and seem to be lost without hope, swallow only a single grain of this earth, and you are sound again as before; nay, more vigorous than ever. Yes, if you rub your eyes with this soil, you may see all spirits between heaven and earth, and all must hearken to your wishes. Look you, these treasures I will share with you. Believe me that I love you?"

"O mighty master," said Hassan, "how can I cherish any doubt thereof, and how ought I to thank you?" "Love me,"





PADMANABA AND HASSAN.





said Padmanaba gently, "and I am content. Remain faithful to me, and betray me never, and it will go well with thee. Now choose a few jewels, and give them to your father as a proof of my friendship for you." Hassan picked out a number of rubies and diamonds, and with a heart full of gratitude he walked out at the side of the good Brahmin through the chambers, the hall, and the courtyard, up the staircase in the well, and thence homeward. Hassan's step-father was almost beside himself with joy when his son showed and presented him with the treasure which he had brought with him; he immediately gave up the lemonade business, and lived for the future in abundance and magnificence. But Padmanaba continued to instruct Hassan as before in all goodness and wisdom.

But now, as ill-luck would have it, Hassan's step-mother was a very greedy and covetous woman. This wretched creature was not content with the treasures which her son had obtained through Padmanaba's goodness, but she wished to get possession of all the good things and riches which the well concealed. So she said one day to Hassan, "Listen, dear son. If we go on living in as gay and expensive a manner as now, the few jewels which you procured will vanish soon enough, and then we can go away and eat the bread of hunger again, and hard enough we shall find it." "Oh, never fear," said Hassan; "when the stones are gone, I will bring, with Padmanaba's assistance, some more, and I can fetch at the same time a handful of the wonder-working black earth, and then you can live entirely without care." "That is all very well, my son," said the old witch, "but what assurance have you that your good friend, the Brahmin, may not happen to die before you expect it? What shall we have then? Why do not you ask him rather to teach you all the

arts which are necessary in order to descend the well without danger? If he has really bestowed all therein on you, he must give you also a free entrance thereto." "Oh mother!" said Hassan, "I fear Padmanaba will be angry if I make such a suggestion to him." "Try it, at least, my son," said the old woman. "If it does not please him, he will say so at once." And she importuned him so long, that Hassan went and requested the Brahmin to teach him all that was necessary to enable him to obtain the treasure without danger. Padmanaba loved the youth so tenderly, that he was unable to refuse his request, and, therefore he wrote out in full, upon a leaf of paper, all the prescriptions, precepts, and forms of conjuration, and instructed him so carefully, that to make a mistake was no longer possible. Hassan expressed his thanks, and running straightway to his mother said, "Look, I have the key, now you can be without anxiety."

A few days had passed, when this wicked woman again called her son apart, and said, "Listen! I have been talking with your father, and we have determined that we will go to-day into the vaults, and fetch out some treasure to keep in store; so you must conduct us." "Yes," said Hassan, "so I will." "Moreover, we have determined," continued this witch, "to kill the Brahmin, Padmanaba, as soon as we are certain that he has taught you the right precepts, for who can tell that he will not impart the secret to other people. You, Hassan, must pierce his breast with your sword." "What!" cried Hassan. "I? Shall I kill him? My benefactor, my friend, the man who has overwhelmed us with happiness and wealth: him am I to kill? Never will I do it; never, never. I would rather kill myself." The wretched old woman advised him, besought, threatened, commanded. Hassan remained steadfast. At last she called her husband,



too, his father, to her aid ; but he also in vain tried to shake his son's determination. "Very well," said he, at last, "if you will not, so let it be, and we must make ourselves content. But at least you will perhaps do me the favour of showing me the paper which the Brahmin has given you." That, too, Hassan refused. "What!" cried the father, then, "do you thus repay all that we have done for you? Were you not adopted by me when you were wandering about the streets like a beggar? Have we not clothed, fed, and cared for you?" So they had done truly enough ; but only for their own convenience, for they could make very good use of Hassan in their business. "Well," said Hassan, at last, "ungrateful I will not seem. I will give you the paper, but you must swear to me to do no harm to the good Padmanaba." "We swear," cried the wicked step-parents at once, although they had not the slightest intention of keeping the oath. Then Hassan pulled out the paper and gave it to them ; but scarcely had his step-father taken it, before he fell on Hassan, struck him to the earth, bound and gagged him, and said, "There, lie there, and get your friend to help you, if you can!" He laughed contemptuously, and left the room with his wicked wife. He locked the door, and then ran with the woman to the well, in order to steal the treasure. He then intended to murder the Brahmin in the secrecy of night.

But Allah watched over Hassan, and his steadfastness was rewarded, for in the very same hour Padmanaba learnt from a ministering spirit all that had happened, and the old couple were therefore hardly out of the house when he ran to Hassan and freed him from his bonds. "Stand up and follow me, my dear, faithful son," said he kindly and affectionately. "Come and see how ingratitude and avarice receive their reward." Hassan got up, and both went away.

In the meantime, the lemonade-merchant and his wife had run to the well, greedy for the riches which it concealed, and for which they had the key. Without anxiety or foreboding of danger he threw the leaf into the well; the water sank, and the steps appeared. With his wife he descended into the well, and before the talisman of the wise man the lock sprang back and the door opened; the Moor dropped down at the words and the breathing; the fire-spitting dragons vanished, and the entrance to the temple was gained. Greedily the step-mother fell upon the treasures which she beheld round about, and she groaned at the weight of those with which she loaded herself. Her husband did likewise. He confined himself principally to rubies, gold, and diamonds, and at last, when he had enough, he panted off with his wife towards the outlet from the under world, the staircase in the well. But they had scarcely stepped out of the temple into the courtyard when two powerful lions, with open jaws and glowing eyes, strode roaring towards them, and a voice sounded from the air, "Miserable, vile betrayers, let death be the reward of your treachery." And immediately the lions fell upon them, and in two minutes both were torn to pieces and destroyed.

But Padmanaba and Hassan swept down on a cloud-chariot from the air, whence they had seen together the tragic fate of the wicked step-parents, and taking the bodies out, rendered them the last rites. And Hassan remained the favourite of the Brahmin Padmanaba, who instructed him in all wisdom, and made him powerful over the spirits of the air and of the earth. For many a year they lived happily with one another, and Hassan never repented having withstood the request of his wicked step-mother, and having held fast to what was good and right.







"NOW YOU SHALL BE MY SON'S BRIDE, AND SHALL BE MARRIED THIS  
VERY DAY." *Page 263.*



*THE WOOD-MAIDEN.*

HER father and mother had long been dead, and the little maid had seen them buried in the woody valley near the cool spring, where they had often sat together and looked at the little stars which journeyed so quietly across the sky. Two crosses marked their graves, and little forget-me-nots peeped out from under the ivy which grew about them, and in the mounds there were some wild roses. The girl used to kneel in the twilight by the graves to say her prayer, and it seemed to her as if her parents' dear, well-known voices spoke from the rose-bush and told her of the beautiful land where they were now dwelling, and said how hard life was, and how sweet it was to die, and what deep peace they enjoyed there with the angels.

Every evening the girl used to hear this, and the roses bloomed bright and red on her cheeks, and the forget-me-nots shone out of her true eyes, and she became as gentle and submissive as the ivy, and peaceful and humble of heart, and she grew in years and in favour with God.

As she was sitting one evening with her head leaning against one of the crosses, the king's son suddenly sprang out of the wood on a wild, raven-black horse; but horse and man started when they saw her, and stopped suddenly as if enchanted.

Then the prince dismounted from his horse, and went up

to the maiden, saying in a low, trembling voice: "Are you Mary, and does your son lie buried here?" "No," she said, "I am a poor Wood-maiden, and have no one left me in the world, and it is my parents who are buried here." Then the prince ventured to take her by the hand and say: "If you will go with me to my castle, you shall be the dearest treasure that I have in all the world." And she looked up at his brave, manly face, and into his beautiful brown eyes, and felt a desire to be near him always. "Yes," she said "I will go with you," and she picked a rose, and a forget-me-not, and an ivy-leaf from her parents' graves, and put them in her bosom, and then put her hand in the prince's.

His heart seemed to him to grow as if it were large enough for the whole world, and he hardly knew that he lifted her on to his spirited horse, and that it carried them to his castle as quietly and softly as if it had been walking on flowers and velvet.

He led her to his own room, and, telling her to sit down on his golden throne, he went to his mother, and said, "Mother, I have found a maiden in the wood who is more beautiful and better than any other maiden who has ever been, or ever will be in the world. Give her to me for my wife, or I will never marry at all, and then our race will die out, and the kingdom will go to strangers."

The queen was frightened when she heard this, but she soon regained her composure, and said: "Then you are going to forsake your bride, the Princess of the Green Islands, to whom your father betrothed you when you were still a child?"

"I must, mother! My heart, my life, my soul is with the Wood-maiden. I *must* marry her, mother!"

But the queen did not want to have this common girl for her daughter, and remonstrated with her son, saying to him:



"You and I are almost alone in the world; shall mother and son quarrel?" so he gave in to her so far as to let her judge for herself if the Wood-maiden was worthy to share his throne.

Then the queen had the girl summoned, and was much surprised at her beauty and gentleness; but she addressed her with austere manner and haughty voice. "What is your name?" "Christine," said the maiden. "What do you want here?" continued the queen. "Nothing, your highness, except sometimes to see your son's face." Then the queen looked fixedly into her face; but Christine's eyes were so clear and truthful that the queen knew it must be as Christine had said. So she said, "I will allow it, if you will accomplish three things which I shall give you to do." "What are they, your highness." "In the woods and meadows there dwell some little folk called the elves, and the Queen of the Elves is the only person who knows of and can avert a great calamity which threatens my house. Bring her to me, for I wish to question her about it. That shall be your first task."

And the maiden smiled like an opening rosebud, or as the holy angels smile, and said, "Wait a few days, O queen, until the full moon, and she will come to you!" The queen agreed to this; and when the day had come, and the sun had gone down into the sea, the full moon rose up, and the maiden knew that it was now time to go to the field in the wood where she had often before been present at the full moon feasts of the mischievous elves. There were thousands and thousands of flowers here in the meadow, white, blue and red—so many that the dewdrops could not fall to the ground, but fell into their cups; and in them the elfin wine was made from dew, and flower dust, and honey, on the night of the full moon.

"What brings you to our feast?" said the Elf-queen, when she saw the Wood-maiden approaching. "I have a great request to make of you," said the girl. "The prince's house is threatened with a great calamity, and you only are able to avert it. Will you go with me to his mother?" "A calamity," said the queen, "and I not know of it!" After thinking a moment, she laughed and said, "Yes, dear maiden, for your sake I will gladly go with you; but you are silly people." On a sign from her, her mother-of-pearl carriage drove up, and Christine had only just seated herself in it when in a trice the birds of paradise drew them to the door of the palace.

"Now, go and have a pleasant sleep," said the Elf-queen. "I wish to talk with the queen." So Christine went; but she heard how the other queen begged, and how the elf laughed, and how she sang, as she went away—

"All mortals together  
Are like one another;  
They seek far and wide  
What they have by their side.  
Good night! my dear sister, good night!"

The next morning the queen sent for her and said: "Well, you have accomplished your first task, for the Elfin-queen has been to see me, but she has not helped me at all. I wanted her to tell me where a certain jewel is which she once gave my husband, and on which the prosperity of our house wholly depends. My husband died a few days after he had lost it, and no one knows where it was left. It is an opal, bright as the sun and full of hidden powers. The elf said some mysterious words to me, as if it were somewhere very near to me. I have given orders that search should be made



everywhere, but no one can find it; if you can get it for me I shall see that you will bring luck to my house. This shall be your second task.

Then the maiden smiled like opening rosebuds, or as the angels smile, and taking out of her pocket a beautiful golden gleaming stone she asked: "Can that be the right one, do you think?" "It is it! it is it!" cried the queen. "But wherever did you get it?" "I saw it in the magpie's nest when the wind had blown the poplar tree down one day. I did not like to let the little birds, about which the parents cry so dreadfully, die of hunger, so I fed them till they grew up, and then one morning the mother laid the stone in my lap." The queen then examined it carefully. It seemed to have become more beautiful than ever, and there was not a single speck on it, and there seemed to glide across it every now and then, lovely figures who had wreaths in their hands and a glittering light round their heads. The queen knew from this that it had been in good hands, and said to the girl, "Keep it, Christine, till I ask for it; it is well taken care of in your hands, and you will want it." So a few days passed away, and Christine saw the prince every day, and grew more and more fond of him, so that at last it seemed more beautiful to her to look at him than at the heaven with all its stars and the earth with all its flowers. One day the queen sent for her again and said, "Christine, now I am going to give you your last task. The Princess of the Green Islands is coming to-morrow; my son is betrothed to her, and the wedding is to take place after five years. You cannot now be with my son and see him unless you act as servant to his bride." On hearing this, Christine thought her heart would break, but she pressed her hand tightly to her breast and said, but so that no one else could hear it, "Yes, your majesty's will shall be done."

The king's daughter came; she was as beautiful as the rising sun, and she and the king's son were very fond of each other, and used often to walk together in the garden. Christine waited on her quietly and obediently, and all the long, long time no single word of complaint escaped her lips. But when the fifth year was almost over, and the wedding-day drew near, she had grown quite pale, and her lips were like white roses, and her eyes sad and dim; but she pressed her hands over her loudly-beating heart and said, "Be silent, my heart." She would have died if the opal's secret power had not sustained her life. But on the evening before the wedding she escaped from amid the preparations, and went to the wood to her parents' grave. Here she fell down on her knees and prayed. Hot and feverish, she clasped the cross with her arms and buried her face in the ivy. And now she first understood the meaning of the words which had so long been hidden from her, that life is hard and death is sweet. She prayed with trembling lips, and then the long restrained pain melted at last. For the first time for a long while she could shed tears; tears, fast falling like the evening shower, fell on the flowers of the graves, and the more she wept the lighter her heart became, the hot ferment of her blood became quieter, and at last it flowed like a cool stream in spring. Peace came to her heart, and courage to bear all, even the hardest.

Then she lay down in the old cottage on the moss where she used to lie when a child, and slept as sweetly and soundly as an angel. While she was asleep it seemed as if she heard distant music coming nearer and nearer, and then as if two bright eyes bent over her, and when she looked up, she saw the prince's beautiful face, and he bent over her and folded her in his arms. The queen, too, was there, and came up



saying, "You have accomplished your task; I know now that you are worthy of the throne. Now you shall be my son's bride, and shall be married this very day; and she put a gold ring on her finger and set a crown on her head. And the maiden's eyes shone as the stars shine on a balmy summer night, and her cheeks blushed rosier than ever. And the prince's sister, for she was the supposed bride, embraced her and said, "Teach me to be good as you are," and Christine stood there in the midst of them with her eyes on the ground and pressed her hands over her beating heart. And she thought, "Now, good or bad may come, I shall be able to bear it; the hardest is now over." And she put her hand in the prince's and went with him as his queen to his castle. But in the evening the prince and his bride went to the meadow in the forest when the glowing evening sun shone through the trees, and where the elves were again celebrating their full moon feast with great rejoicings. She was conducted to the Elfin-queen, who was sitting on the violet hill, and very much I should like to know what they said to each other, and what the queen gave her for a wedding present, but no one has been able to tell me.



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6









