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OFFICE OF "BOOKS FOR THE BAIRNS,"
LONDON.

PREFACE.

THE Fairy Tales which are printed in this number are reproduced by arrangement with Mr. T. Hasegawa, of Tokyo, Japan, an art publisher who prints a very beautiful series of the fairy tales of Japan. They are done in English for the use of the many English-speaking people who now live in Japan, and they are printed on soft crêpon paper, such as the Japanese people love. But their chief charm lies in the illustrations, which are produced in colours, and are characterized by all the quaint and dainty effects for which the Japanese artists are famous. The three stories which I print here are good samples of the whole series, and my artist has copied the original drawings in outline; but, of course, the effect of these is nothing like that of the original coloured pictures. Mr. Hasegawa's books may now be obtained in this country, and full lists are given in an advertisement on another page.

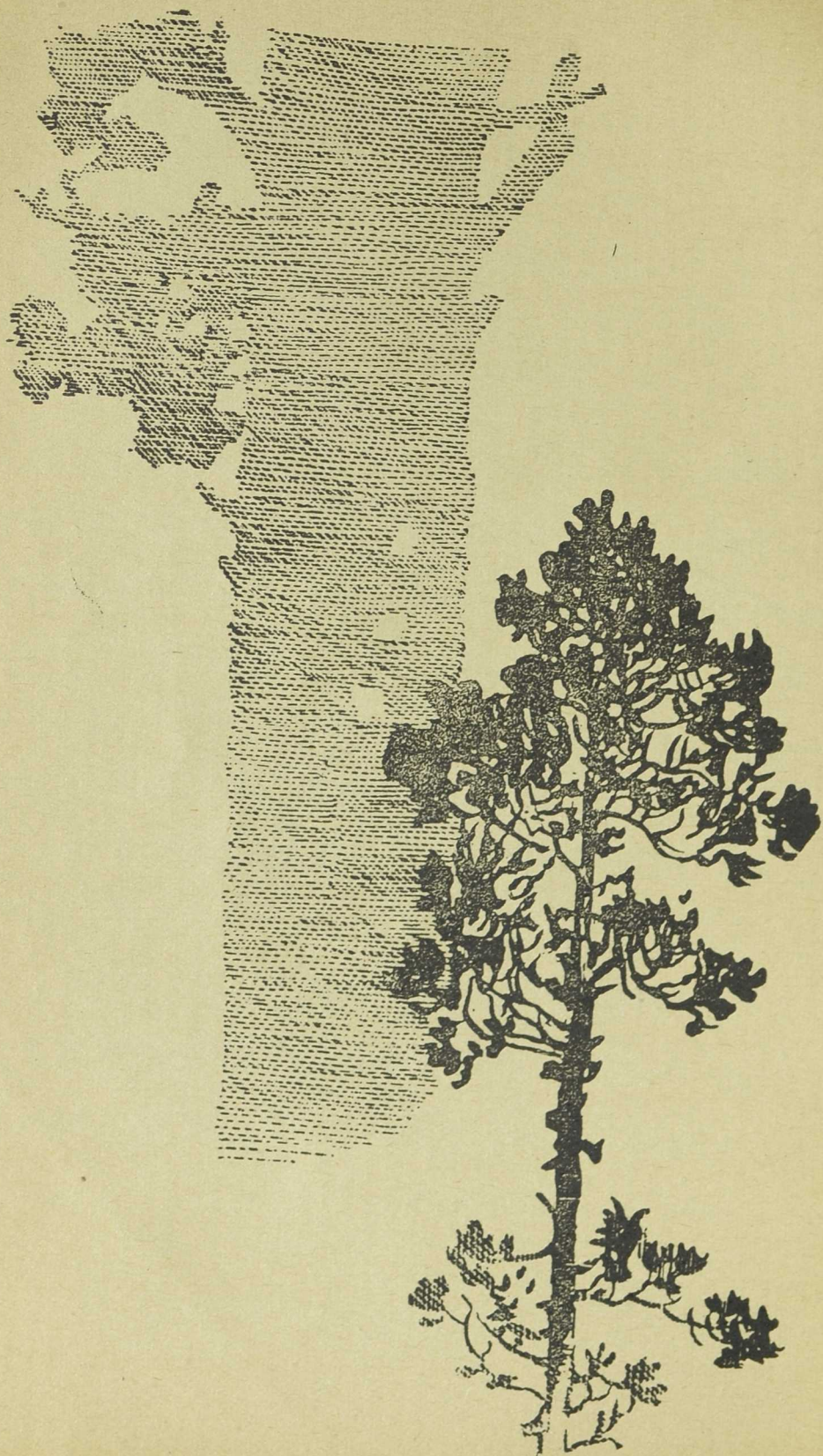
FAIRY TALES FROM JAPAN.

SCHIPPEITARO.

THE following story has been current in all parts of Japan from ancient times. Slightly different versions exist in different provinces, but the most widely known is the one here given.

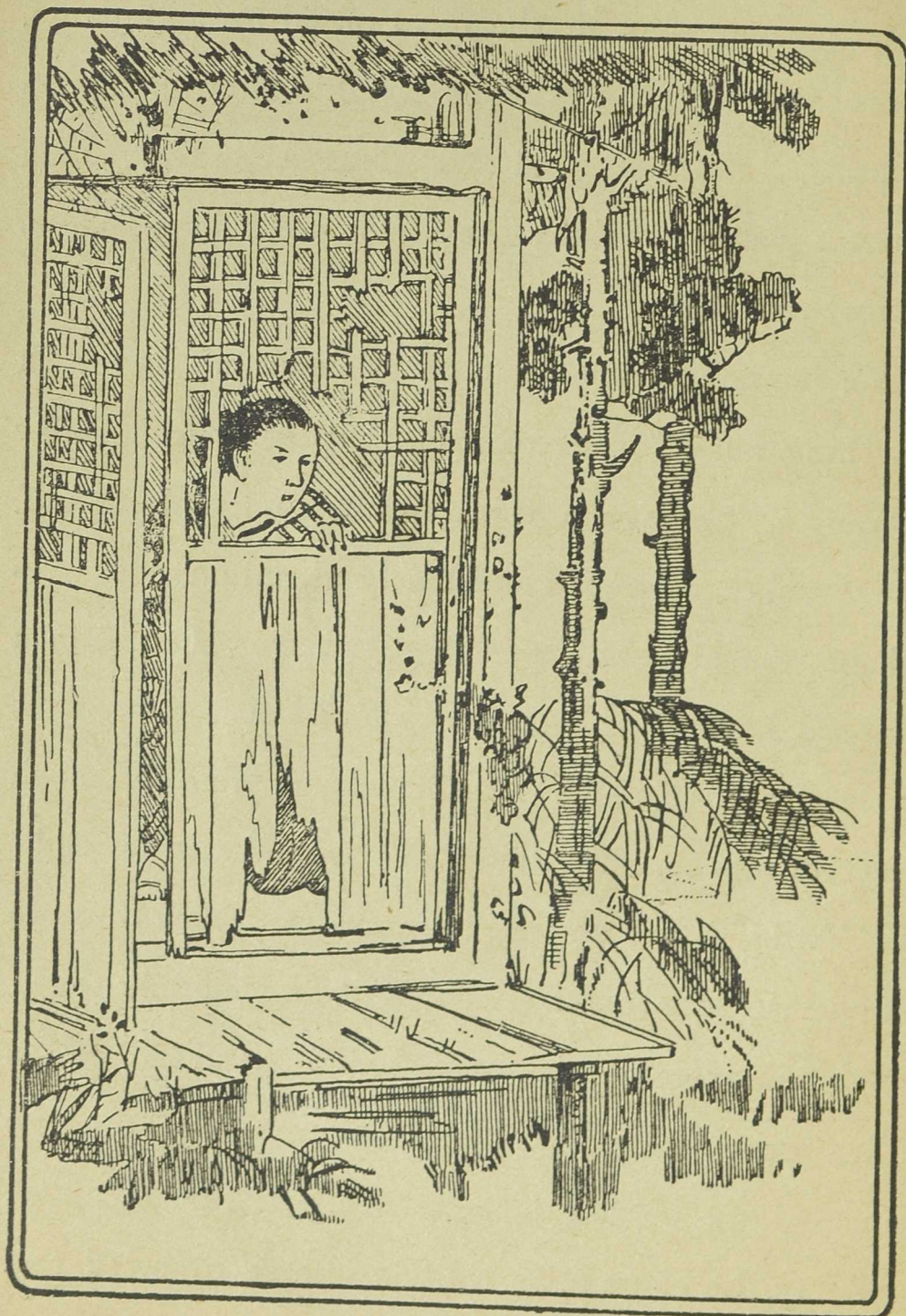
The picture of the dog on another page is a copy of one now issued to the faithful in Japan, who reverence it as the "large-mouthed god," and regard it as a charm to keep away devils and thieves. The original was, no doubt, something like the dog Shippeitaro.

Should the children who read this book ever visit Japan, they might see it stuck up over the door, on the outside, of some houses even yet.



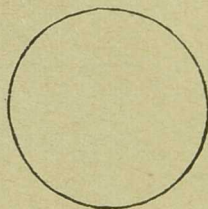
Long, long ago, in the days of fairies and giants, ogres and dragons, valiant knights and distressed damsels, in those good old days a brave young warrior went out into the wide world in search of adventures.

For some time he went on without meeting with anything out of the common, but at length, after journeying through a thick forest, he found himself, one evening, on a wild and lonely mountain side. No village was in sight, no cottage, not even the hut of a charcoal burner, so often to be found on the outskirts of the forest. He had been following a faint and much overgrown path, but at length even that was lost sight of. Twilight was coming on, and in vain he strove to recover the lost track. Each effort seemed only to entangle him more hopelessly in the briars and tall grasses which grew thickly on all sides. Faint and weary, he stumbled on in the fast-gathering darkness, until, suddenly, he came upon a little temple deserted and



half ruined, but which still contained a shrine. Here at least was shelter from the chilly dews, and here he resolved to pass the night. Food he had none; but, wrapped in his mantle, and with his good sword by his side, he lay down, and was soon fast asleep.

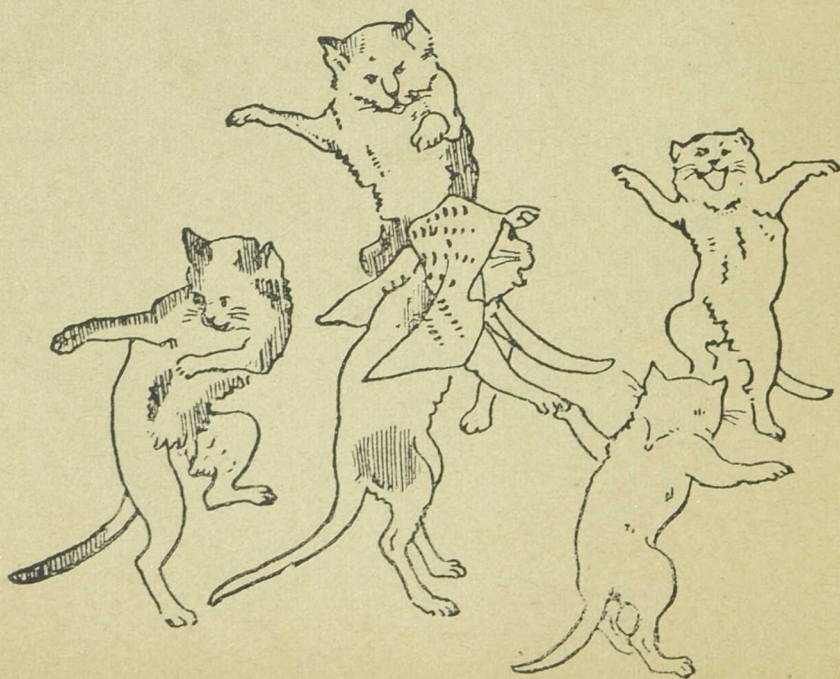
Towards midnight he was awakened by a dreadful noise. At first he thought it must be a dream, but the noise continued, the whole place resounding with the most terrible shrieks and yells. The young warrior raised himself cautiously, and, seizing his sword, looked through a hole in the ruined wall. He beheld a strange and awful sight. A troop of hideous cats were engaged in a wild and horrible dance, their yells meanwhile echoing through the night. Mingled with their unearthly cries, the young warrior could clearly distinguish the following words :—



“Tell it not to Schippeitaro !

Keep it close and dark !

Tell it not to Schippeitaro !”

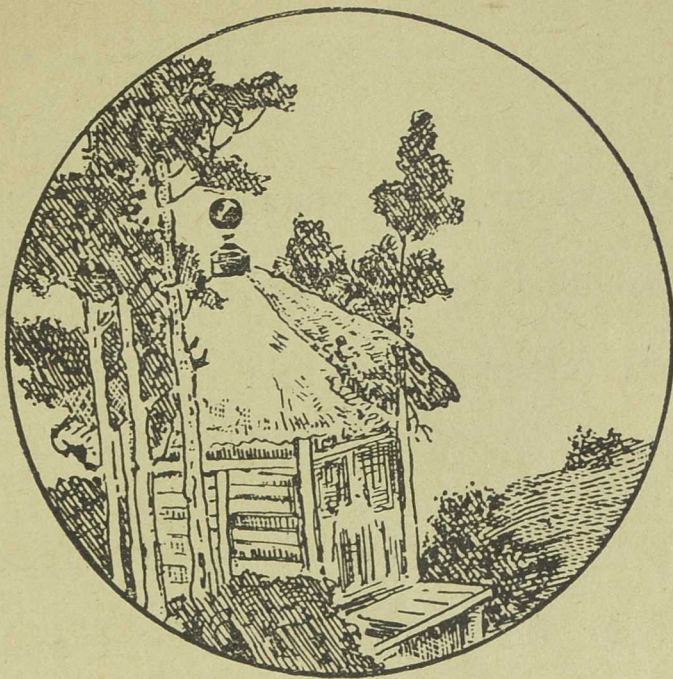


A beautiful clear full moon shed its light upon this gruesome scene, which the young warrior watched with amazement and horror.



Suddenly, the midnight hour being passed, the phantom cats disappeared, and all was silence once more.

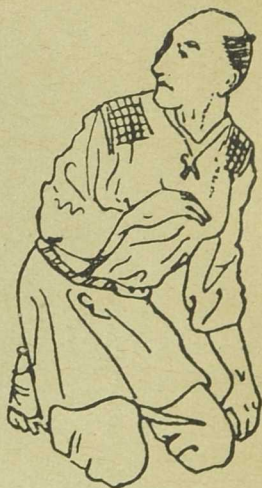
The rest of the night passed undisturbed, and the young warrior slept soundly until morning. When he awoke the sun was already up, and he hastened to leave the scene of last night's adventure. By the bright morning light he presently discovered traces of a path which the evening before had been invisible. This he followed, and found, to his great joy, that it led, not as he feared, to the forest through which he had come the day before, but in the opposite direction, towards an open plain. There he saw one or two scattered cottages, and, a little farther on, a village. Pressed by hunger, he was making the best of his way towards the village, when he heard the tones of a woman's voice loud in lamentation and entreaty. No sooner did these sounds of distress reach the warrior's ears than his hunger was forgotten, and he hurried on to the nearest cottage, to find out what was the matter, and if he could give any help.



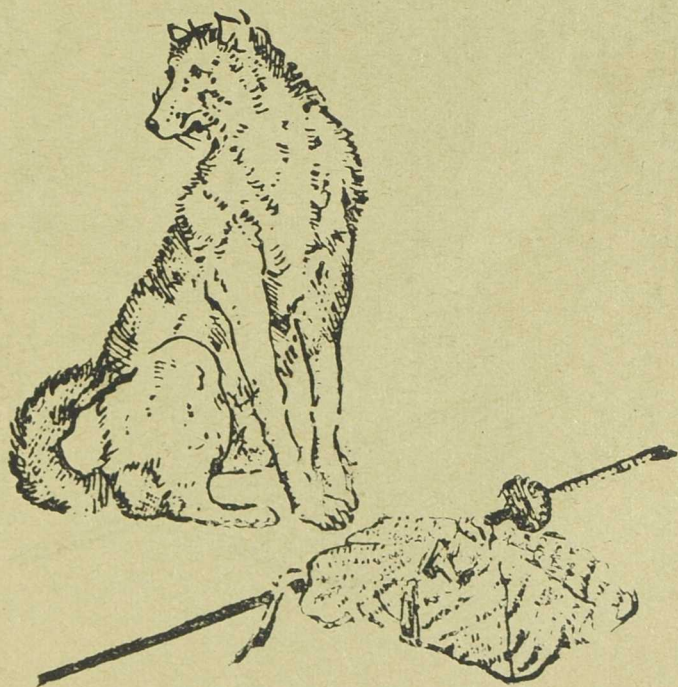
The people listened to his questions, and, shaking their heads sorrowfully, told him that all help was vain. "Every year," said they, "the mountain spirit claims a victim. The time has come, and this very night will he devour our loveliest maiden. This is the cause of the wailing and lamentation."



And when the young warrior, filled with wonder, inquired further, they told him that at sunset the victim would be put into a sort of cage, carried to that very same ruined temple where he had passed the night, and there left alone. In the morning she would have vanished. So it had been every year, and so it would be now: there was no



help for it. As he listened, the young warrior was filled with an earnest desire to deliver the maiden. The mention of the ruined shrine having brought back to his mind the adventure of the night before, he asked the people whether they had ever heard the name of Schippeitaro, and who and what he was. "Schippeitaro is a strong and beautiful dog," was the reply; "he belongs to the head man of our Prince, who lives only a little way from here We



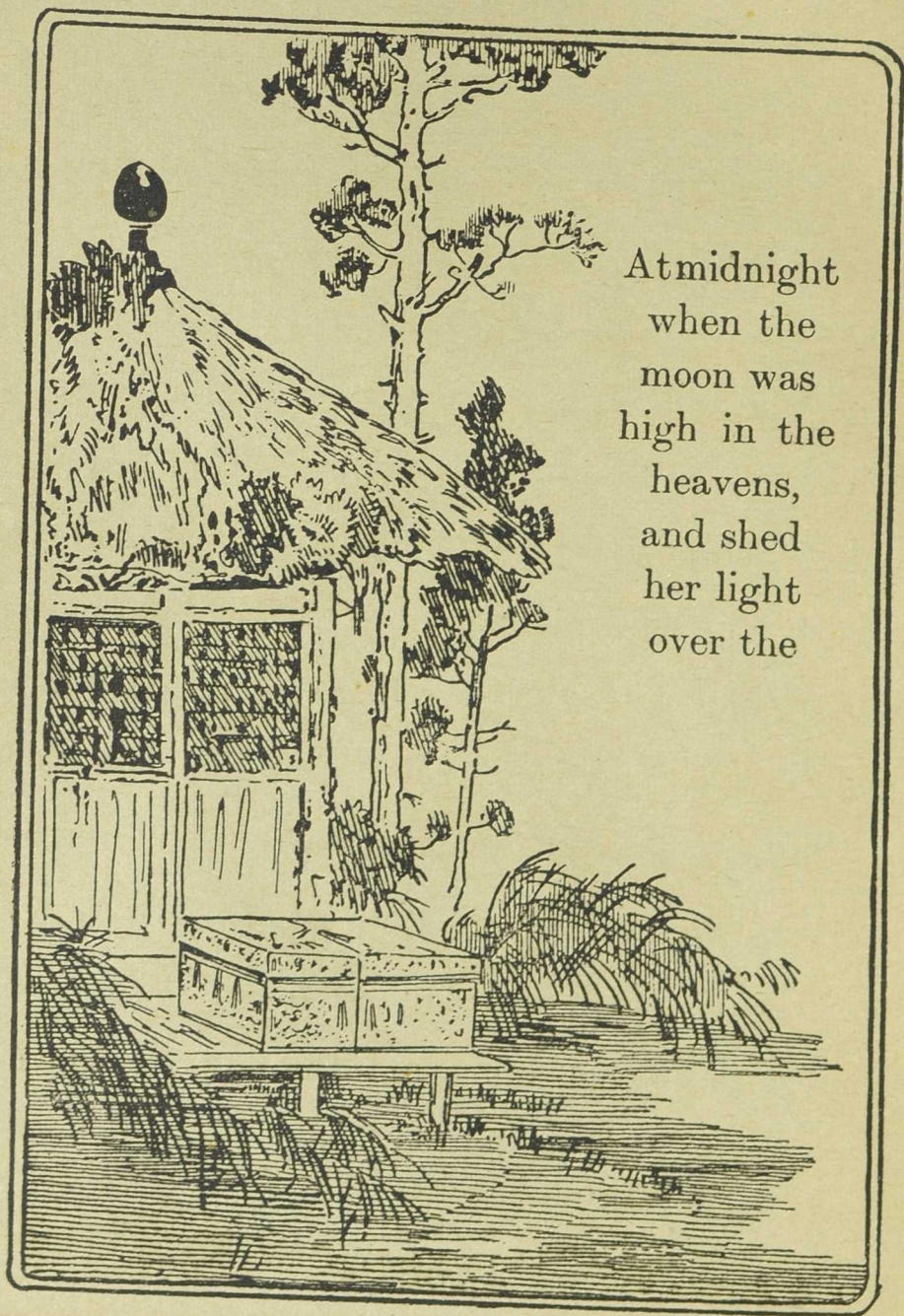
often see him following his master: he is a fine brave fellow."

The young knight did not stop to ask more questions, but hurried off to Schippeitaro's master and begged him to lend his dog for one night. At first the man was unwilling, but at length agreed to lend Schippeitaro on condition that he should be brought back the next



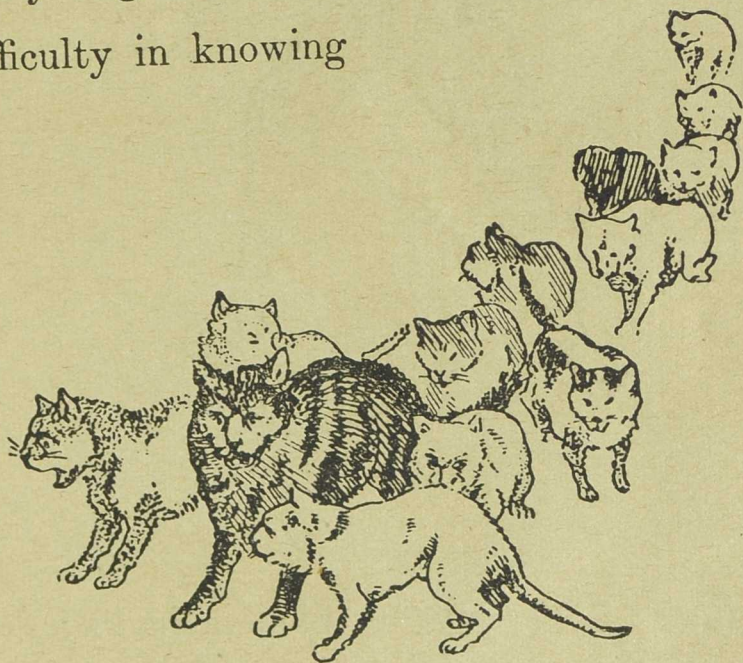
day. Overjoyed at his success, the young warrior led the dog away.

Next he went to see the parents of the unhappy maiden, and told them to keep her in the house and watch her carefully until his return. He then placed the dog Schippeitaro in the cage which had been prepared for the maiden, and, with the help of some of the young men of the village, carried it to the ruined temple, and there set it down. The young men refused to stay one moment on that haunted spot, but hurried down the mountain as if a whole troop of hobgoblins had been at their heels. The young warrior, with no companion but the dog, remained to watch and see what would happen.



At midnight
when the
moon was
high in the
heavens,
and shed
her light
over the

mountain, came the phantom cats once more. This time they had in their midst a huge black tom cat, fiercer and more terrible than all the rest, and which the young warrior had no difficulty in knowing



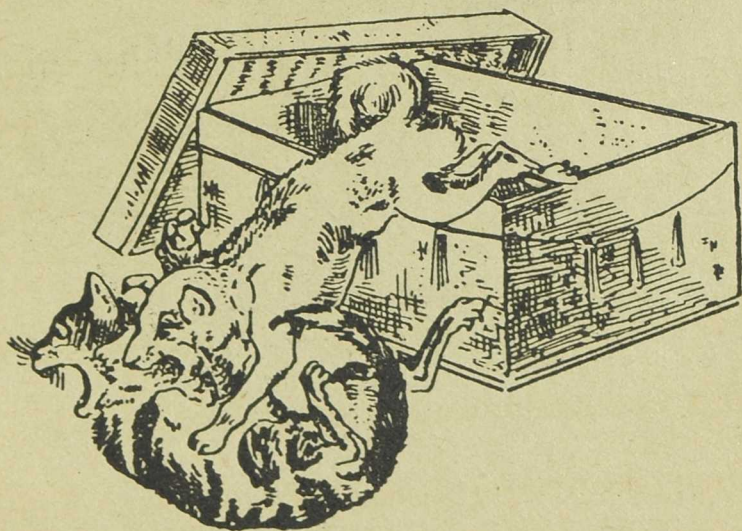
as the frightful mountain fiend himself. No sooner did this monster catch sight of the cage than he danced and sprang round it with yells of triumph and hideous joy,

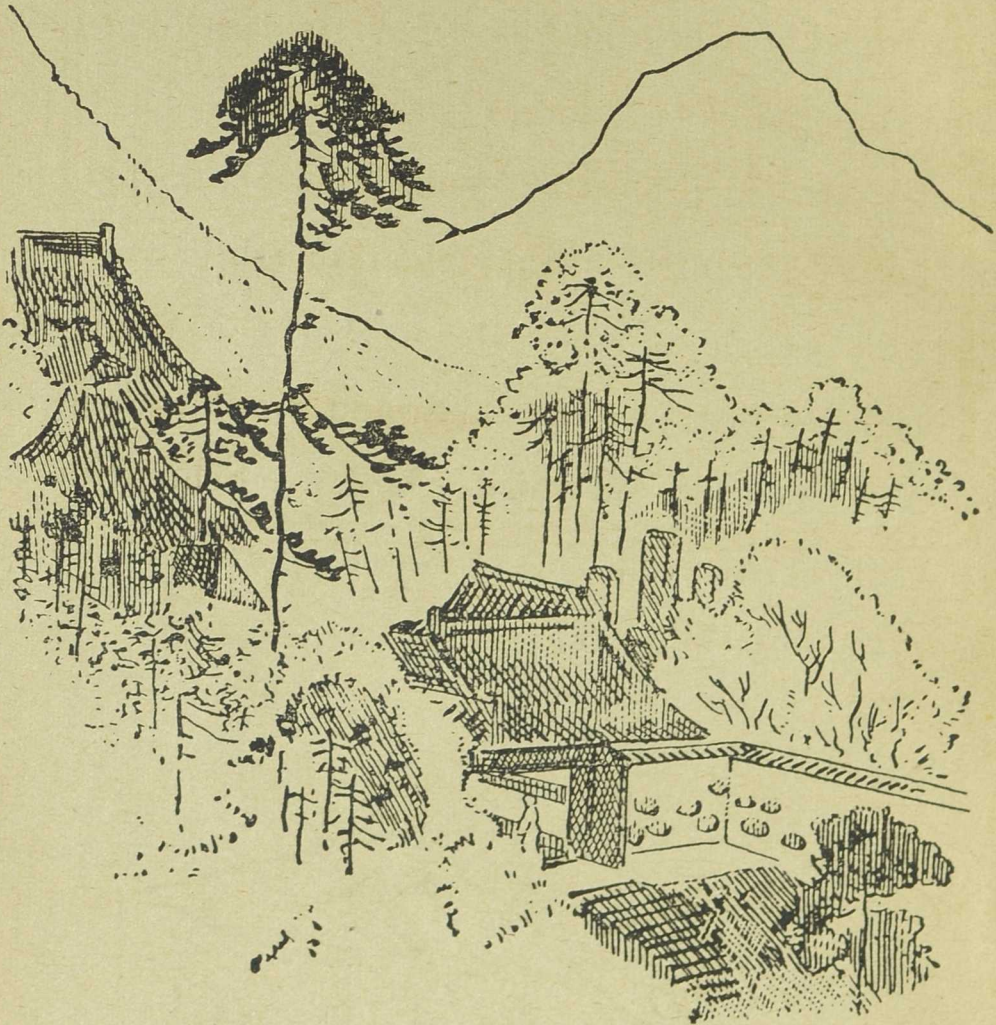


followed by his companions. When he had long enough jeered at and teased his victim, he threw open the door of the cage.

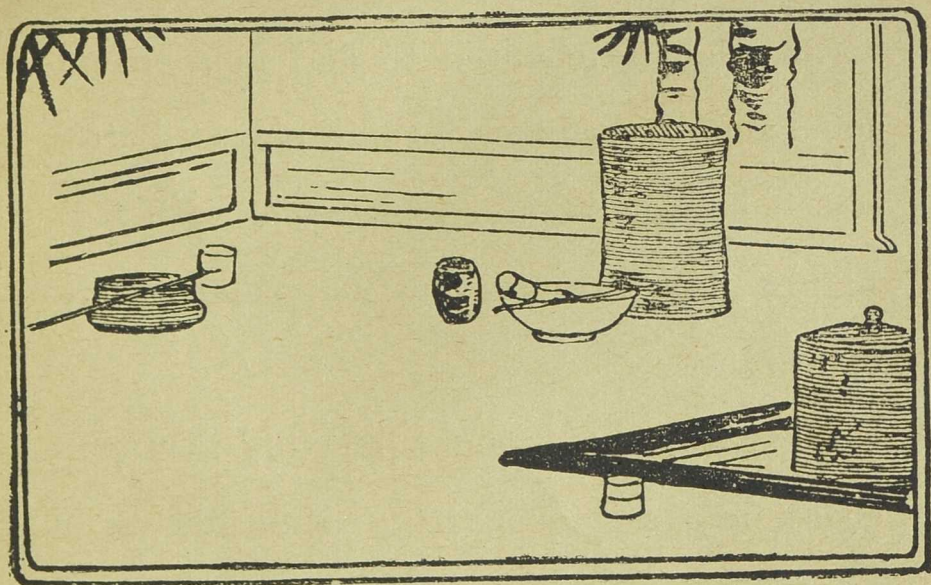
But this time he met his match. The brave Schippeitaro sprang upon him, and, seizing him with his teeth, held him fast while the young warrior, with one stroke of his good sword, laid the monster dead at his feet.

As for the other cats, too much astonished to fly, they stood gazing at the dead body of their leader, and were quickly killed by the knight and Schippeitaro. The young warrior brought back the brave dog to his master, with a thousand thanks, told the father and mother of the maiden that their daughter was free, and the people of the village that the fiend had claimed his last victim, and would trouble them no more. "You owe all this to the brave Schippeitaro," he said, as he bade them farewell, and went his way in search of fresh adventures.





THE TEMPLE OF MORINJI.



THE WONDERFUL TEA - KETTLE.

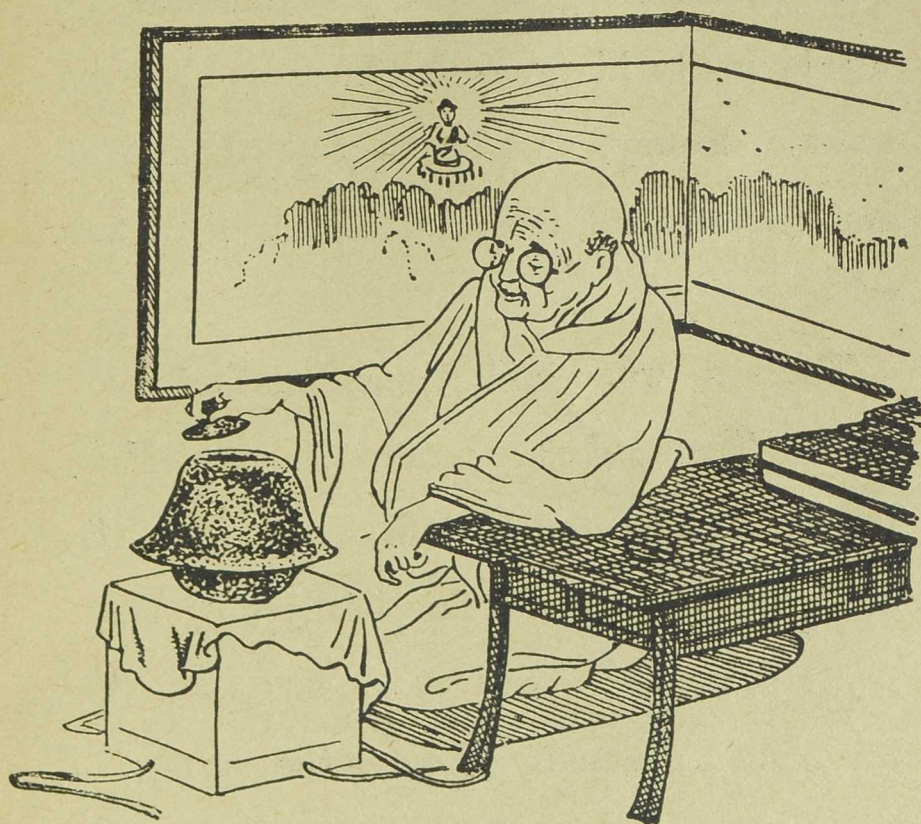
A LONG, long time ago, at the temple of Morinji, in the province of Kotsuke, there lived an old priest.

This old priest was very fond of the ceremonial of preparing and drinking of tea known as Chanoyu; indeed, it was his chief interest and pleasure in life to conduct this ceremony.

One day he chanced to find in a second-hand shop a very nice-looking old tea-kettle, which he bought and took home with him, highly pleased by its fine shape and artistic appearance.

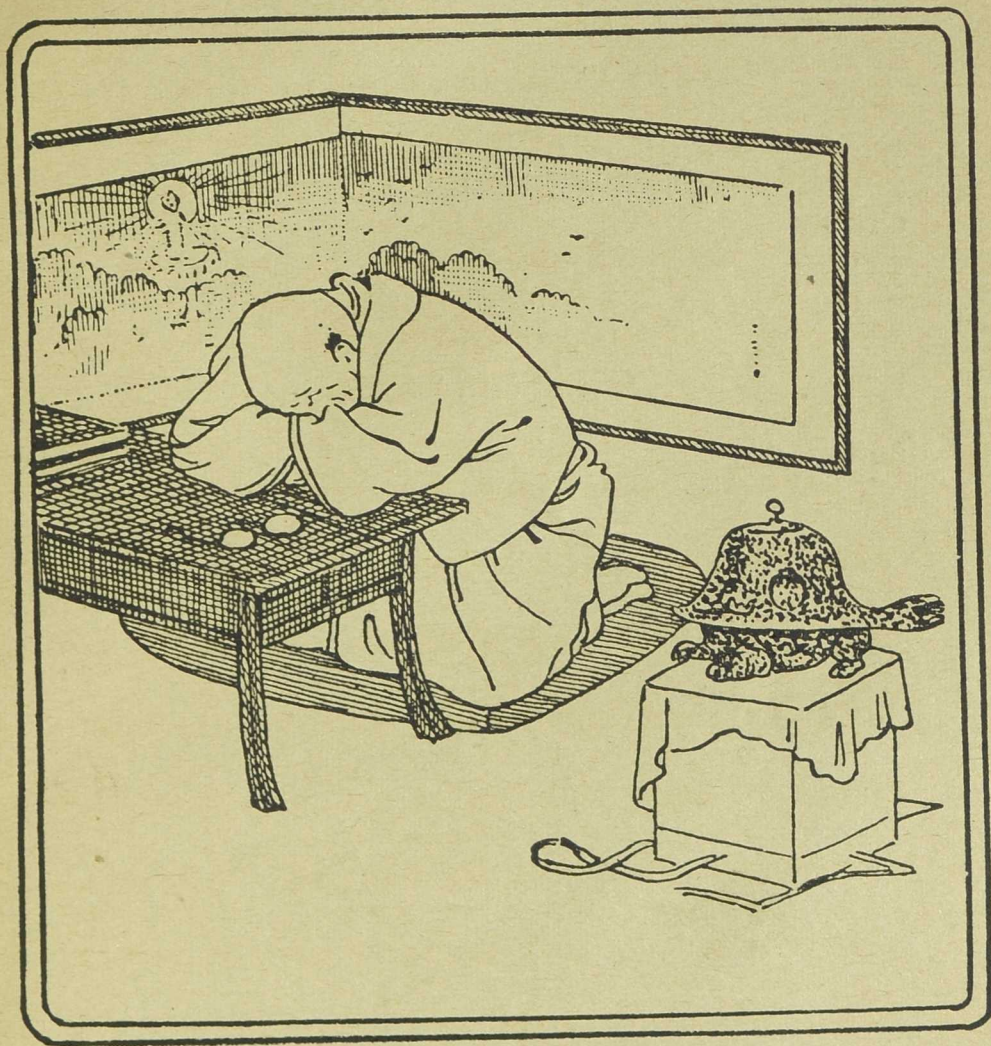
Next day he brought out his new purchase, and sat for a long time turning it round on this side and on that, and admiring it.

“You are a regular beauty, that’s what you are,” he said. “I shall invite all my friends to the Chanoyu, and how astonished they will be at finding such an exquisite kettle as this!”



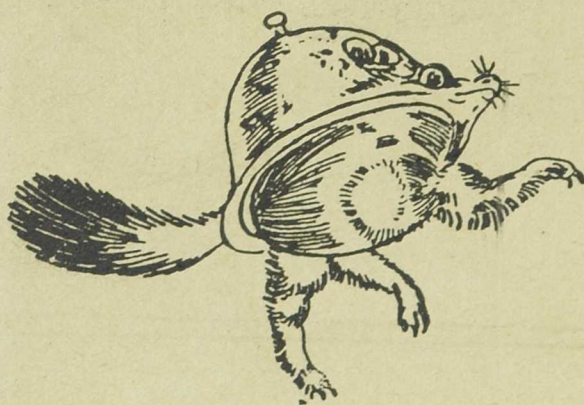
He placed his treasure on the top of a box where he could see it to the best advantage, and sat admiring it, and planning how he should invite his guests. After a while he became drowsy, and began to nod, and at last fell forward, his head on his desk, fast asleep.

Then a wonderful transformation took place. The tea-kettle began to move. From its spout appeared a hairy head; at the other side out came a fine bushy tail; next, four feet made themselves visible; while fine fur seemed gradually to cover the surface of the kettle. At last, jumping off the box, it began capering about the room for all the world just like a badger.

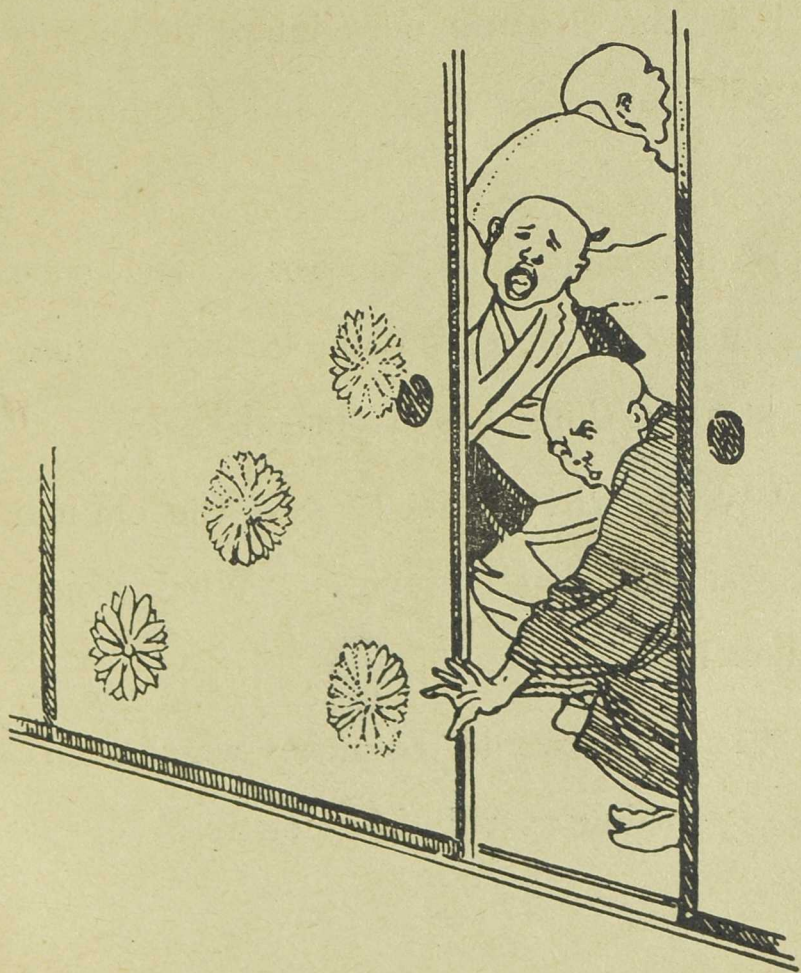


Three young students who were at study in the next room heard the noise, and when one of them peeped through the sliding doors, what was his astonishment to see the tea-kettle on four feet dancing up and down the room.

He cried out, "Oh! what a horrible thing! The tea-kettle is changed into a badger!"



“What!” said the second student. “Do you mean to say that the tea-kettle is turned into a badger? What nonsense!” So saying, he pushed his companion to one side, and peeped in, but he also was terrified by what he saw, and screamed.



"It's a goblin. It's coming at us—let us run away!"

The third student was not so easily frightened.

"Come, this is rather fun," said he. "How the creature does jump, to be sure! I will rouse the master, and let him see too."

So he went into the room, and shook the priest, crying: "Wake! master, wake! A strange thing has happened."

"What's the matter?" said the old man, drowsily rubbing his eyes. "What a noisy fellow!"

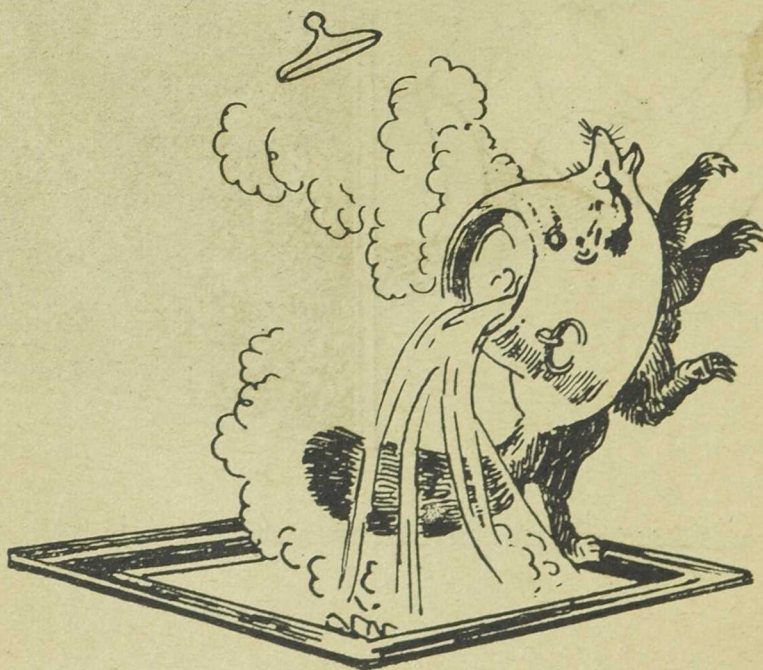
"Any one would be noisy when such a strange thing as this is going on."



“Only look, master! your tea-kettle has got feet and is running about!”

“What! what! what! what’s that you say?” asked the priest again—“the kettle got feet! What’s this? Let me see!”

But by the time the old man was thoroughly roused the tea-kettle had turned into its ordinary shape, and stood quietly on its box again.



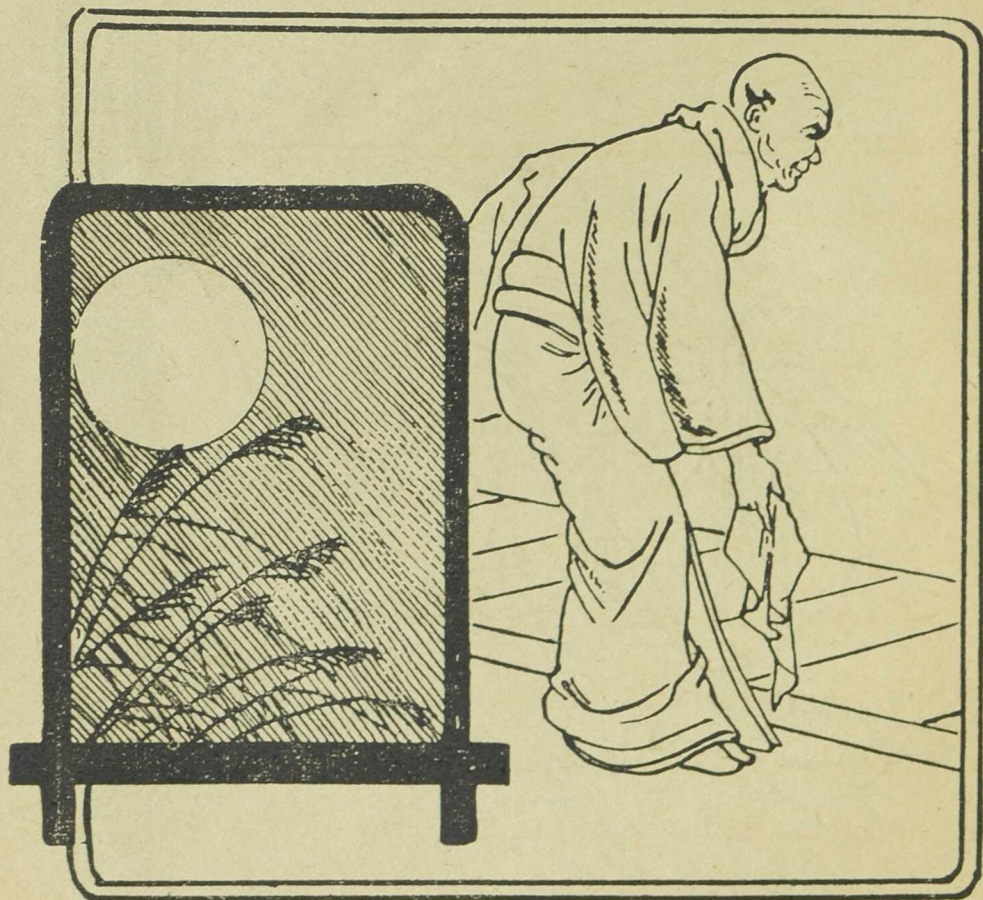
“What foolish young fellows you are!” said the priest. “There stands a kettle on the top of a box—surely there is nothing very strange in that! No, no, I have heard of the rolling-pin that grew a pair of wings and flew away, but, long as I have lived, never have I heard before of a tea-kettle walking about on its own feet! You will never make me believe that!”

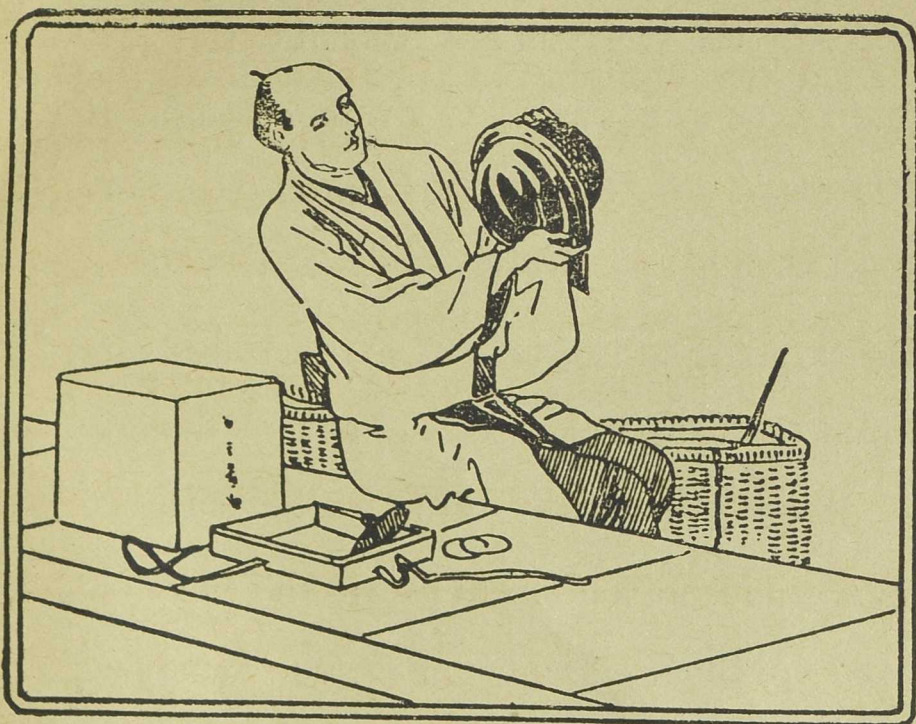


But, for all that, the priest was a little uneasy in his mind, and kept thinking of the incident all that day. When evening came, and he was alone in his room, he took down the kettle, filled it with water, and set it upon the embers to boil, intending to make some tea. But as soon as the water began to boil—

“Hot! hot!” cried the kettle, and jumped off the fire.

“Help! help!” cried the priest, terrified out of his wits.





But when the students rushed to his help, the kettle at once resumed its natural form ; so, one of them, seizing a stick, cried :

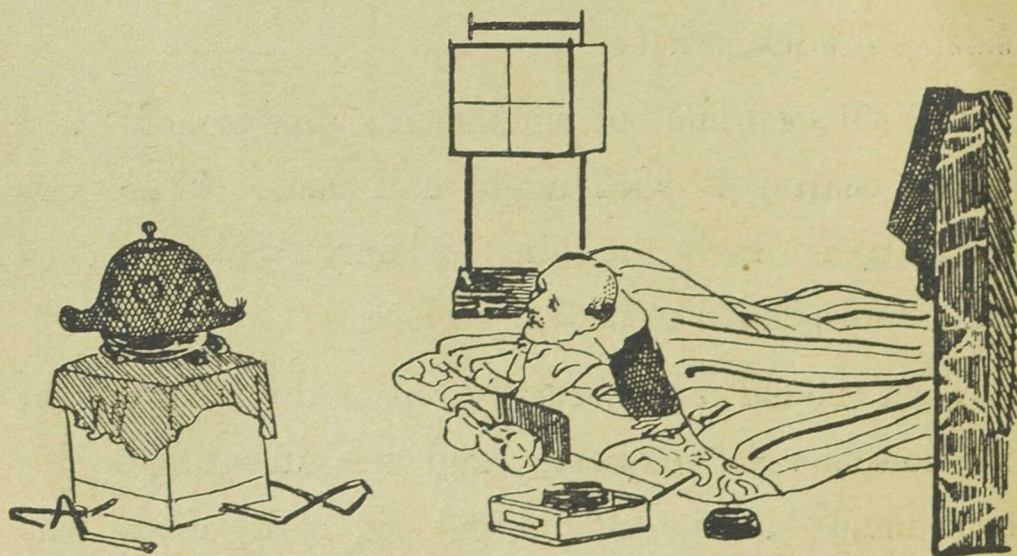
“ We’ll soon find out whether it’s alive or not ! ” and began beating it with might and main. There was evidently no life in the thing, and only a metallic clang ! clang ! responded to his lusty blows.

Then the old priest heartily repented having bought the mischievous tea-kettle, and was debating in his own mind how he should get rid of it, when who should drop in but the tinker.

"Here's the very man," thought the priest. A bargain was soon struck, the tinker bought the tea-kettle for a few coppers, and carried it home, well pleased with his purchase.

Before going to bed he took another look at it, and found it still better than he had at first thought, so he went to sleep that night in the best of spirits.

In the midst of a pleasant dream the tinker suddenly started up, thinking he heard somebody moving in the room; but when he opened his eyes and looked about, he could see nobody.



"It was only a dream, I suppose," said he to himself, as he turned over and went to sleep again.

But he was disturbed once more by some one calling, "Tinker! Tinker! Get up! Get up!"

This time he sprang up, wide awake, and, lo and behold, there was the tea-kettle, with the head, tail, feet, and fur of a badger, strutting up and down the room.

"Goblin! Goblin!" shrieked the tinker. But the tea-kettle laughed and said:

"Don't be frightened, my dear tinker. I am not a goblin, only a wonderful tea-kettle. My name is Bumbuku-Chagama, and I will bring good luck to any one who treats me well; but, of course, I don't like to be set on the fire, and then beaten with sticks, as happened to me up at the temple yesterday."



“How can I please you, then?” asked the tinker. “Shall I keep you in a box?”

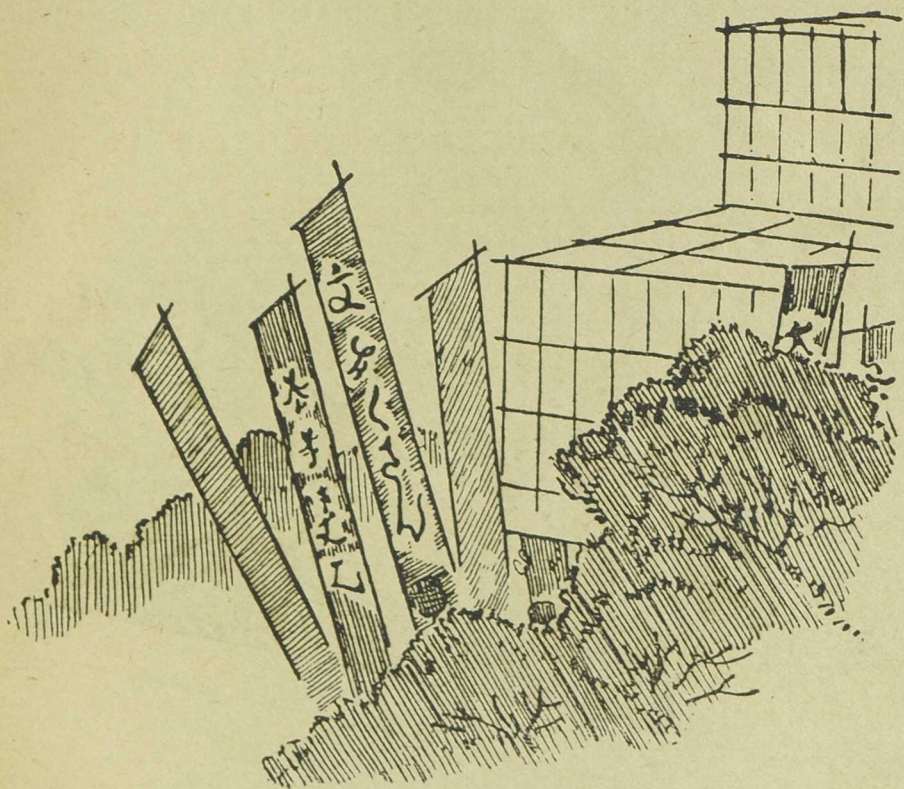
“Oh, no, no!” answered the tea-kettle. “I like nice sweet things to eat, and sometimes a little wine to drink, just like yourself. Will you keep me in your house and feed me? And, as I would not be a burden upon you, I will work for you in any way you like.”

To this the tinker agreed.

Next morning he provided a good feast for Bumbuku, who then spoke as follows :

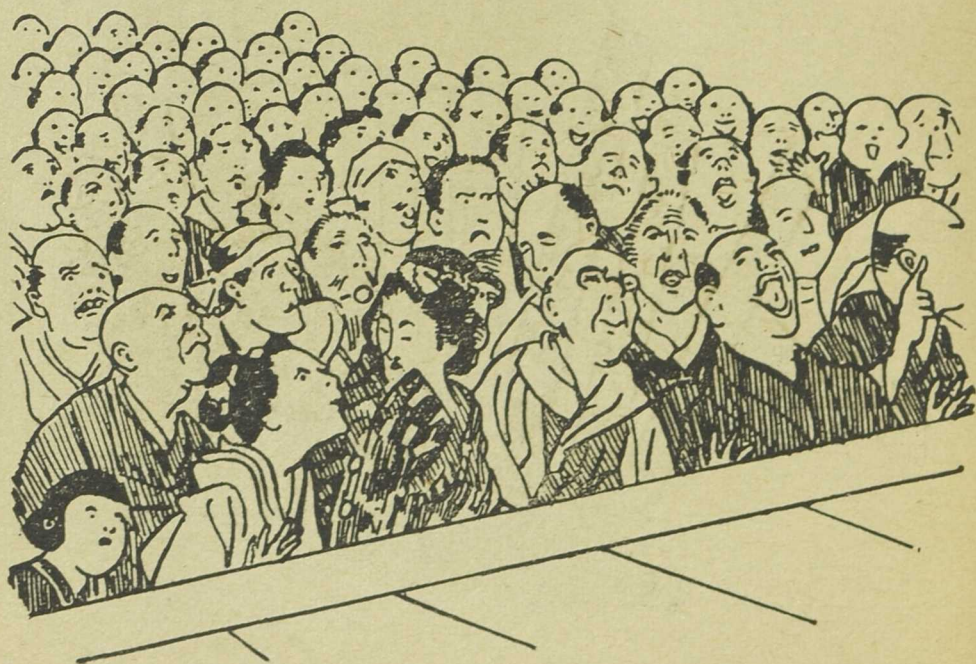
“I certainly am a wonderful and accomplished tea-kettle, and my advice is that you take me round the country as a show, with accompaniments of singing and music.”

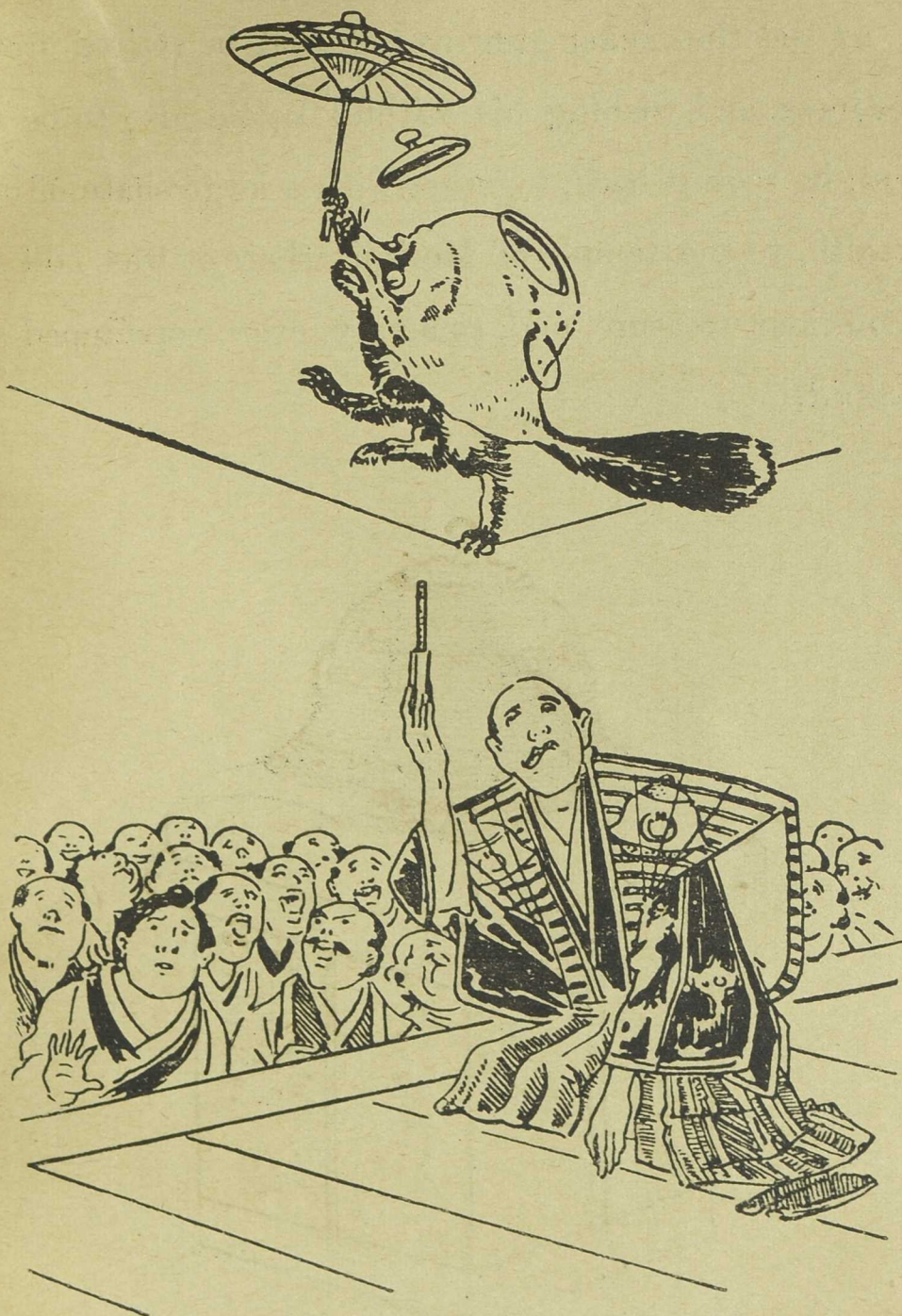
The tinker, thinking well of this advice, at once started a show, which he named the Bumbuku-Chagama. The lucky tea-kettle at once made the affair a success,



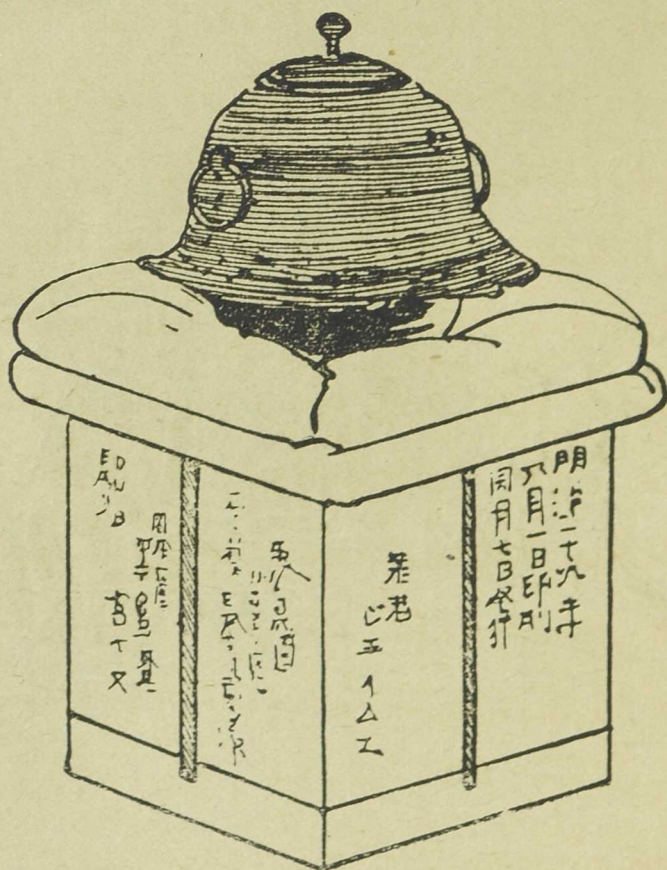
for not only did he walk about on four legs, but he danced the tight rope, and went through all kinds of acrobatic performances, ending by making a profound bow to the spectators, and begging for their future patronage.

The fame of these performances soon spread abroad, and the show was filled daily to overflowing, until, at length, even the princes of the land sent to order the tinker and his kettle to come to them, and the performances would take place, to the great delight of the princesses and ladies of the Court.





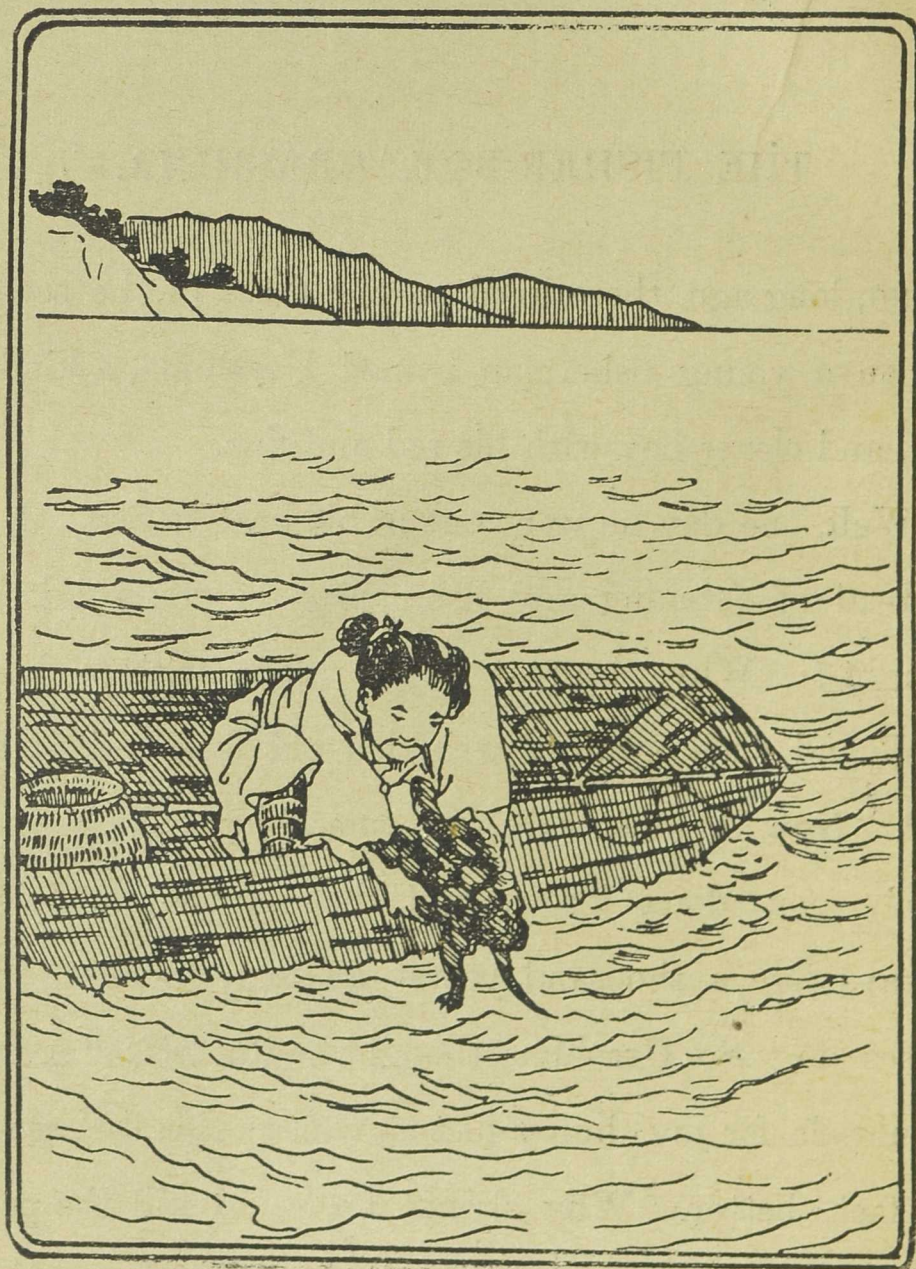
At last the tinker grew so rich that he retired from business, and wishing his faithful kettle also to be at rest, he took it back, together with a large share of his wealth, to the temple of Morinji, where it was laid as a precious treasure, and, some say, even worshipped as a saint.



THE FISHER-BOY, URASHIMA.

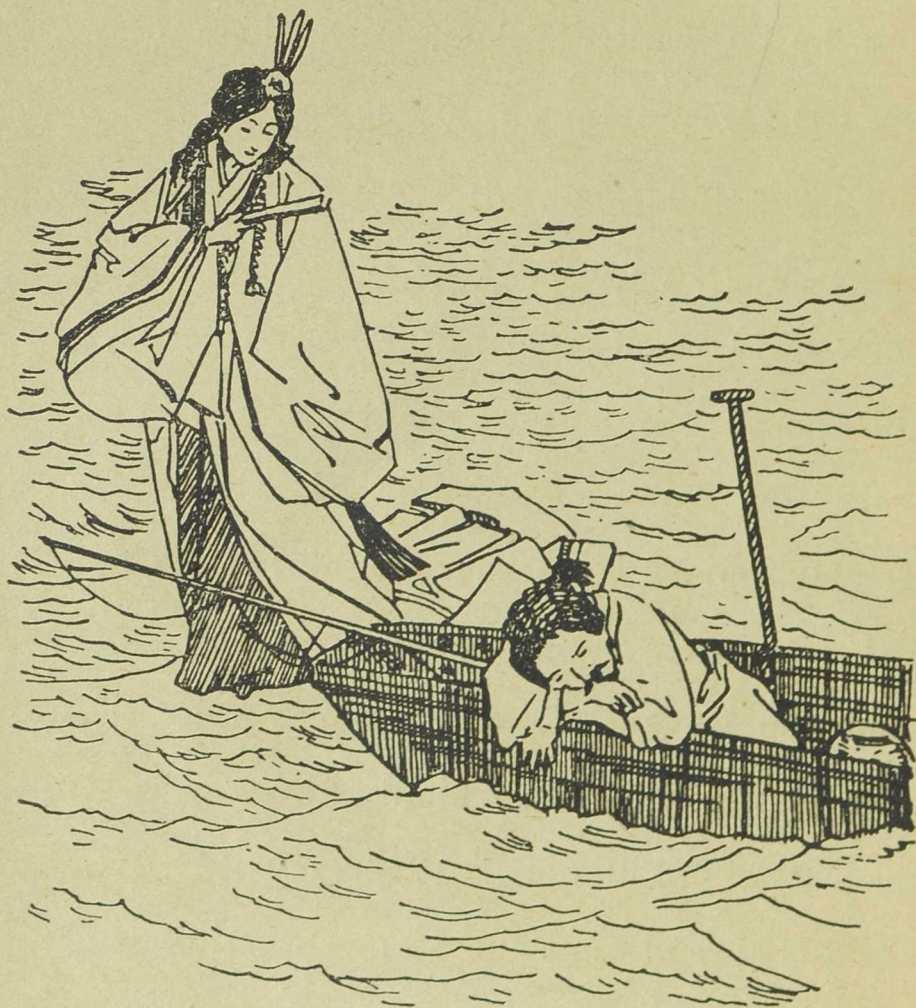
LONG, long ago, there lived on the coast of the sea of Japan a young fisherman named Urashima, a kindly lad, and clever boy with his rod and line.

Well, one day he went out in his boat to fish. But instead of catching any fish, what do you think he caught? Why, a great big tortoise, with a hard shell and such a funny wrinkled old face and a tiny tail. Now I must tell you something which very likely you don't know, and that is that tortoises always live a thousand years—at least, Japanese tortoises do. So Urashima thought to himself: "A fish would do for my dinner just as well as this tortoise—in fact, better. Why should I go and kill the poor thing, and prevent it from enjoying itself for another nine hundred and ninety-nine years? No, no! I



won't be so cruel. I am sure mother wouldn't like me to be so wicked. And, with these words, he threw the tortoise back into the sea.

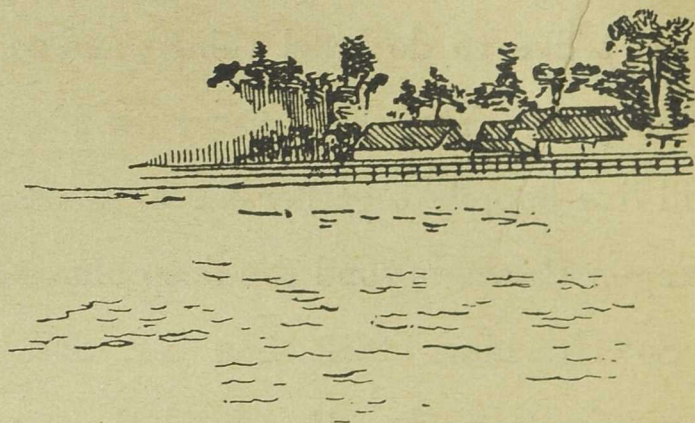
The next thing that happened was that Urashima went to sleep in his boat; for it was one of those hot summer days when almost everybody enjoys a nap in the afternoon. And as he slept, there came up from beneath the waves a beautiful girl, who got into the boat, and said: "I am the daughter of the Sea-God, and I live with my father in the Dragon Palace beyond the waves. It was not a tortoise that you caught just now, and so kindly threw back into the water instead of killing it. It was myself. My father the Sea-God had sent me to see whether you were good or bad.



“ We now know that you are a good, kind boy, who doesn't like to do cruel things, and so I have come to fetch you. You shall marry me, if you like, and we will live happily together for a thousand years in the Dragon Palace beyond the deep blue sea.”

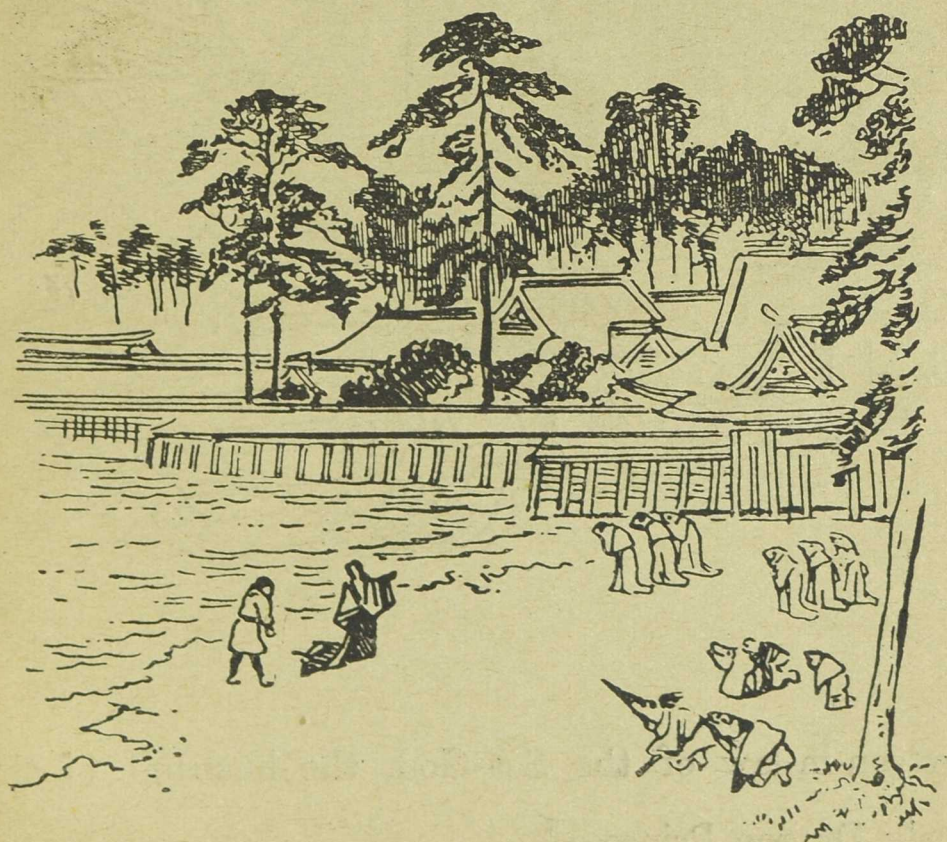
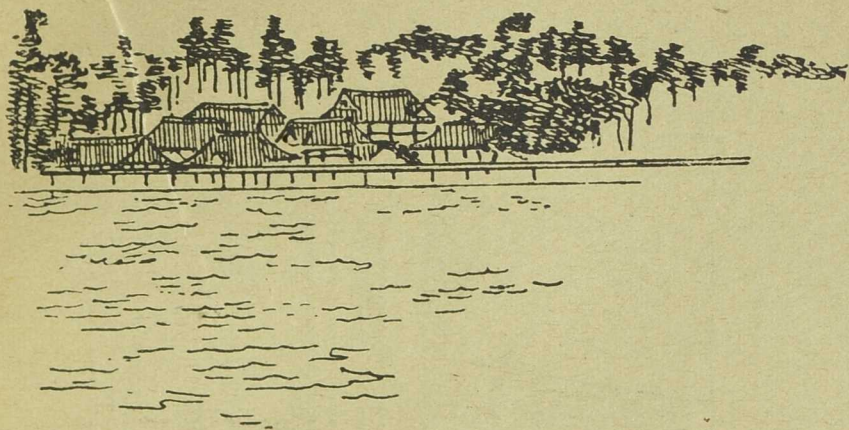
So Urashima took one oar, and the Sea-God's daughter took the other, and they rowed, and they

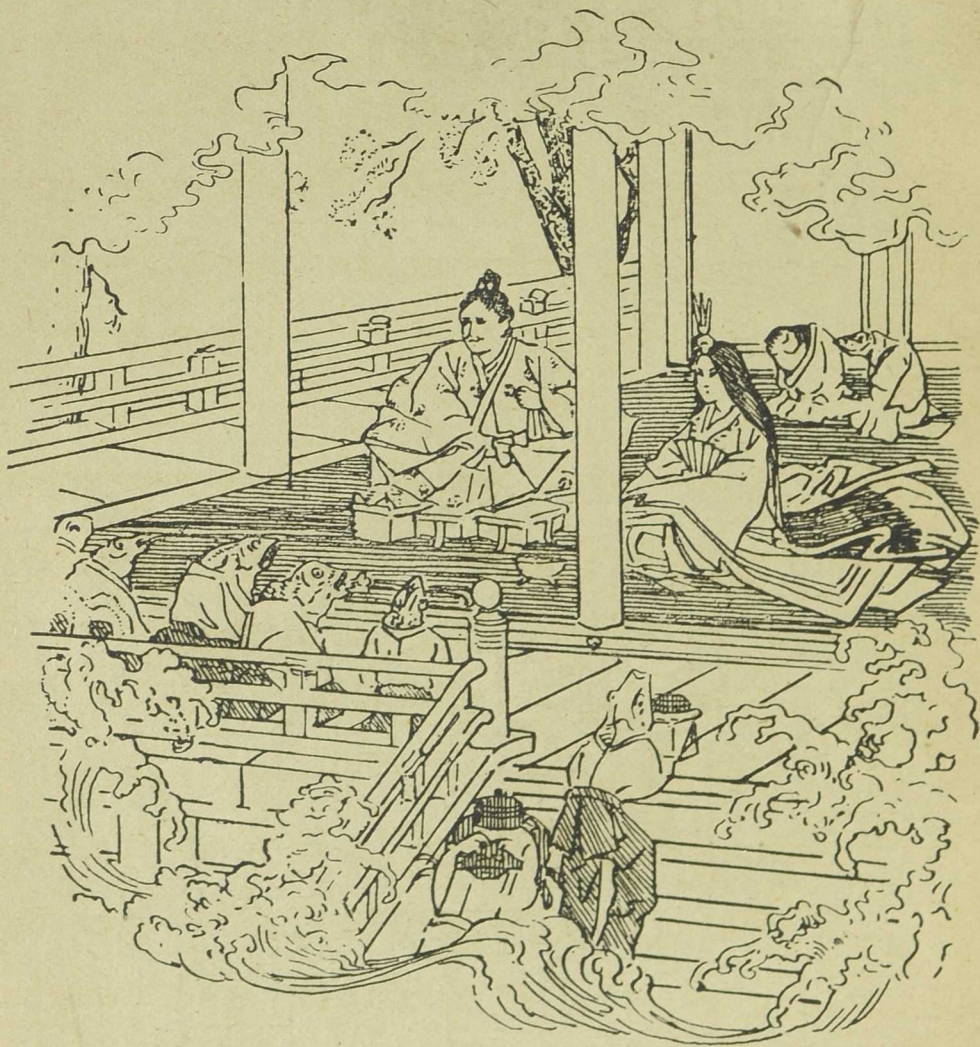




rowed, and they rowed till at last they came to the Dragon Palace where the Sea-God lived, and ruled as King over all the dragons and the tortoises and the fishes.

Oh dear ! what a lovely place it was ! The walls of the Palace were of coral, the trees had emeralds for leaves and rubies for berries, the fishes' scales were of silver and the dragons' tails of solid gold. Just think of the most beautiful, glittering things that you have ever seen, and put them all together, and then you will know what this Palace looked like. And it all belonged to Urashima ; for was he not indeed





the son-in-law of the Sea-God, the husband of the lovely Dragon Princess?

Well, they lived on happily for three years, wandering about every day among the beautiful trees with emerald leaves and ruby berries. But one morning Urashima said to his wife :

“I am very happy here. Still, I want to go home and see my father and mother and brothers and sisters. Just let me go for a short time, and I’ll soon be back again.”

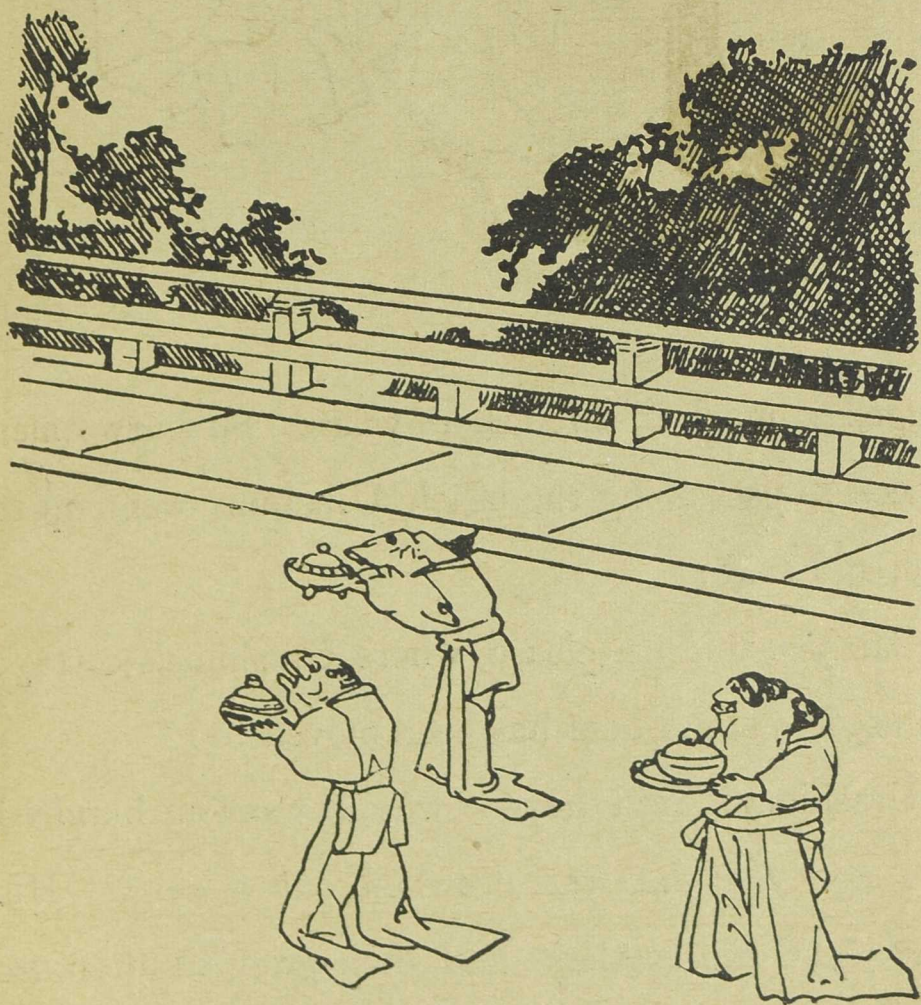
“I don’t like you to go,” said she ; “I am very much afraid that something dreadful will happen. However, if you will go, there is no help for it. Only you must take this box, and be very careful not to open it. If you open it, you will never be able to come back here.”

So Urashima promised to take great care of the box, and not to open it on any account ; and then, getting into his boat, he rowed off, and at last landed on the shores of his own country.

But what had happened while he had been away ? Where had his father’s cottage gone ? What had become of the village where he used to live ? The



mountains, indeed, were there as before, but the trees on them had been cut down ; the little brook that ran close by his father's cottage was still running, but there were no women washing clothes in it any more. It seemed very strange that everything should have





changed so much in three short years. So as two men chanced to pass along the beach, Urashima went up to them, and said :

“ Can you tell me, please, where Urashima’s cottage that used to stand here has been moved to ? ”

“ Urashima ? ” said they—“ why, it was four hundred years ago that he was drowned out fishing. His parents, and his brothers, and their grandchildren are all dead long ago. It is an old, old story. How can

you be so foolish as to ask after his cottage? It fell to pieces hundreds of years ago."

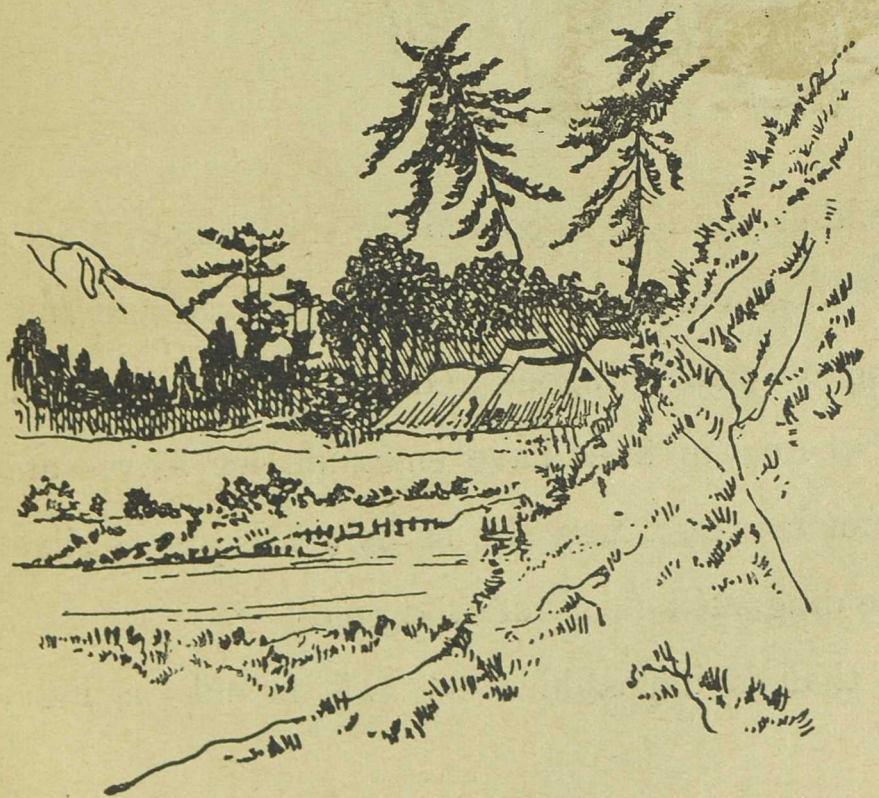
Then it suddenly flashed across Urashima's mind that the Sea-God's Palace beyond the waves, with its coral walls and its ruby fruits and its dragons with tails of solid gold, must be part of fairyland, and that one day there was probably as long as a year in this world, so that his three years in the Sea-God's Palace had really been hundreds of years. Of course there was no use in staying at home now that all his friends were dead and buried, and even the village had passed away. So Urashima was in a great hurry to get back to his wife, the Dragon Princess, beyond the sea. But which was the way? He couldn't find it with no one to show it to him. "Perhaps," thought he, "if I open the box which she gave me I shall be able to find the way." So he disobeyed her orders not to open the box, or perhaps he forgot them, foolish boy that he was. Anyhow, he opened the box; and what do you think came out of it?

Nothing but a white cloud, which floated away over the sea. Urashima shouted to the cloud to stop, rushed about, and screamed with sorrow; for he remembered now what his wife had told him, and how, after opening the box, he should never be able to go to the Sea-God's Palace again. But soon he could neither run nor shout any more.



Suddenly his hair grew as white as snow, his face got wrinkled, and his back bent like that of a very old man. Then his breath stopped short, and he fell down dead on the beach.

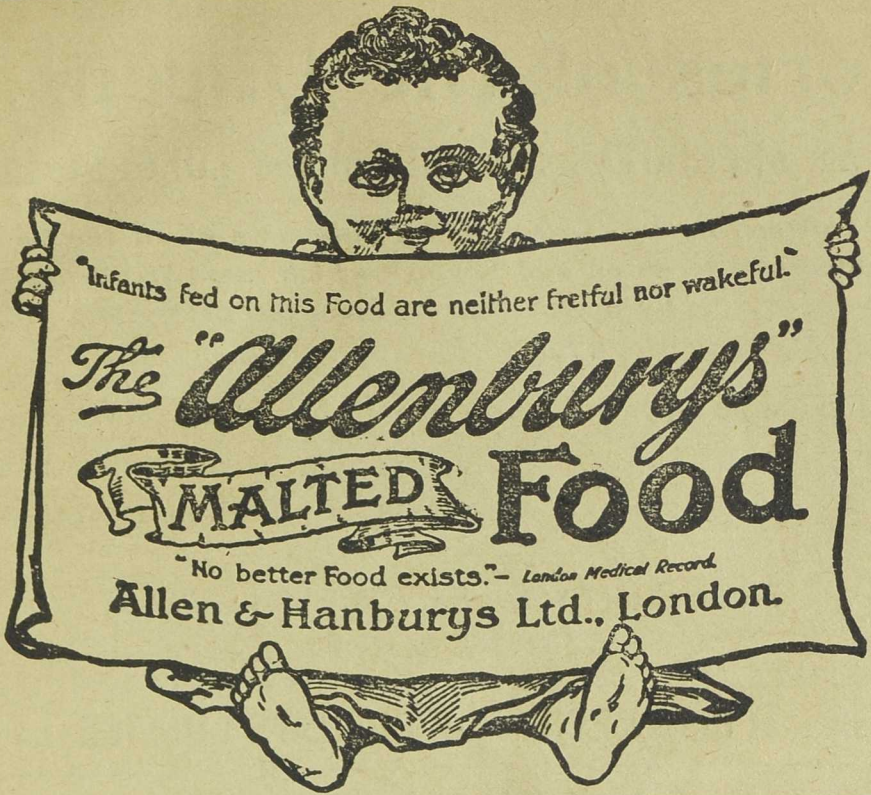
Poor Urashima! He died because he had been foolish and disobedient. If only he had done as he was told, he might have lived another thousand years.





Wouldn't you like to go and see the Dragon Palace beyond the waves, where the Sea-God lives and rules as King over the dragons and the tortoises and the fishes, where the trees have emeralds for leaves and rubies for berries, where the fishes' scales are of silver and the dragons' tails all of solid gold?

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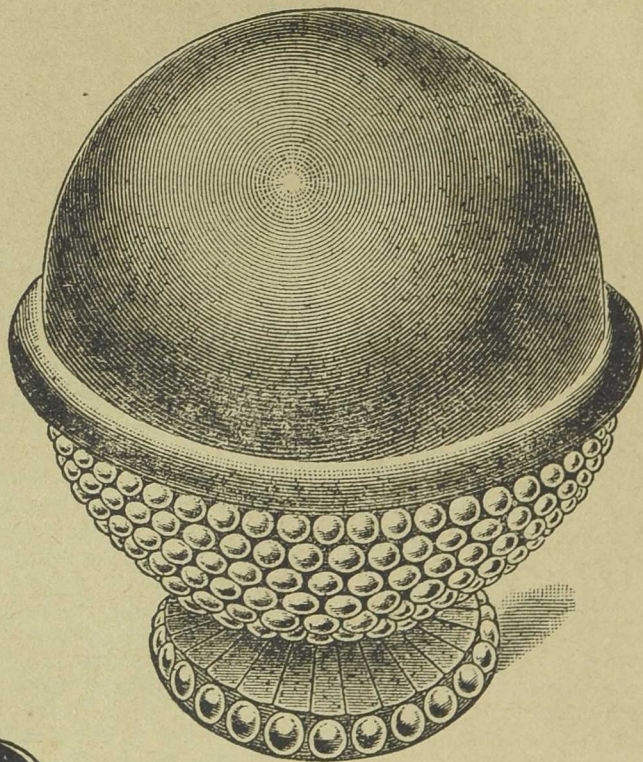
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