A Bushel of Merrythoughts

DESCRIBED IN VERSE

BY

W. HARRY ROGERS.

LEIGHTON, BROS.

LONDON: SAMPSON LOW, SON, AND MARSTON, MILTON HOUSE, LUDGATE HILL.

For the youngest members of your Household Brigade, with the compliments of the Season from

Dec. 23 1874.

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A BUSHEL OF MERRY-THOUGHTS

BY

WILHELM BUSCH.

DESCRIBED AND ORNAMENTED BY HARRY ROGERS.

LONDON:
SAMPSON LOW SON, AND MARSTON, MILTON HOUSE, LUDGATE HILL.
1868.

OUR COVER.

A Bushel of Merry Thoughts—over they go!
Just look on our book-cover,—isn't it so?
The basket 's upset, and you 'll find, when you've been to it,
More fun than you 'd think ever *could* be got into it.
Young chicks and jugged hare tumble out in a group
For the ogre, as soon as he 's finished his soup;
And next, over-head, comes a dear little girl,
That the Marquis of Cobweb claws up by the curl,
As she, pretty darling, is teaching to fly
The unlikeliest bird ever hatched in a stye.
But now starts an animal stranger than any—
A lobster, with claws and enormous antennæ,
Who makes his own salad (he 's grown so obedient),
Tho' he knows his own body 's its choicest ingredient.
And lastly comes galloping out in a flurry,
(It 's hunger, I think, that induces such hurry),
In the loudest of trowsers that ever were built,
A roe-buck that 's given up wearing the kilt.
That 's all, little friends, so I 'll bid you adieu,
With a bumper for Busch, and good wishes for you.

W. H. R.

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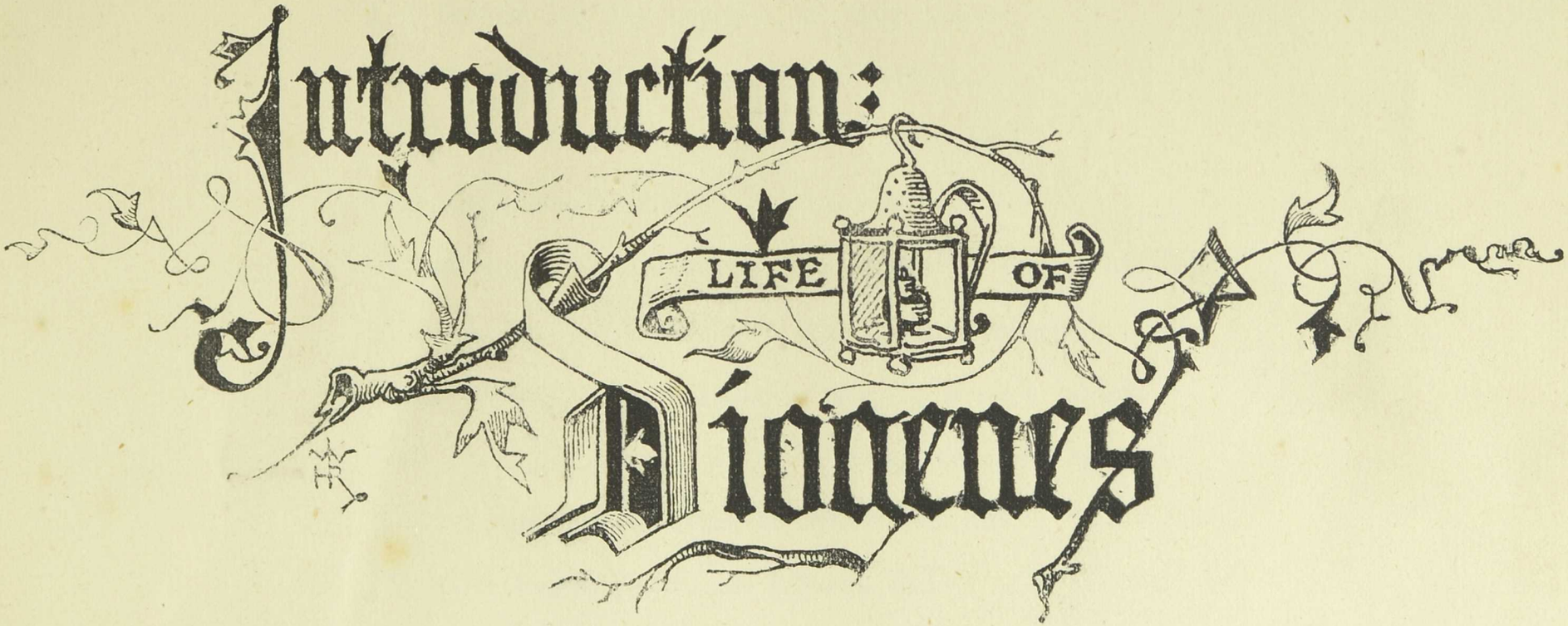
WITH EXPLANATORY VERSES BY W. HARRY ROGERS.



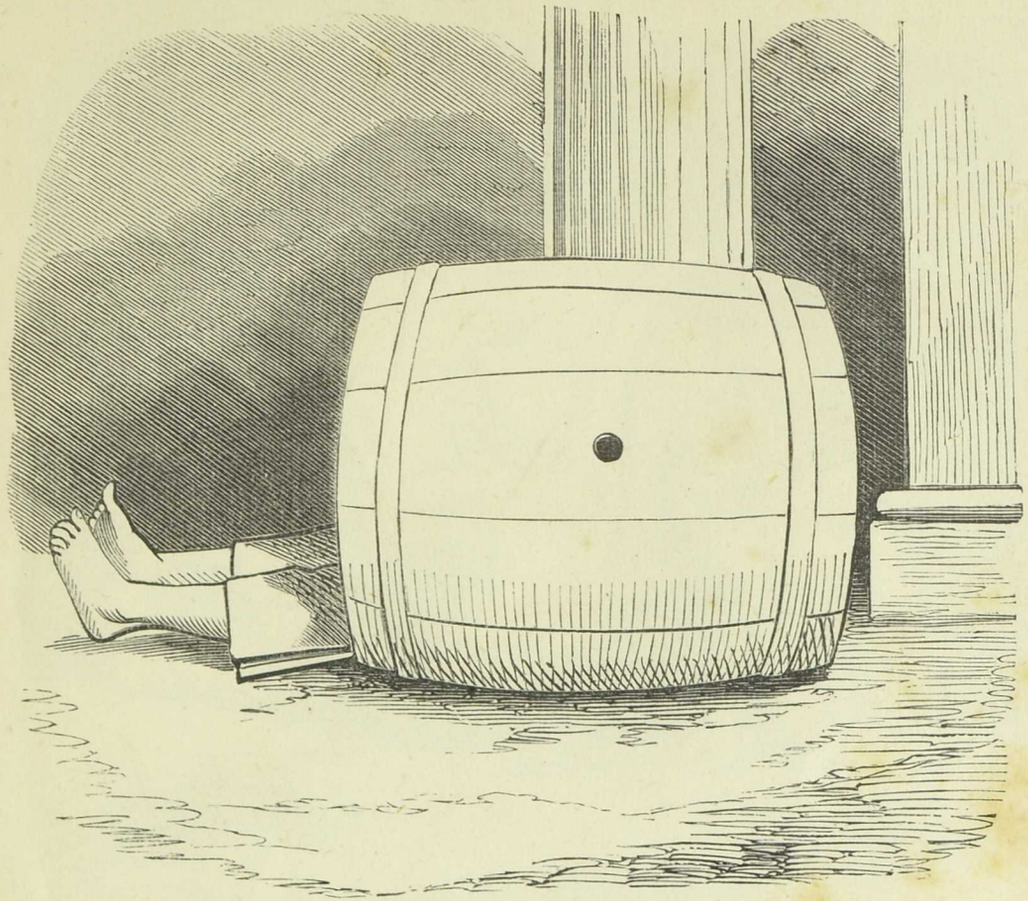
In case the following little story should
In some respects be hardly understood,

I'd better tell my readers, if they please,
Something about this quaint DIOGENES.
Well then, above two thousand years ago
Our sage was nurtured in a town you know,
Which towards the Black Sea stretches long and slopey,
Famous for dates and dirt, and named Sinope.
When young, I'm pained to say he wasn't honest,
And from his native town he soon was *non est;*
And getting off to Athens, where he hid,
He next began to do as Athens did—
I mean, he learned philosophy by rule
At old Antisthenes's grammar-school.
When in his philosophic syntax grounded,
He went to Corinth, where bad boys abounded,

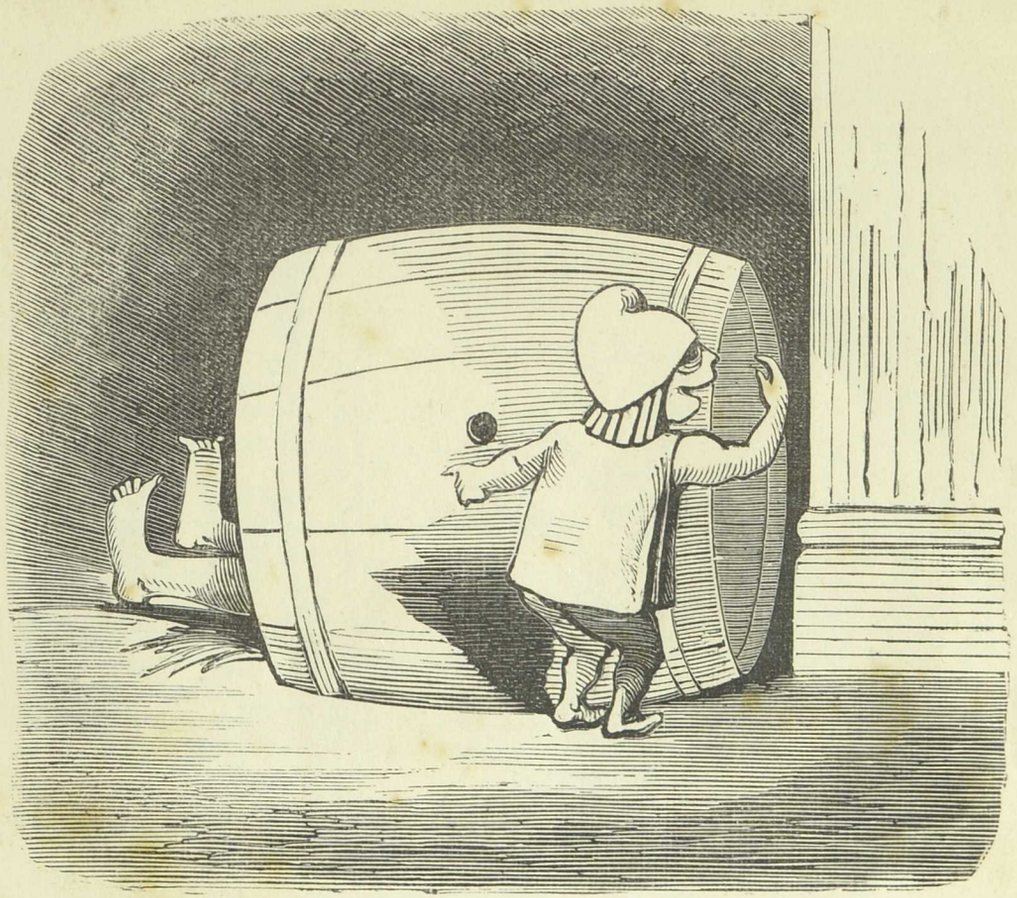
And nothing ever could be spoken trulier
Than that, once there, his manners grew peculiar:
For instance, as some narratives disclose,
He'd often go about without his clothes;
Whereon the little boys would hoot and laugh,
And tease him with their rich Corinthian chaff.
He called himself a 'Cynic' (which I can
Briefly describe as 'dog-in-manger' man),
Ate his beef raw, with garlick and such greenery,
And never had his hair brushed by machinery.
Ere eve approached, it was his caustic whim
To carry a great lantern out with him;
And when asked what he meant by such a plan,
He'd say, 'I'm looking for an honest man.'

But his idea—the most intensely funny—
Was, that he didn't see the use of money;
And having none himself, mind—there's the rub!—
He saved his rent by living in a tub.

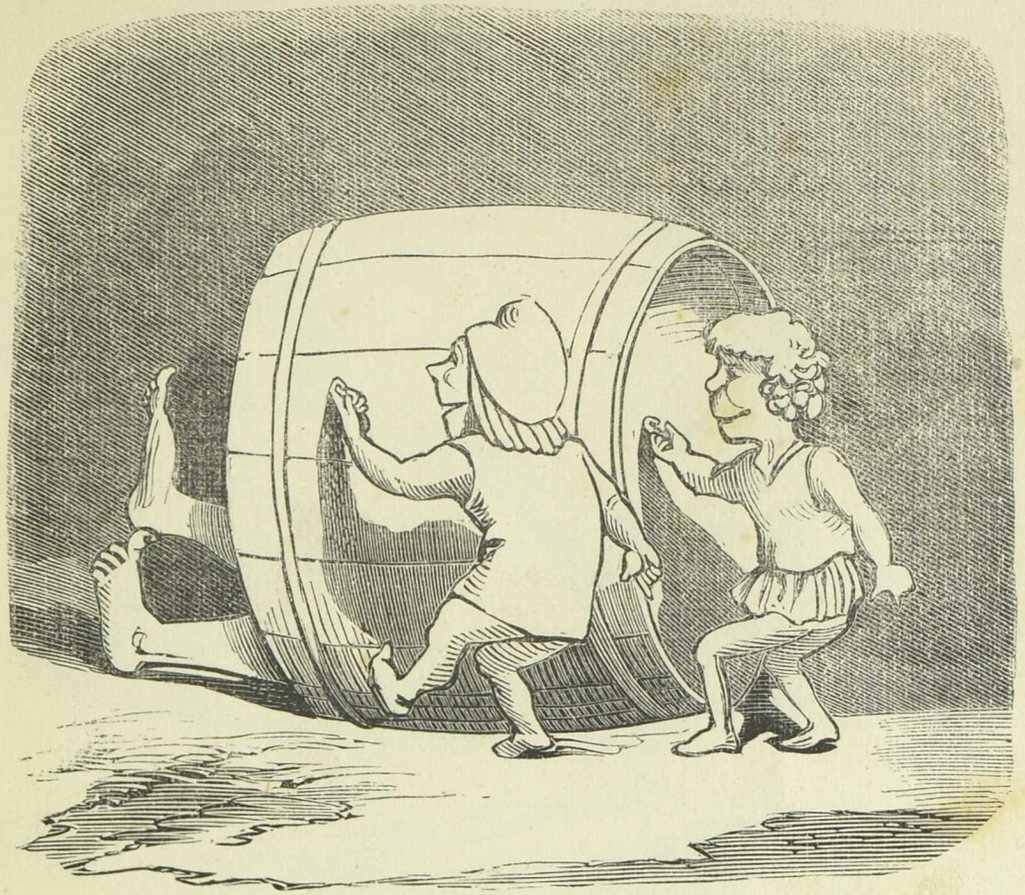
W. H. R.



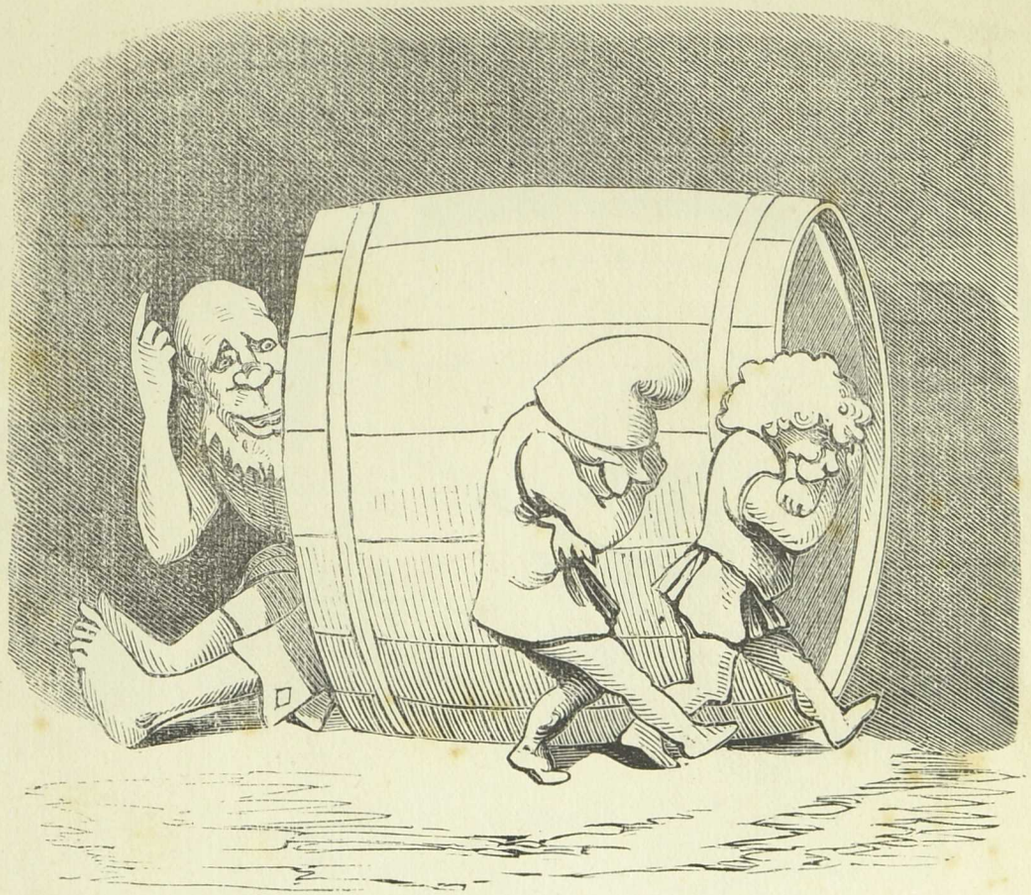
Safe in his tub, reflecting at his ease,
Out in the sunshine lies Diogenes.



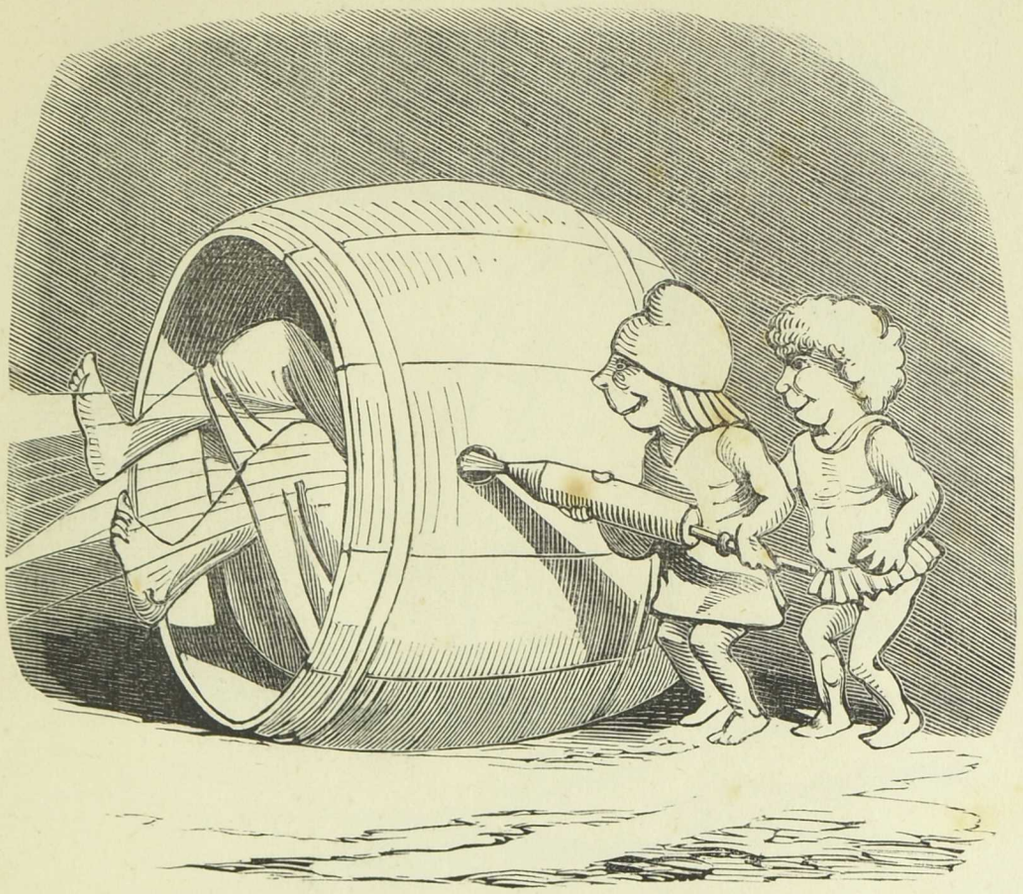
A naughty little rogue who finds him there,
Calls to a friend of his the fun to share.



Arrived, the boys their hands together rub,
And knock with saucy knuckles at the tub.

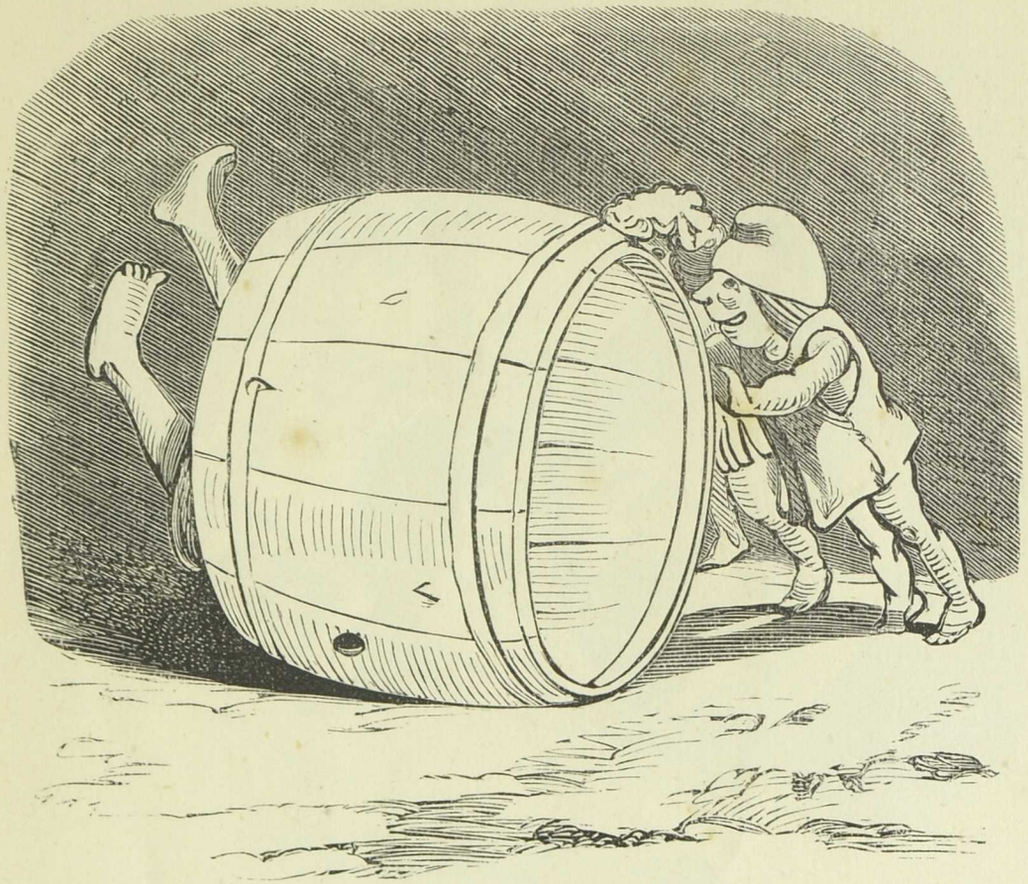


Diogenes, on hearing such a clatter,
Out of his tub cries, 'Now, then! what 's the matter?'

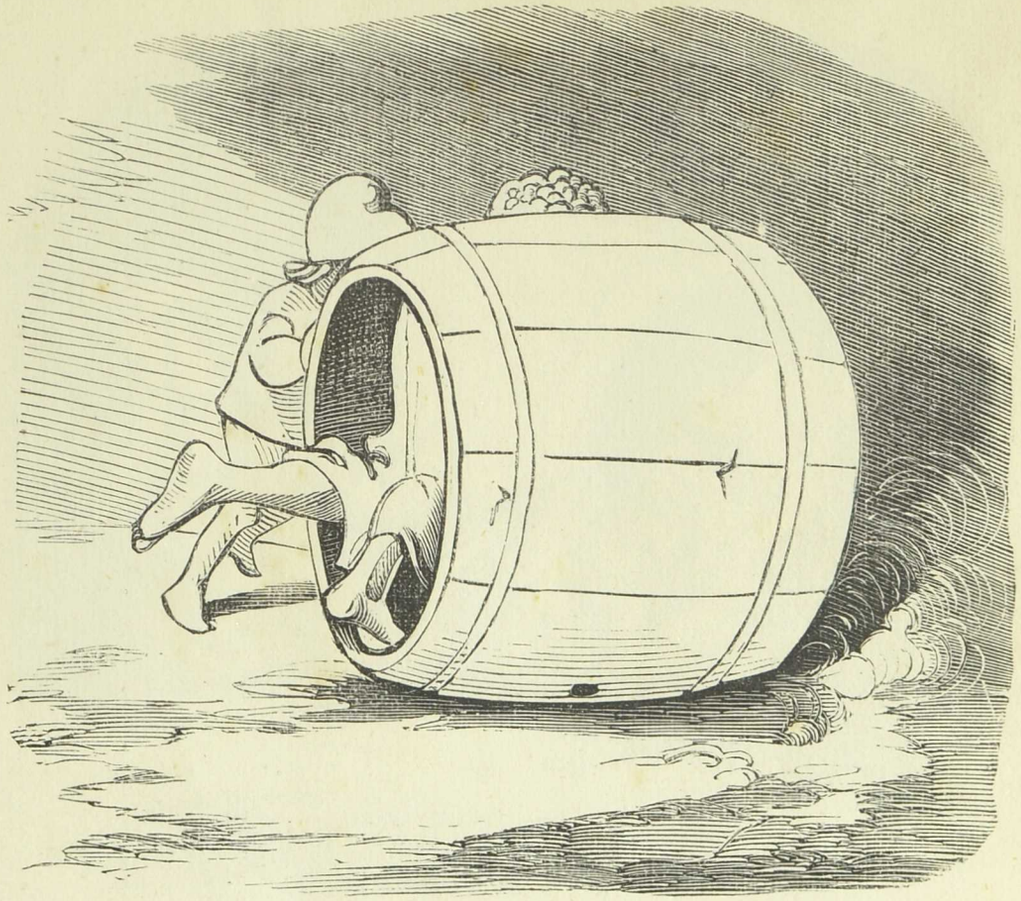


The boy that wears the Trojan cap and skirt,
Off in a jiffy runs to fetch his squirt.

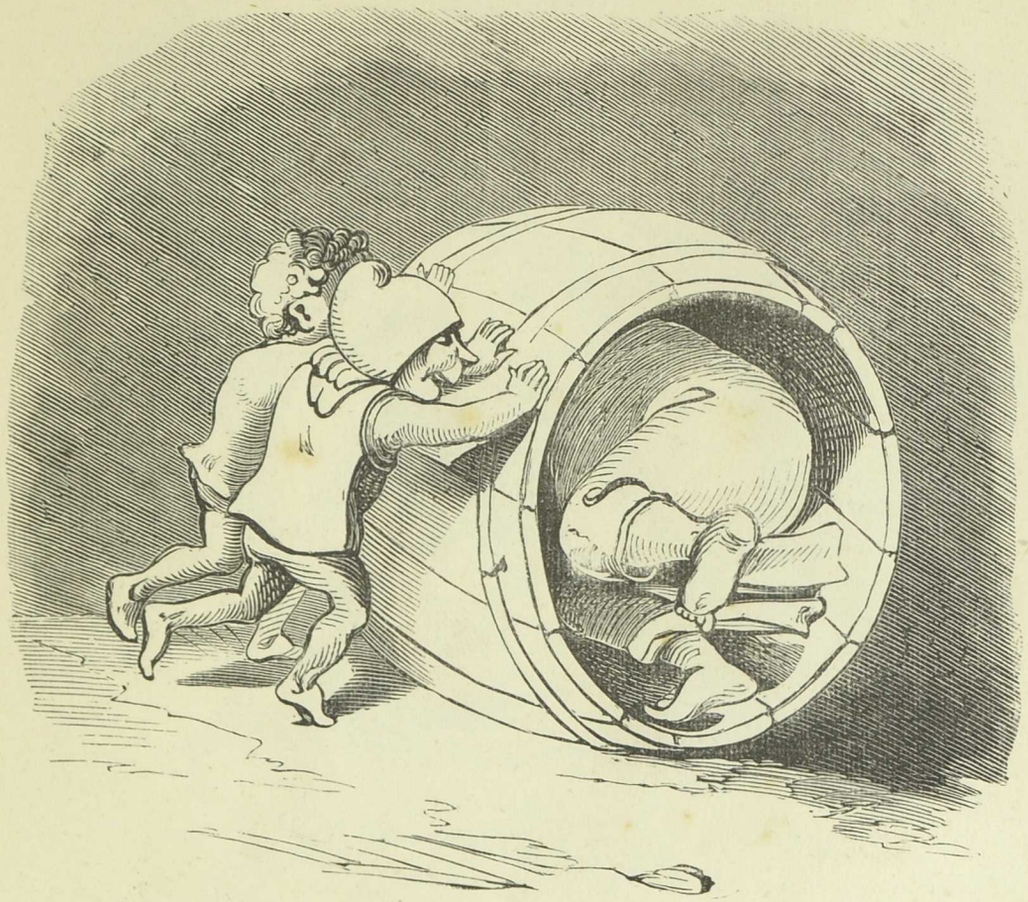
Splashed through the bung-hole now from toes to ears,
Like a drowned rat Diogenes appears.



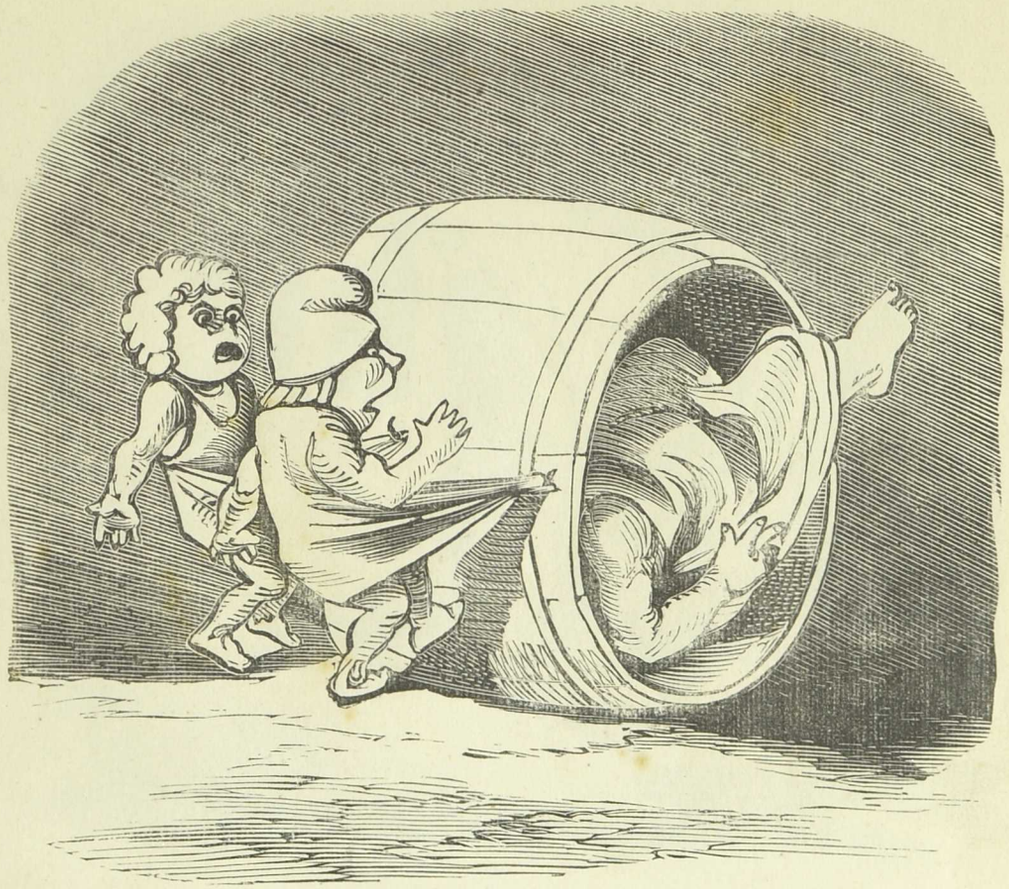
Diogenes resumes his tub in vain,
For lo ! the little scamps come back again.



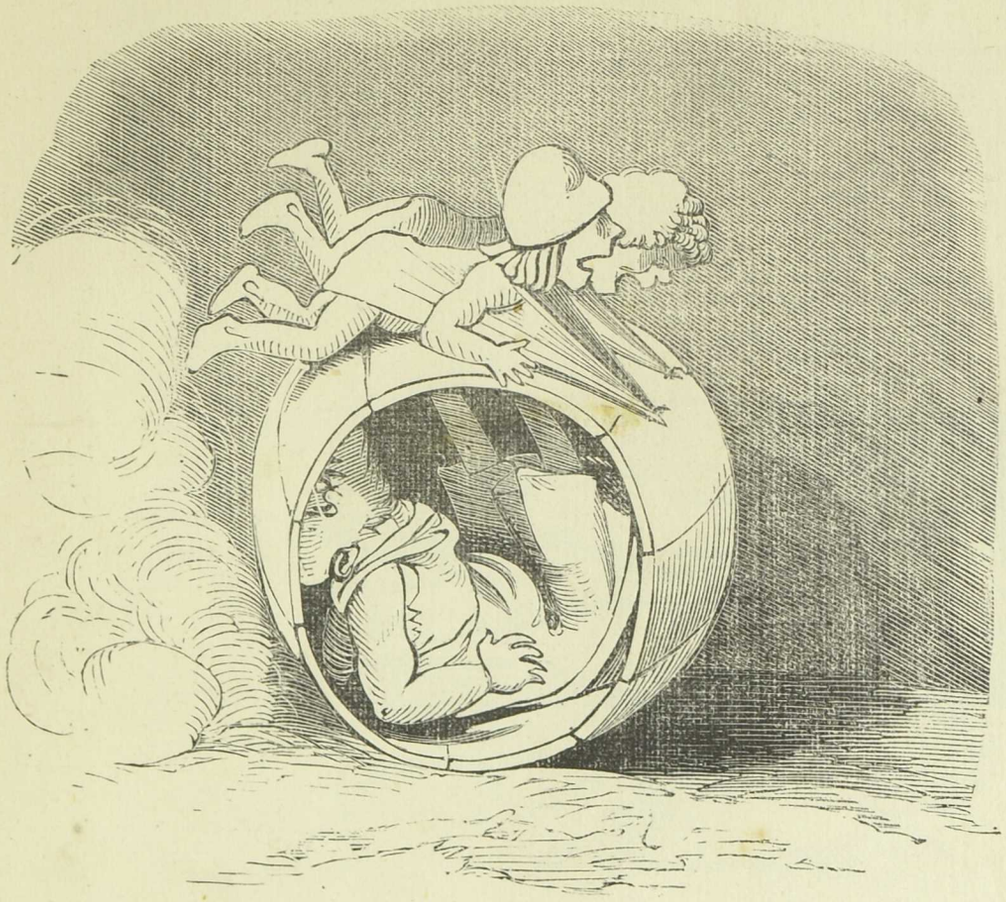
This time they push the tub along the ground—
'Halt !' cries our hero—but the tub goes round.



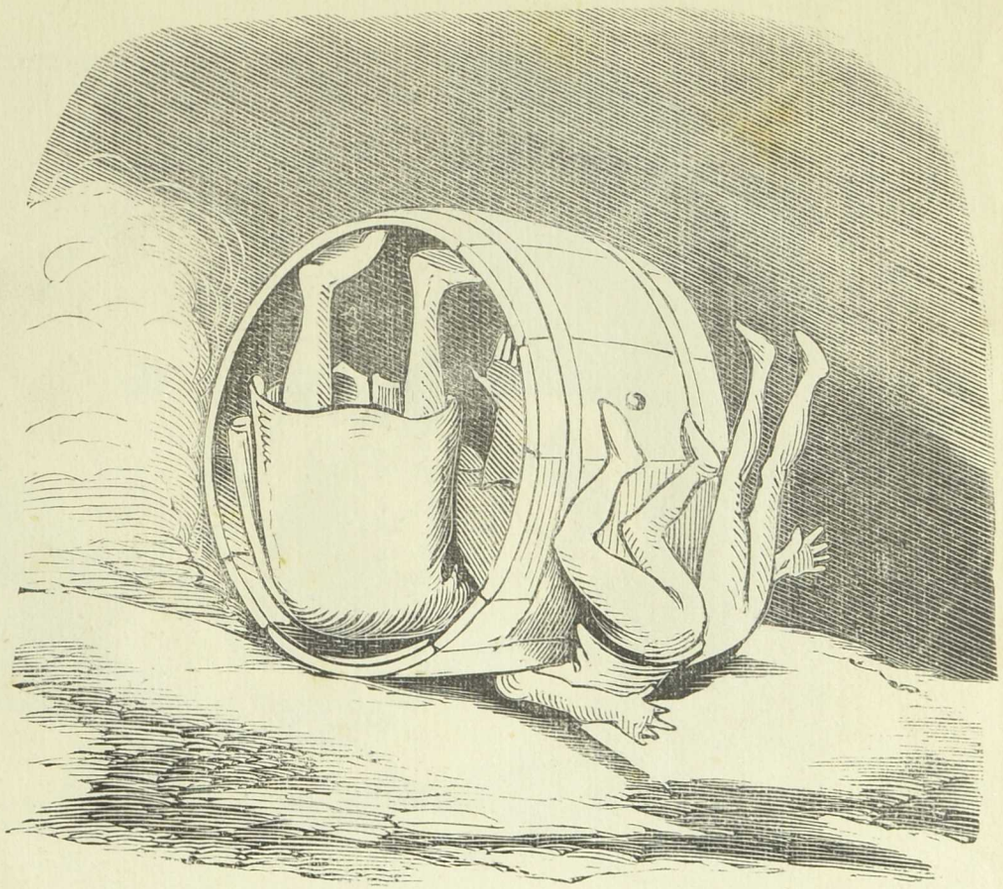
'Let's give the sage a ride!' they shout with laughter
(But retribution sore will follow after).



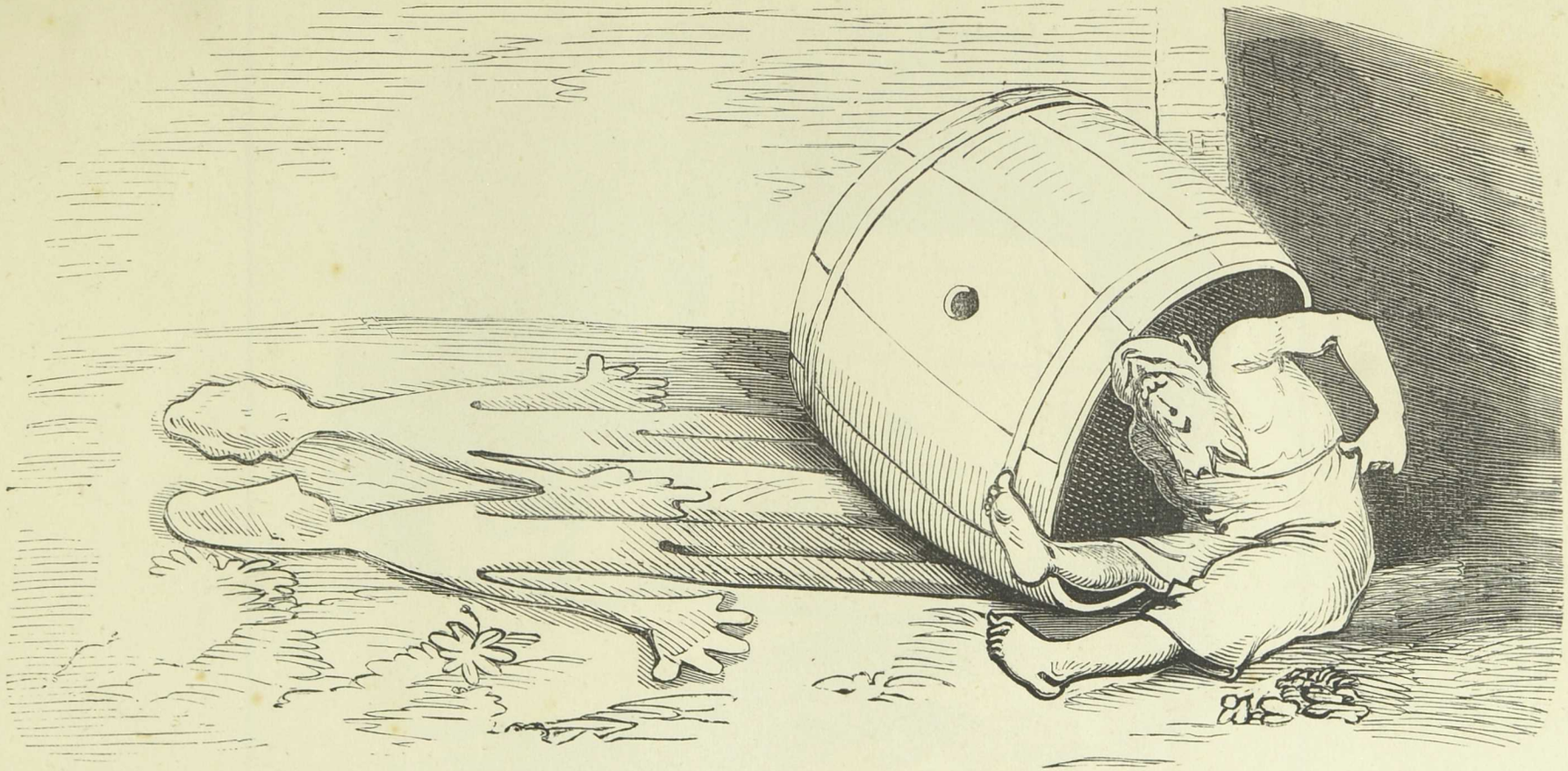
Two nails, that happened in the tub to stick,
Catch by the clothes the children at their trick.



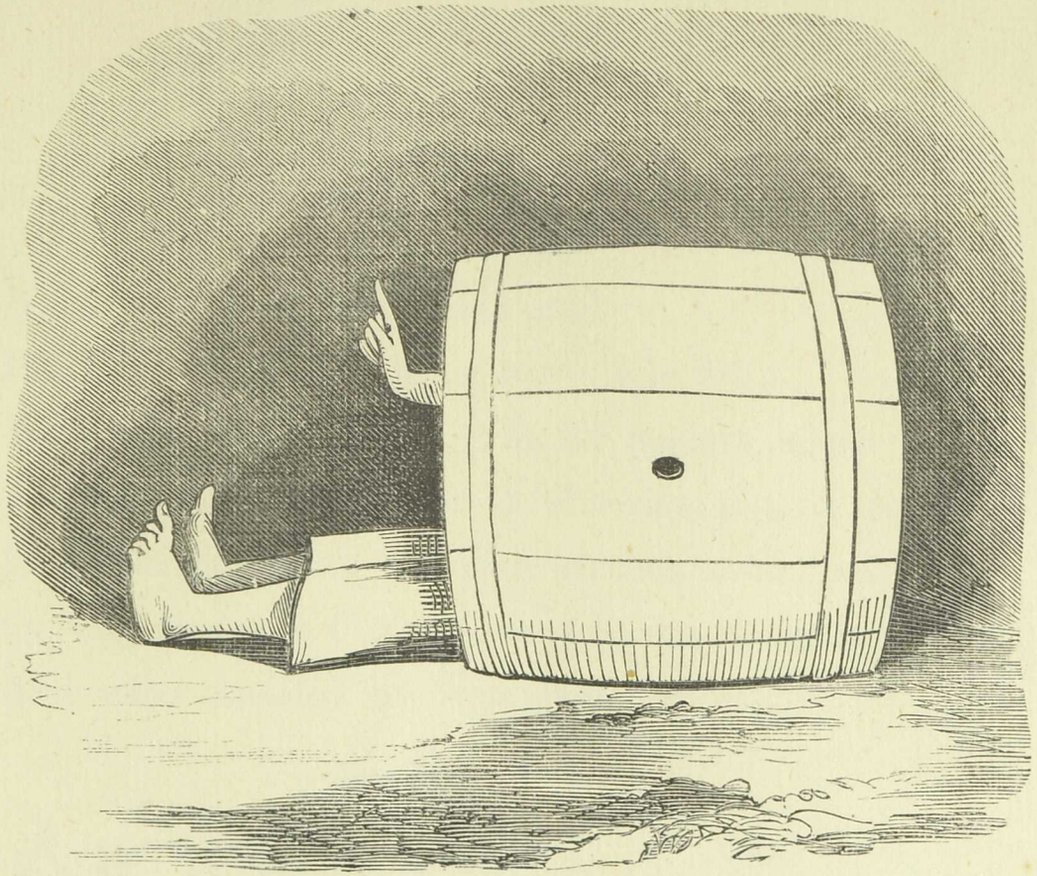
Of course the boys now both begin to cry,
And kick their legs about convulsively.



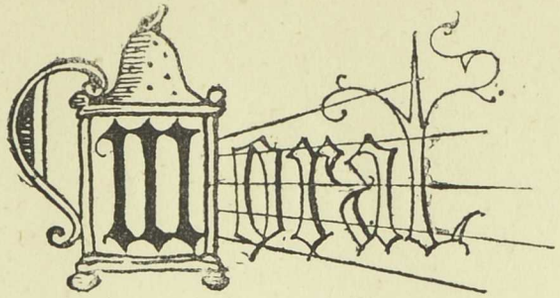
But Fate's stern course nor tears nor kicks can break!
Under the tub they go—and no mistake.



The tub stops still: but, what a scene of woe!
The boys are rolled as flat as calico.



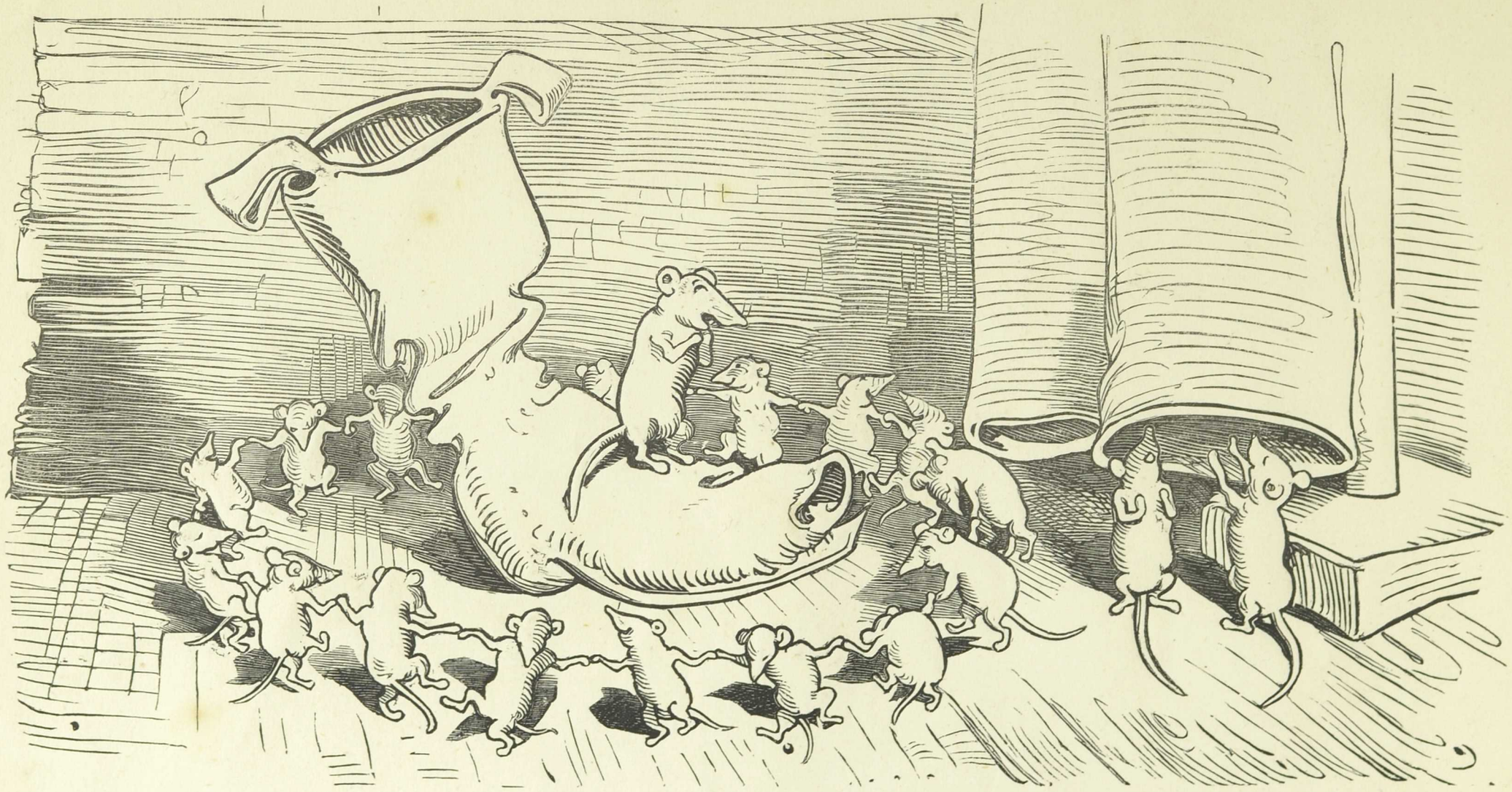
'That 's what it 's come to,' quietly he said;
And back the Cynic tubbed himself to bed.



Never a philosophic hermit snub ;
Don't interfere with some one else's tub ;
Wear caps,—not Trojan,—fit for modern ages,
And use your squirts for shrubberies, not for sages.
In nail-hooks never get your clothes entangled,
Or you, like our Corinthians, may be mangled ;
And when assailed by boys, however wildly,

Act like 

and take it mildly.

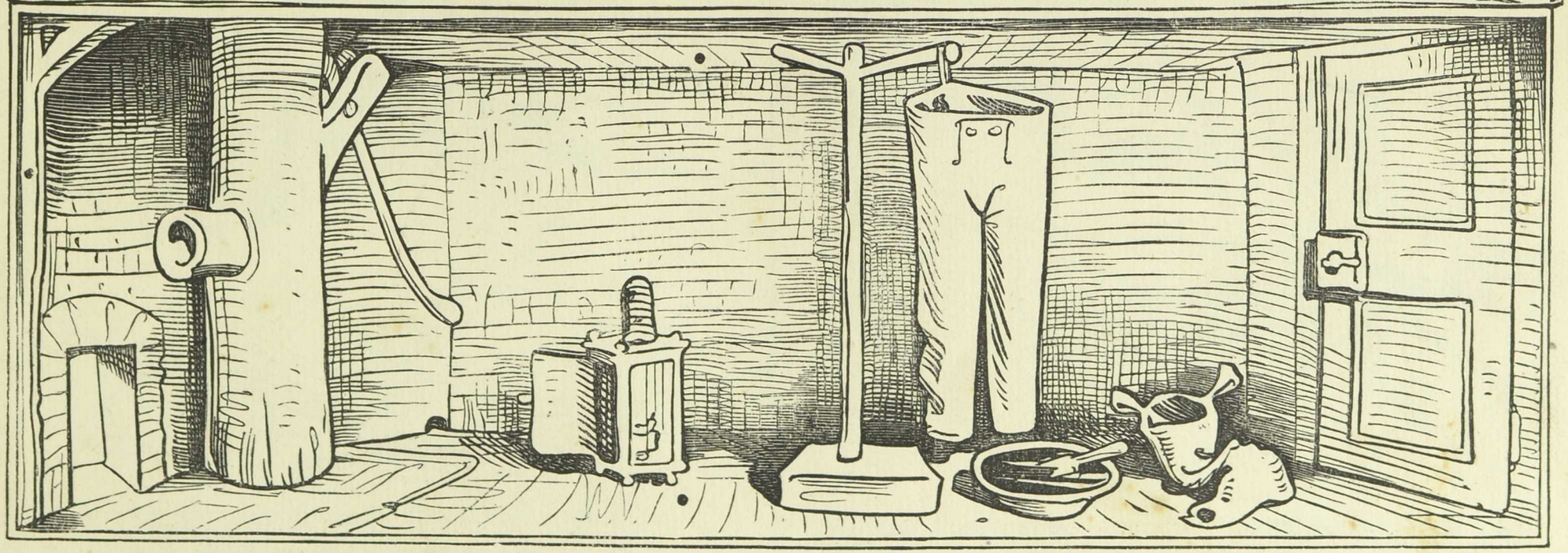


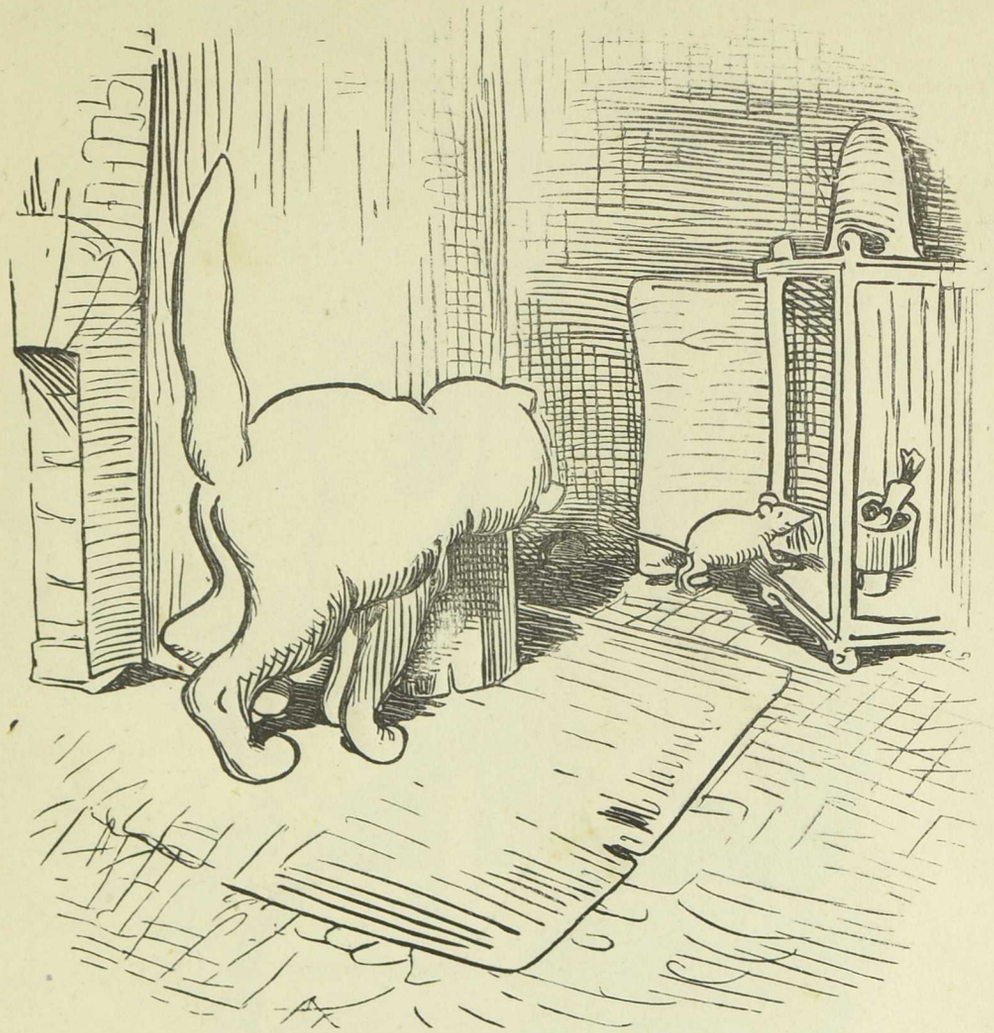
'Long live the glorious boot that wanted mending.'

WITH EXPLANATORY VERSES BY W. HARRY ROGERS.

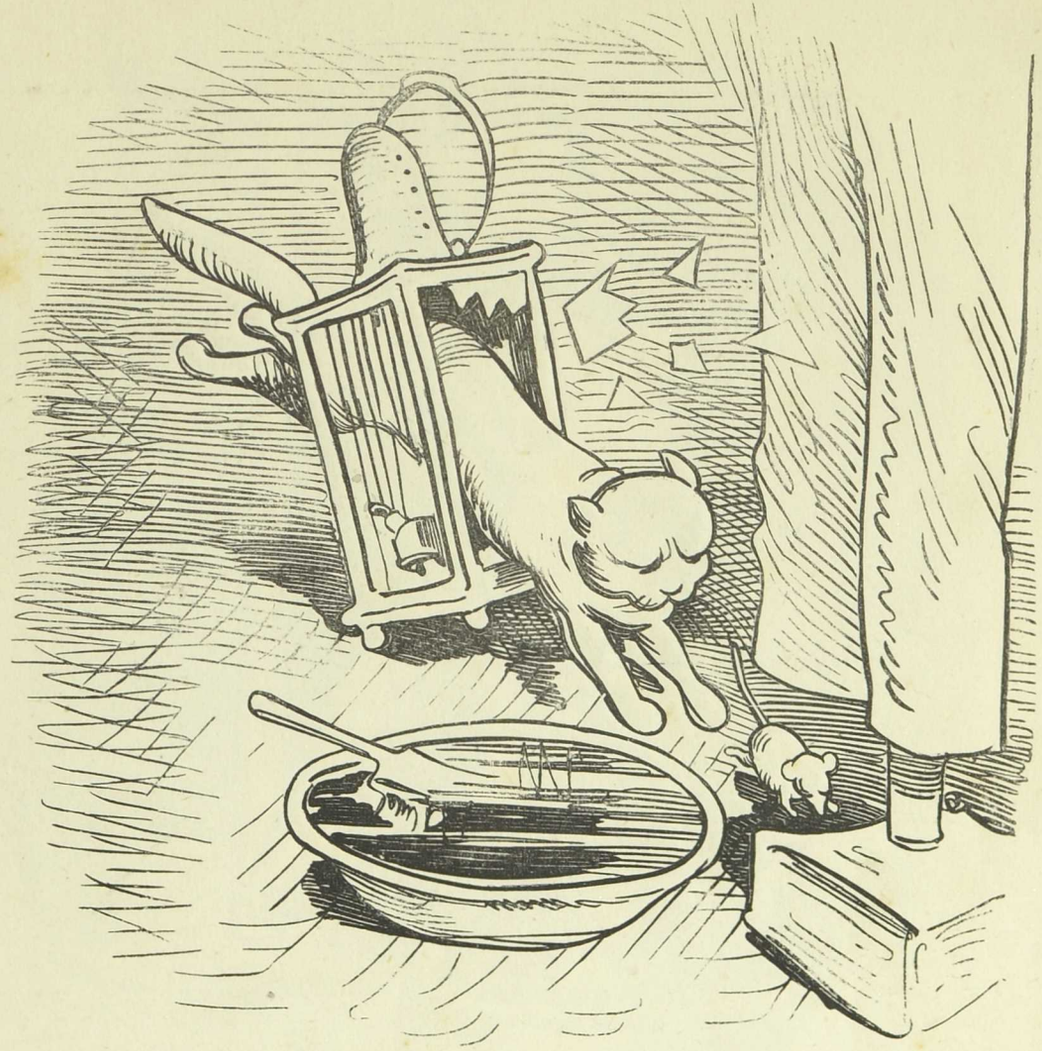
SCENE: THE KITCHEN.

To the left a Mouse-hole: to the right a Boot-hole. A Pump. A Clothes-prop supporting a Pair of Trousers. A Lantern and a Blacking-pot.

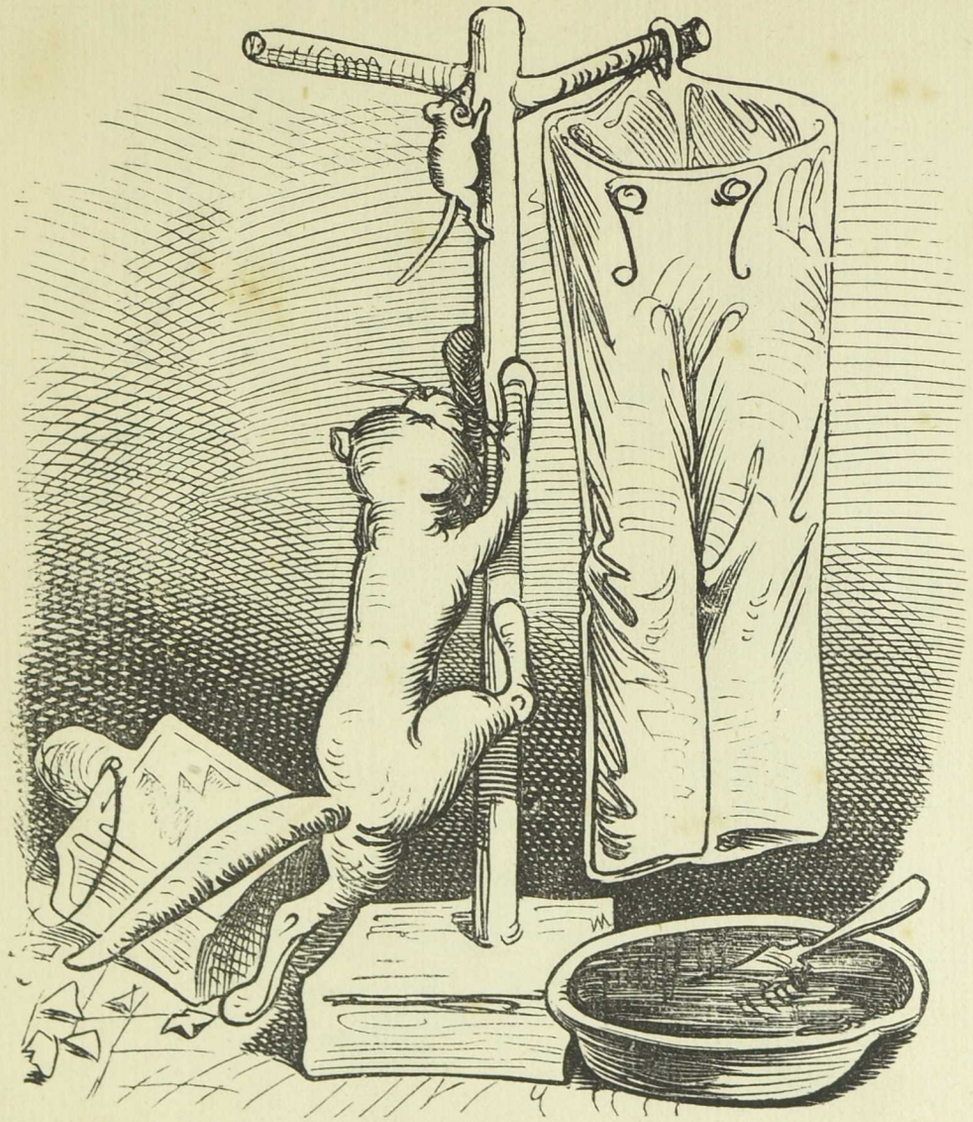




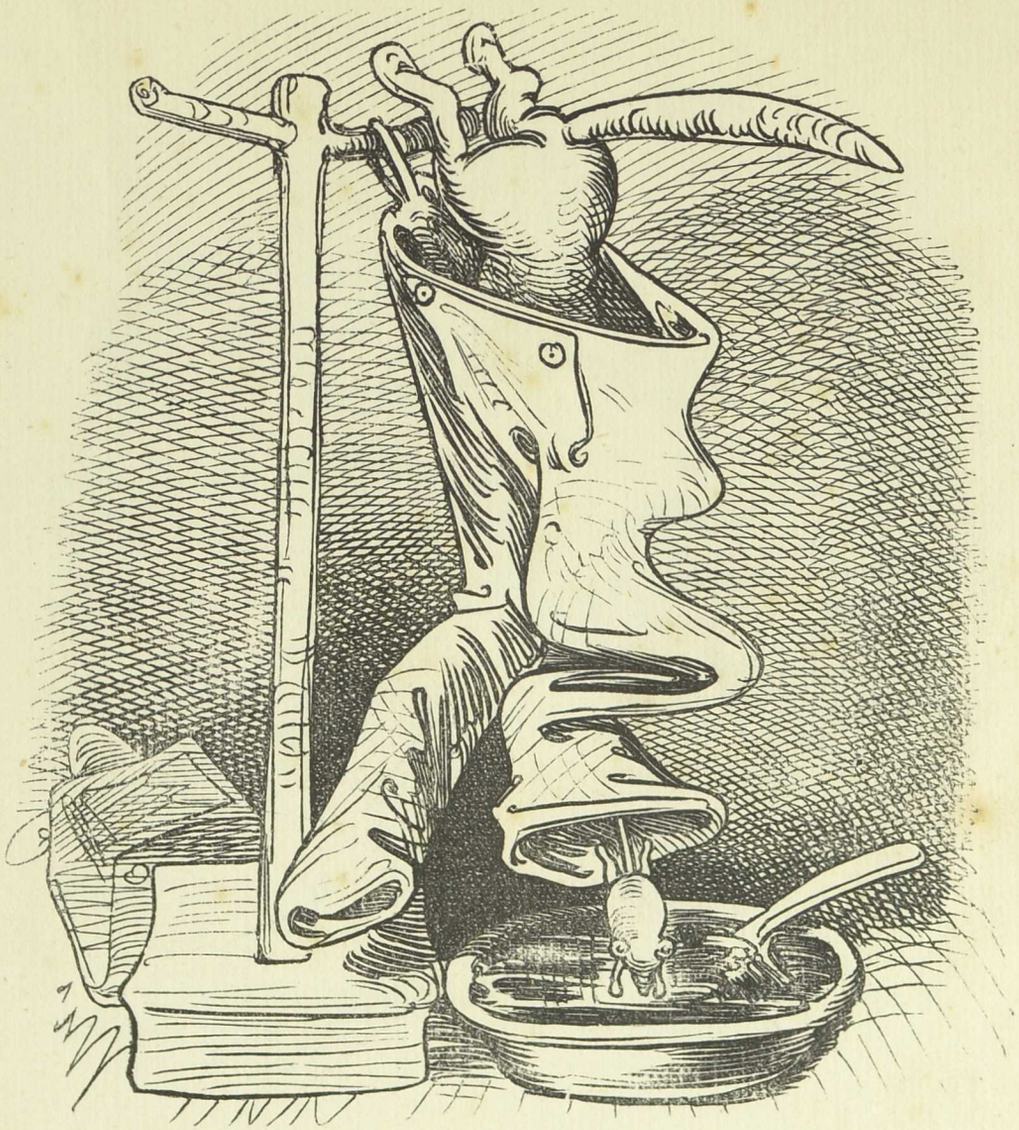
A MOUSE her way towards the lantern wends,
To make a quiet meal off candle-ends,



But Pussy sees—springs—jumps—and then, alas!
She misses Tiny, but she breaks the glass.



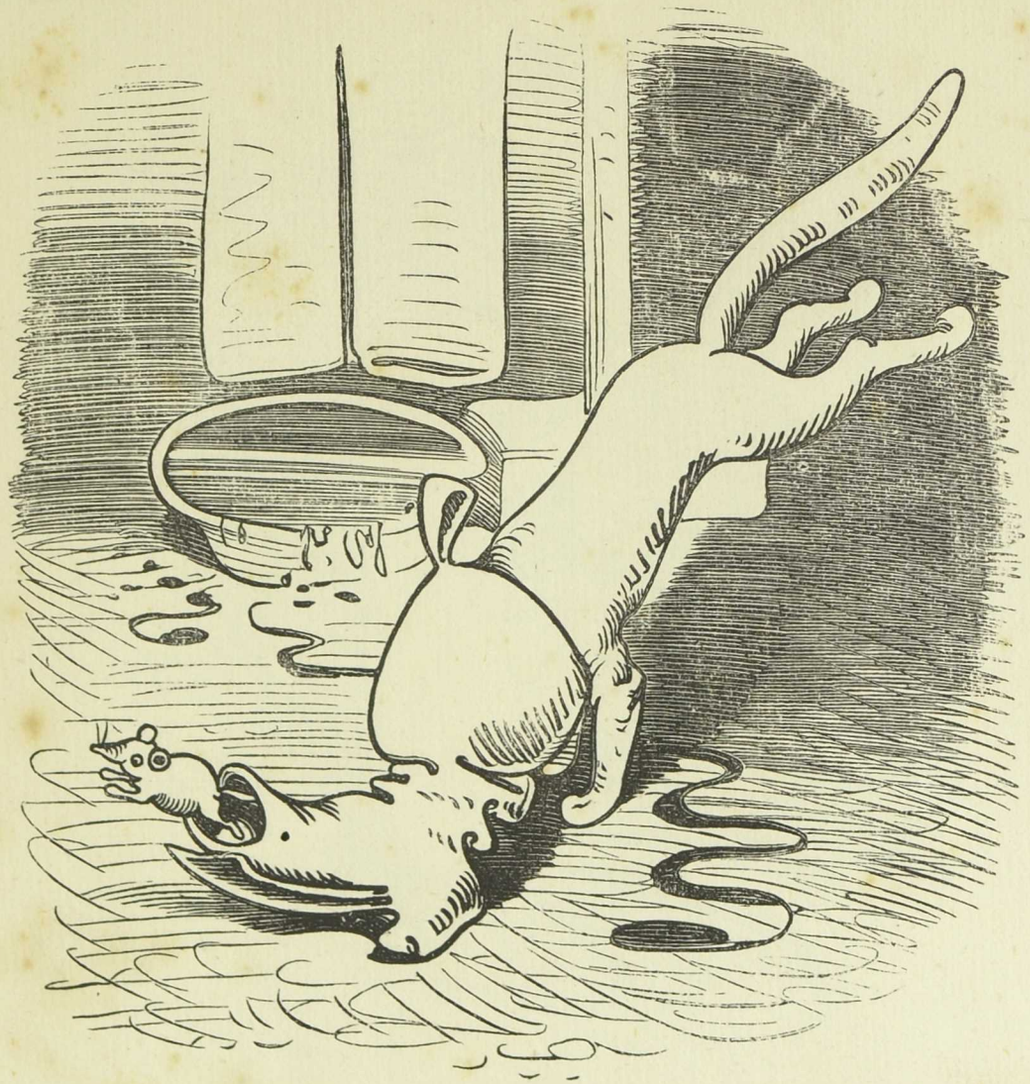
The clothes-prop now the Mouse takes refuge at,
And running up, still hunted by the Cat,



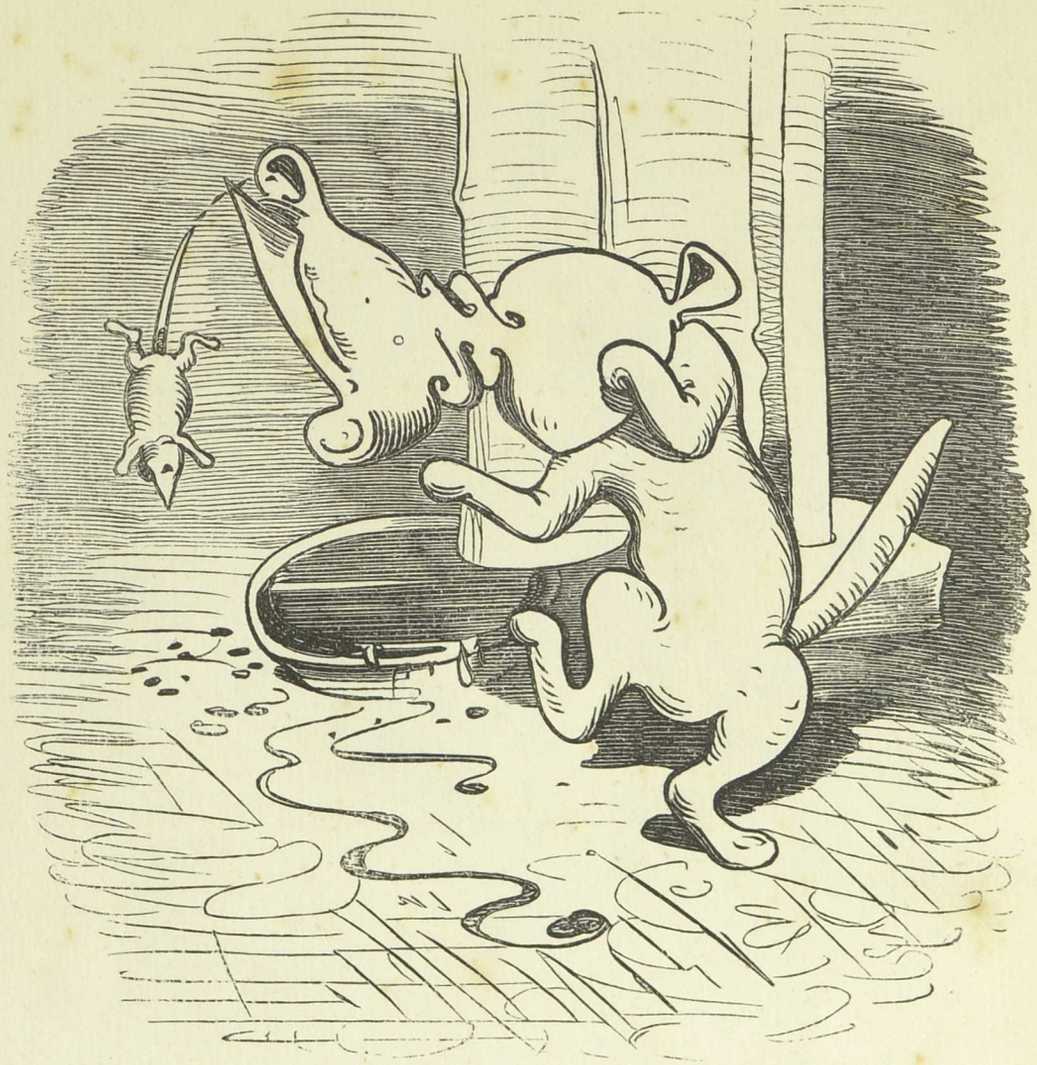
Makes a diversion through the trousers hollow,
And Puss on no account forgets to follow.

Then down they come, all better fortune lacking,
First Mouse, then Cat, head-foremost in the blacking.

The Mouse emerges, looking like a nigger—
Puss looking very much the same, but bigger.

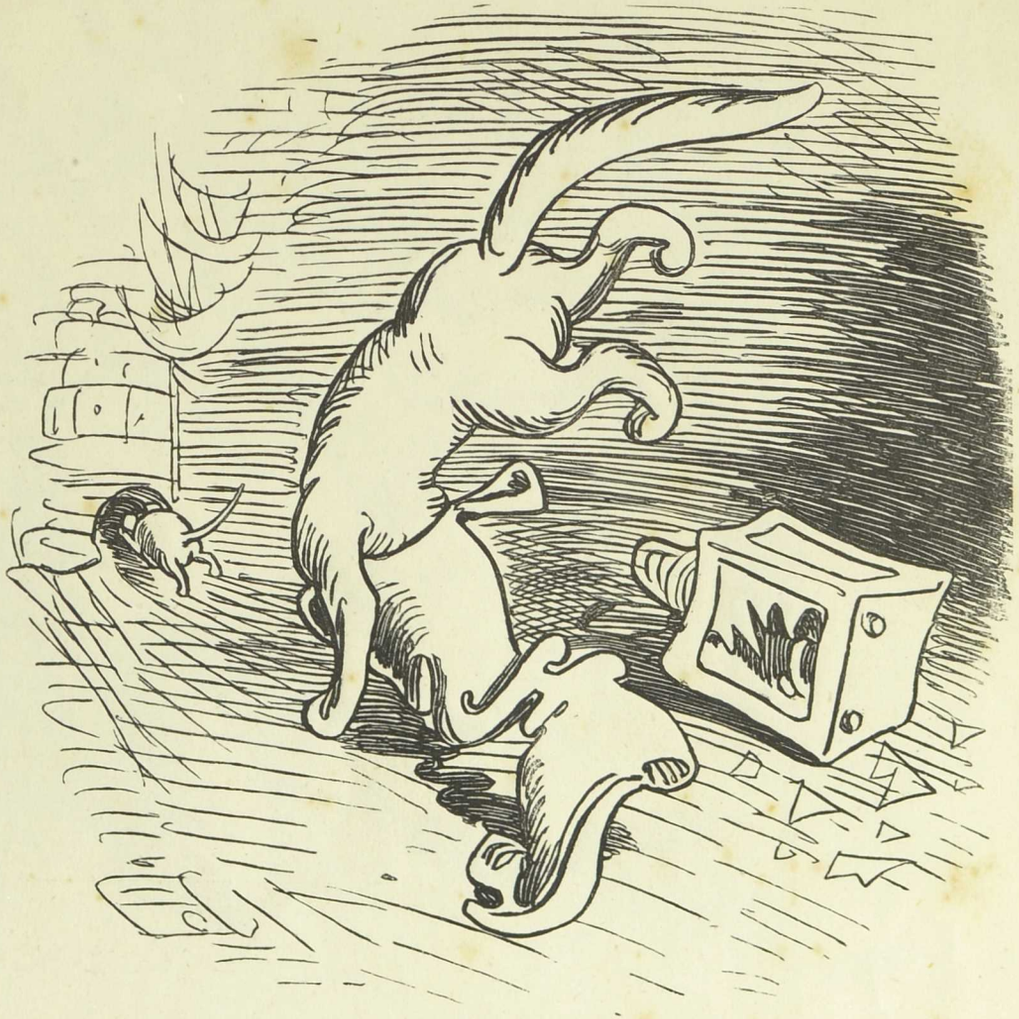


Into a boot, post-haste, our Tiny scrambles,
And Pussy thinks, 'I 'll end that creature's gambols'—

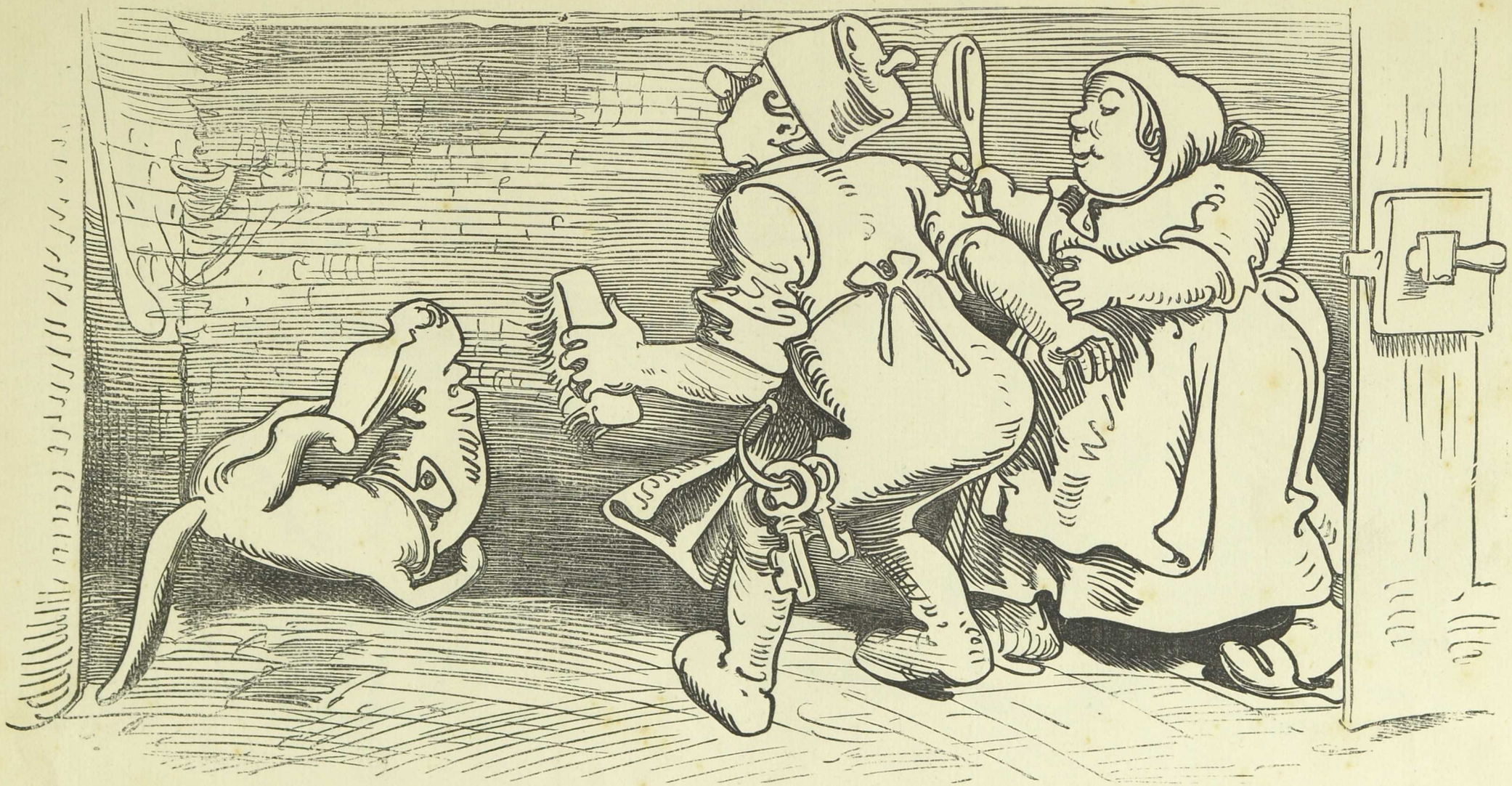


Not for an instant reckoning, you know,
That sometimes boots want mending at the toe.

Out through the hole rushed Mouse, in rushed the Cat—
At least thus far, but forced to stop at that.

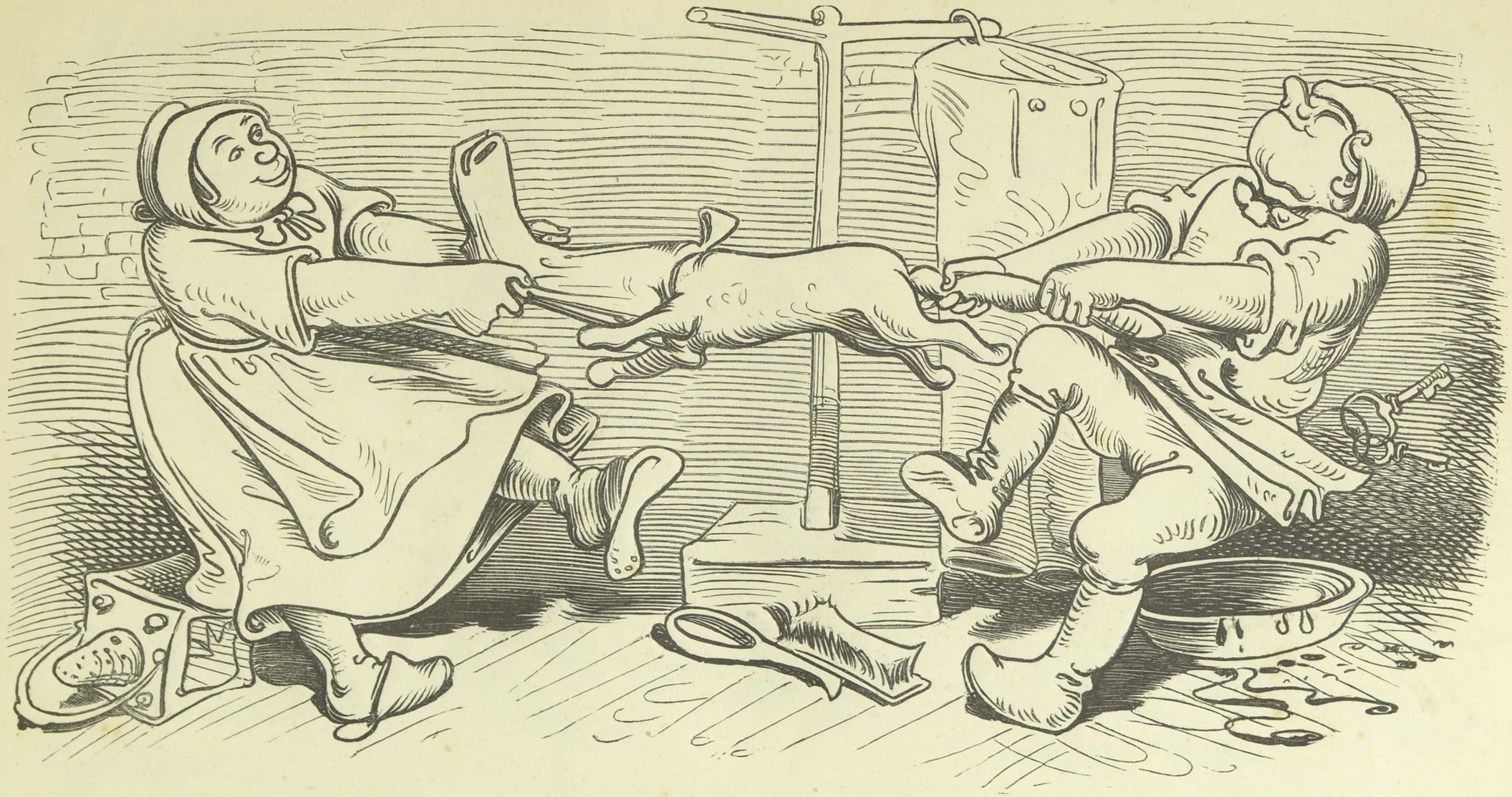


With head stuck fast, she wildly leaps about;
She can't get in, still less can she get out.

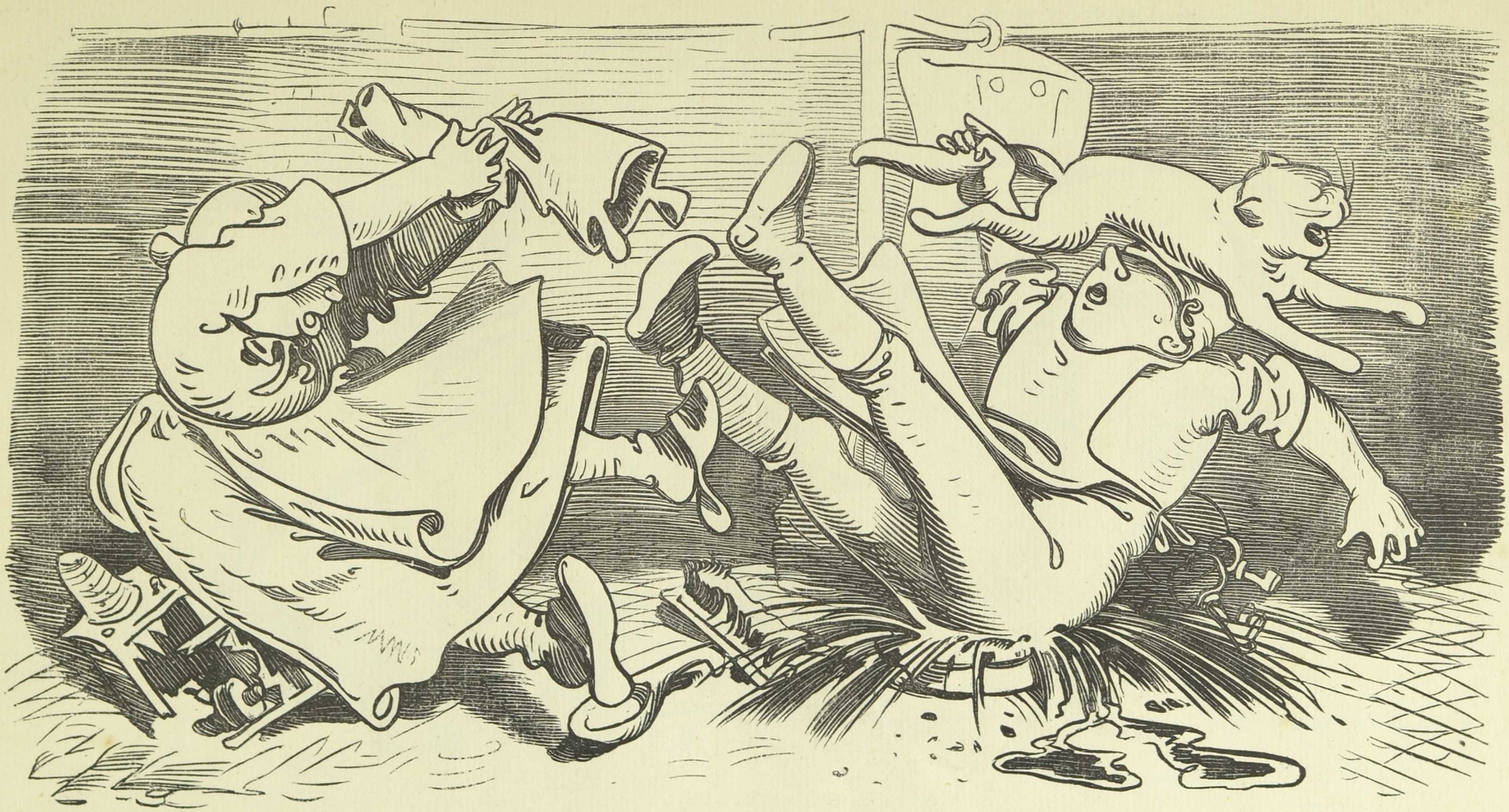


The Cook and Johnny coming in exclaim,
'See! here's a most extraordinary game.'

'What in the world's the matter? Look, my lad!
The Cat and boot have both gone rattling mad.'



'Let's hoist her out,' says Johnny; 'Right!' says she:
And though they pulled as hard as hard could be—
Johnny and Cook—it took an hour at least
Before the wretched creature was released.

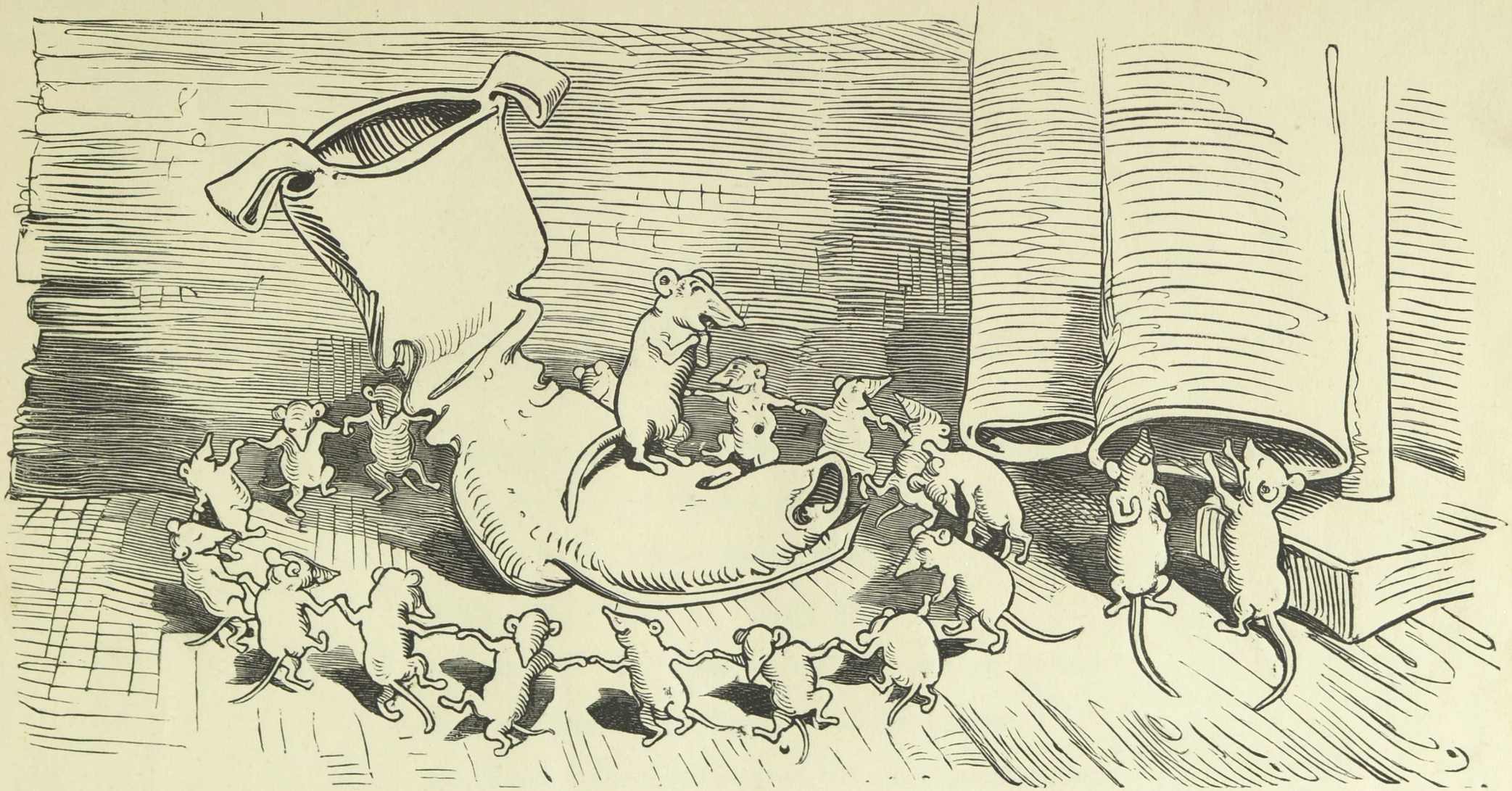


Smash in the lantern falls the Cook, all hot;
Splash goes our Johnny in the blacking-pot;

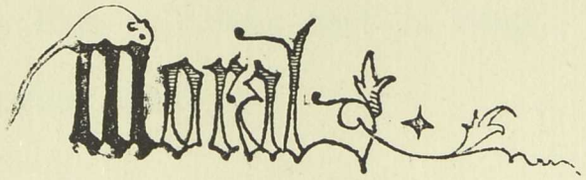
And as they lie in their amazement there,
Don't they just make an interesting pair?

Released at last, the Cat attempts to go,
But fate determines it shall not be so;

And Puss is doomed to one misfortune more,—
Namely, a squeezing in the kitchen door.



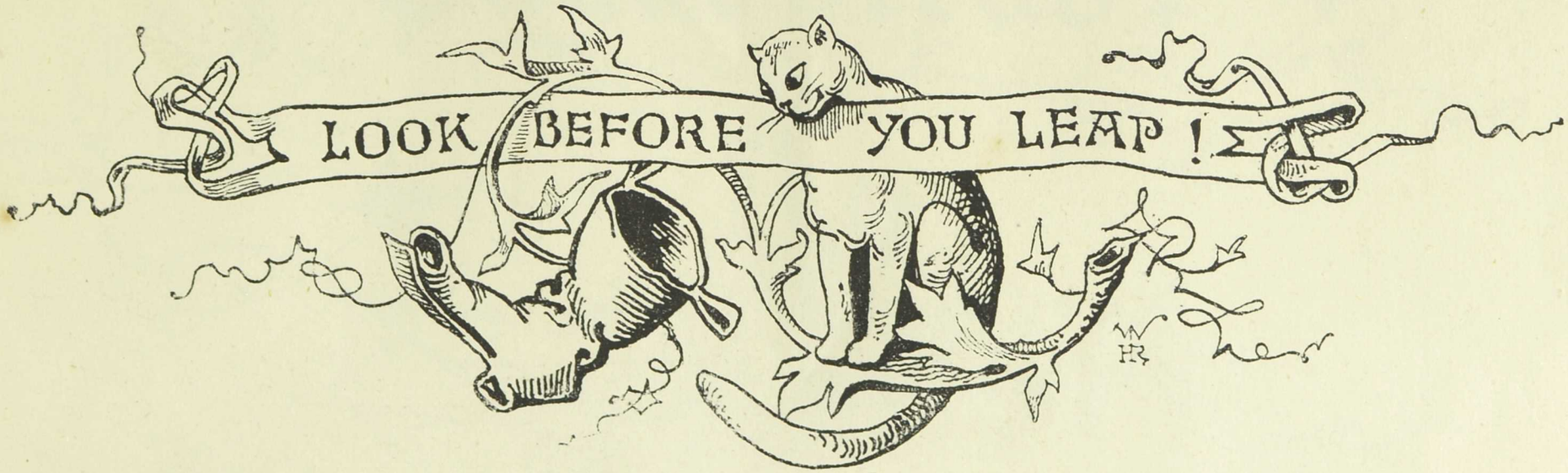
Now all the rescued Mouse's brothers, cousins,
Aunts, uncles, dance around the boot by dozens,
Singing a song with this appropriate ending,
'Long live the glorious boot that wanted mending!!'

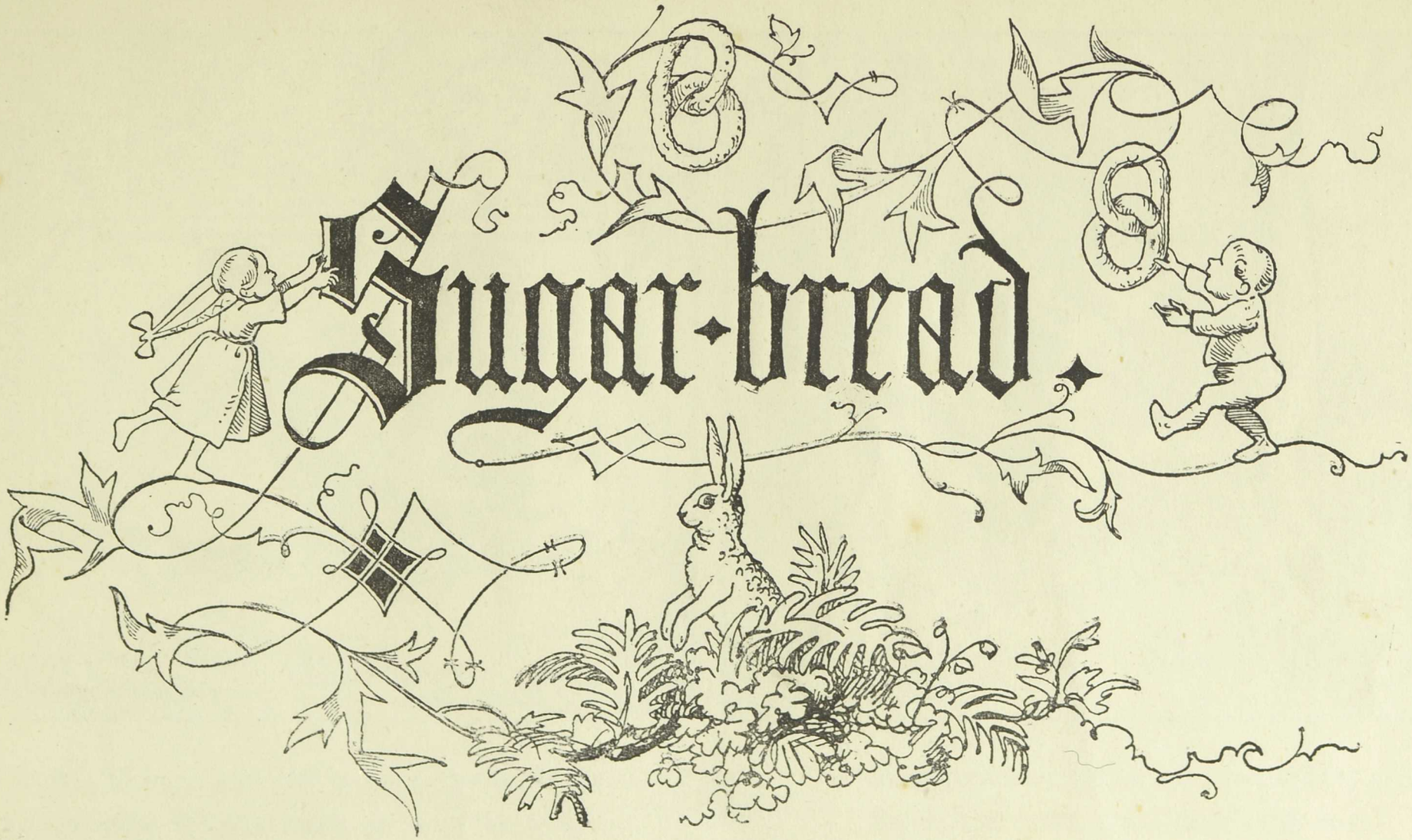


WELL, children, I suppose that we shall quarrel
If to my story I don't tag a moral;
So here it is: that nothing is so rich in
Mishaps as having an untidy kitchen.
Lanterns should rather be on shelves than floors,
And trousers never should be dried indoors.
Don't leave the blacking-pot too near your clothes,
And keep your boots well mended at the toes.

Moral.

Don't harbour mice to nibble things away,
And that, I think, is all I have to say—
Except a hint to Pussy just to keep
In mind this motto:





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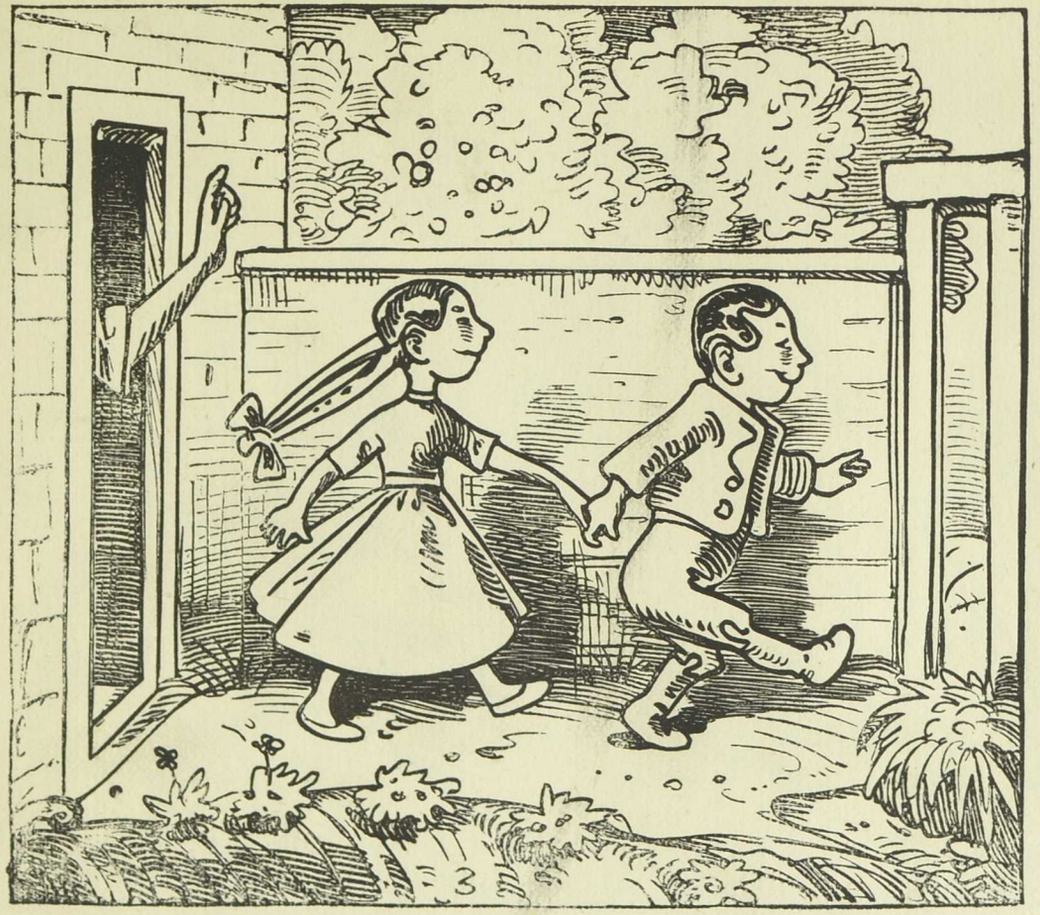
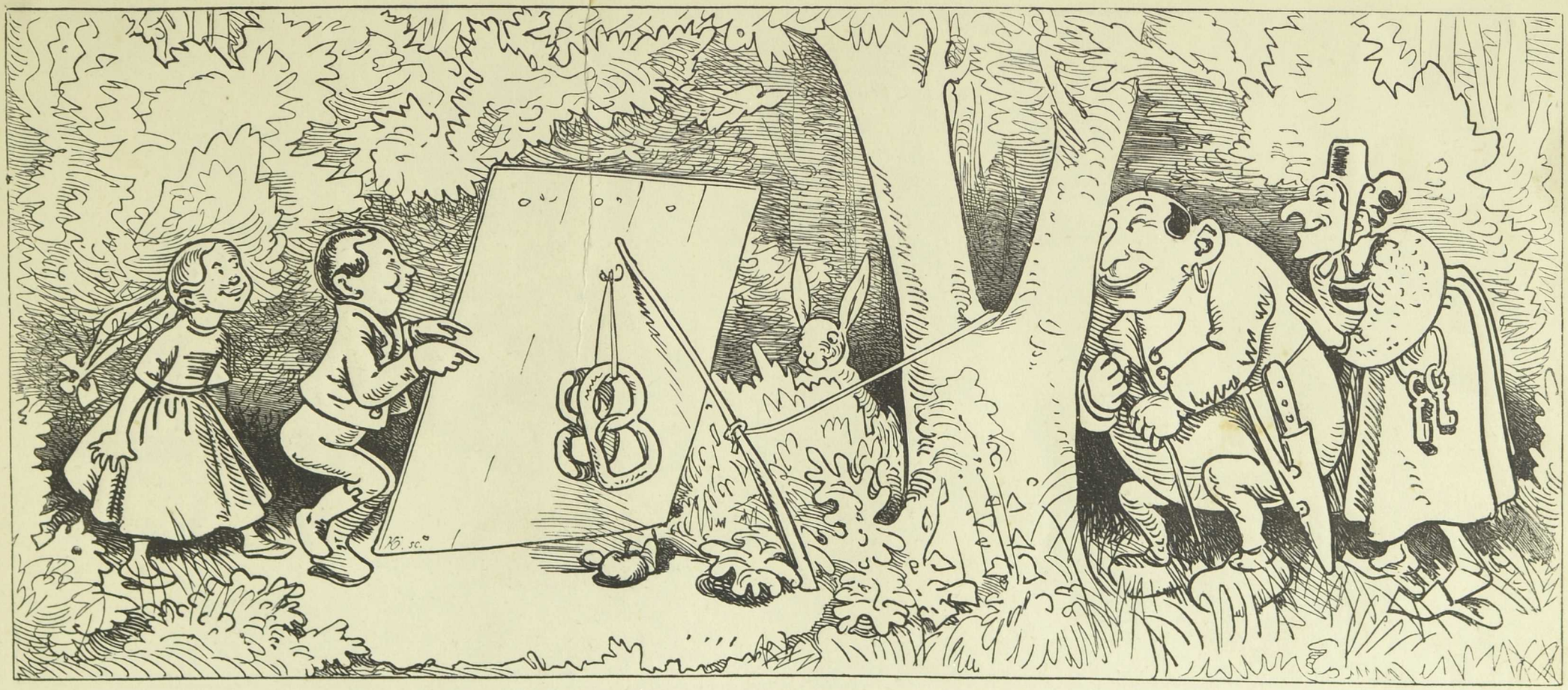
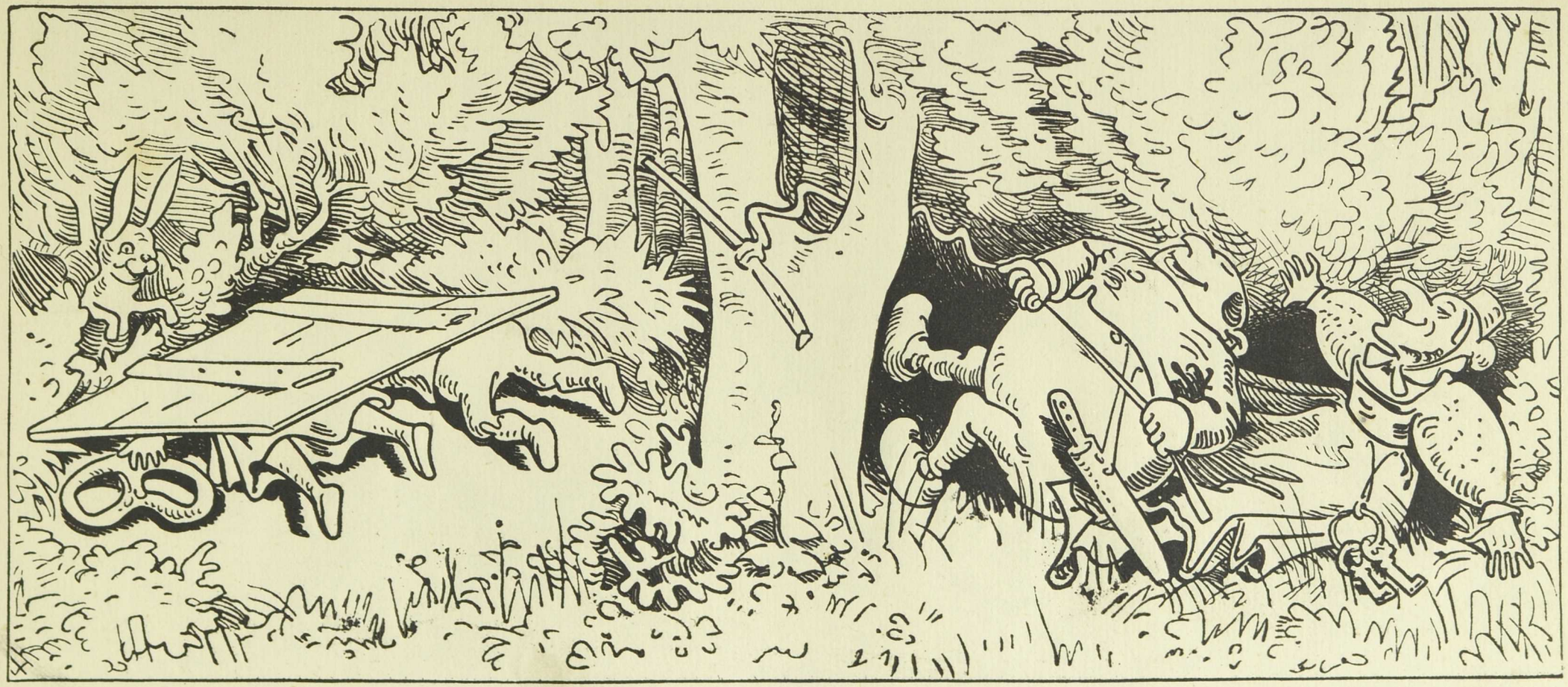


'Now, children,' said the mother, 'mind, be good,
And promise me you won't go near the wood.'

They promise; but, when soon a hare in view
Enters the wood, alas! they enter too.



Now strolling joyous 'neath the greenwood tree,
Hands joined, it isn't long before they see
A trap supplied with Sugar-bread within,
Constructed to decoy small children in.

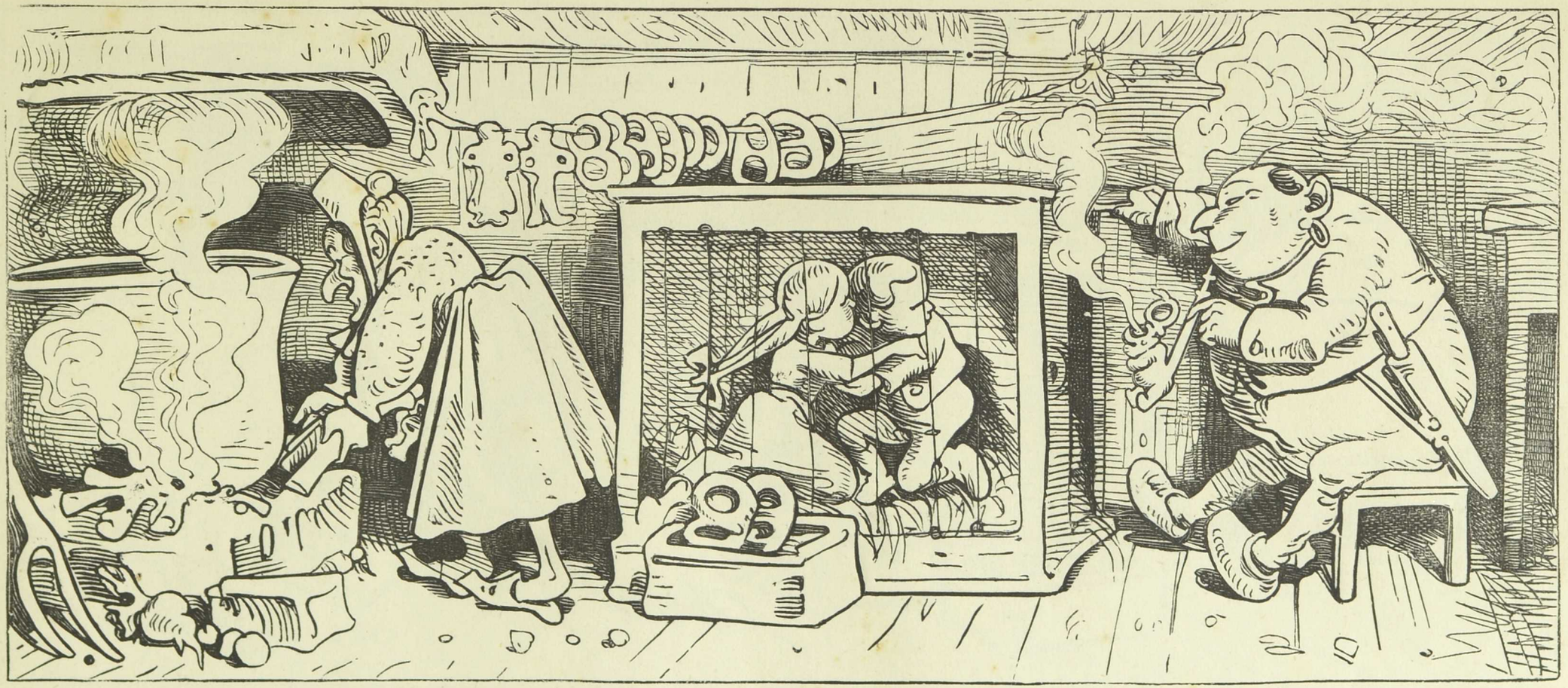


The bait attracts, for nothing, as I 've read,
Tempts little boys and girls like Sugar-bread.

They snatch, and what in the wide world more odd is
Than the trap tumbling on their little bodies?

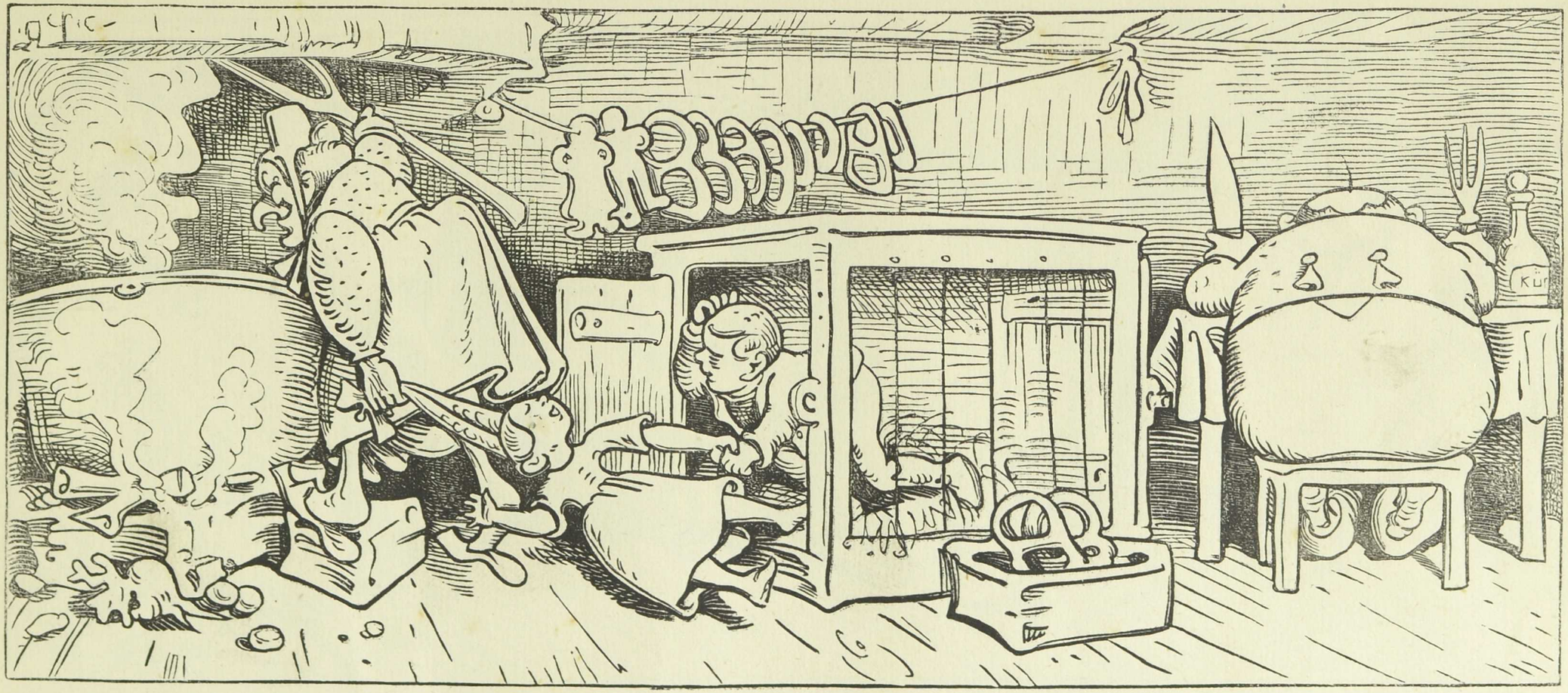
The Hare looks on, and watches in dismay
The children by the Ogres dragged away.

He takes the boy, *she* takes the little girl,
One by the breech, the other by the curl.



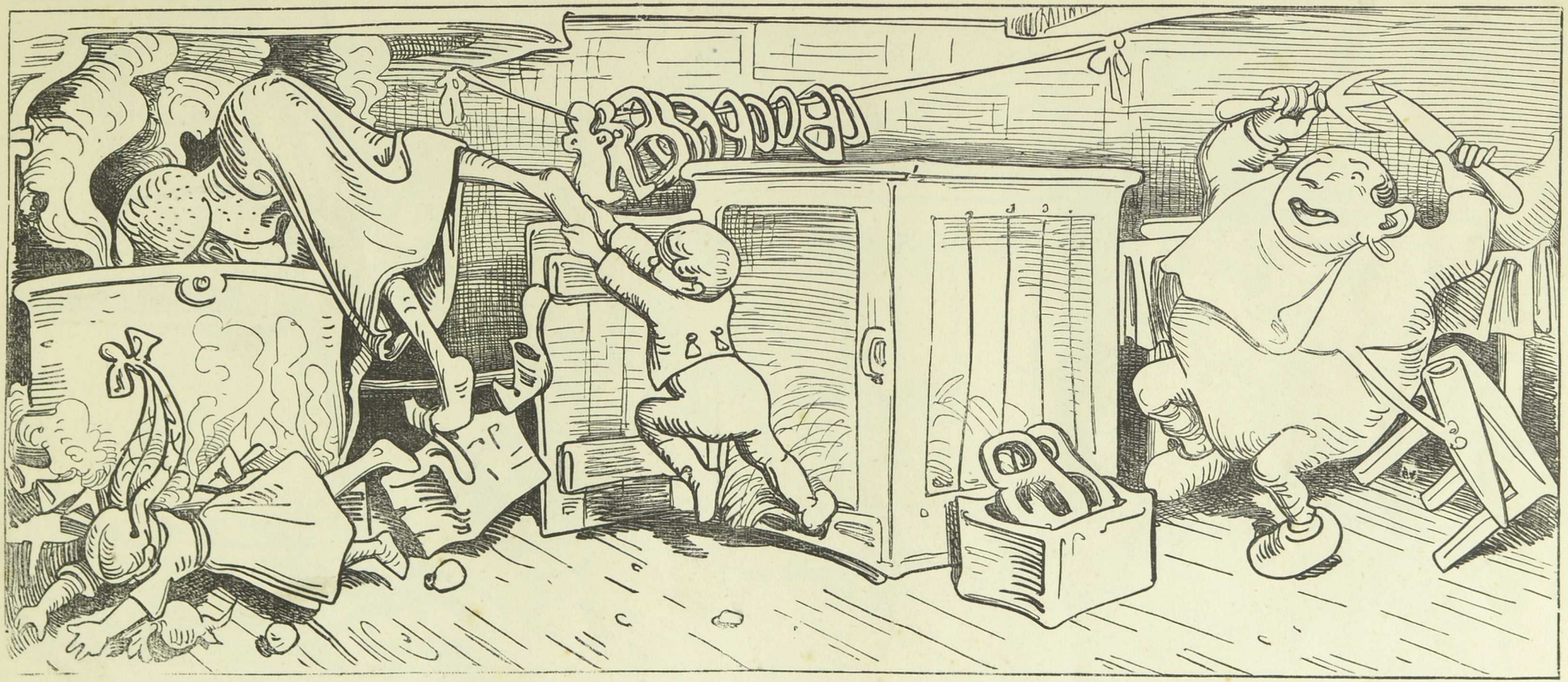
When on their plump cheeks then the Ogre looked,
He cried, 'Now let these little dears be cooked!'

His wife, imbued with just the same desire,
To boil the babes made up a roaring fire.



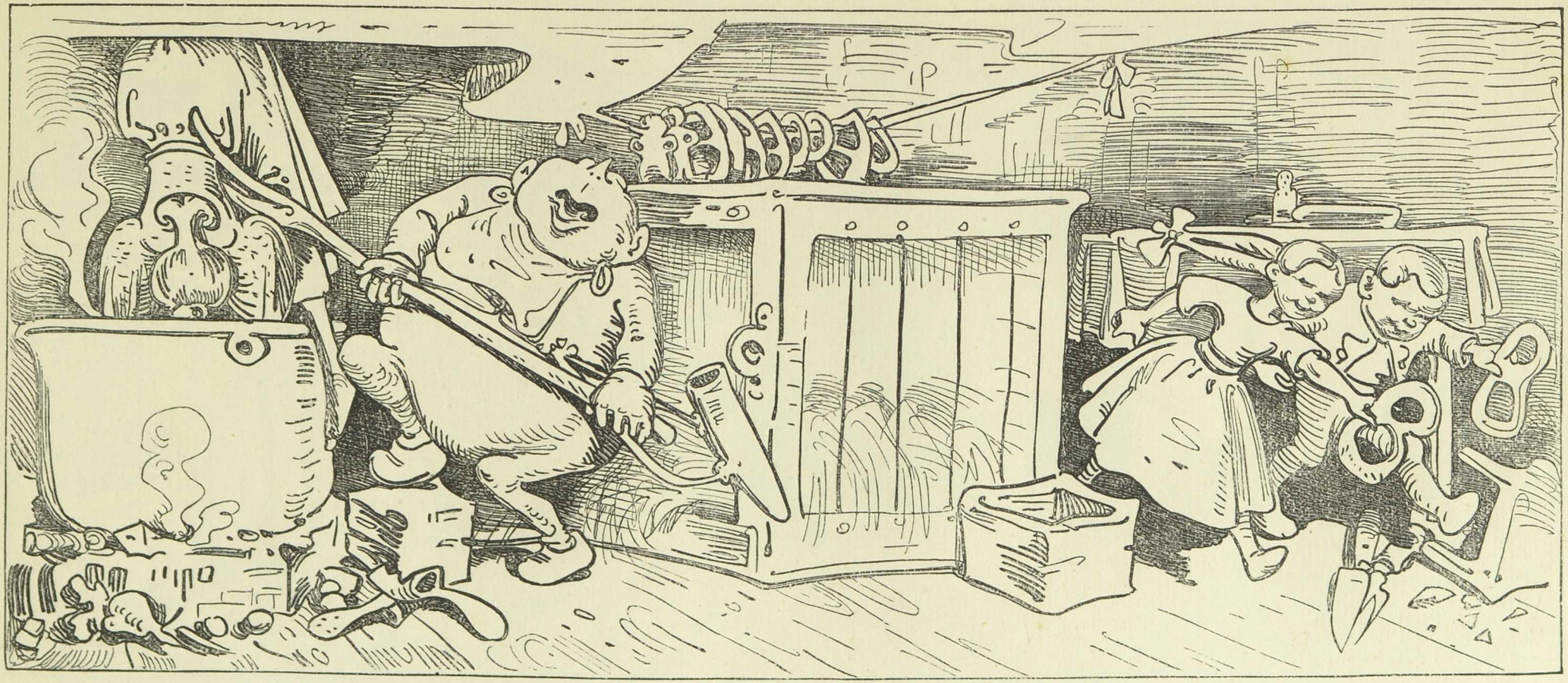
The bloated ruffian to the table sits,
Longing to chop his relish into bits,

While the bad wife, his dinner to prepare,
Seizes the little Darling by her hair.



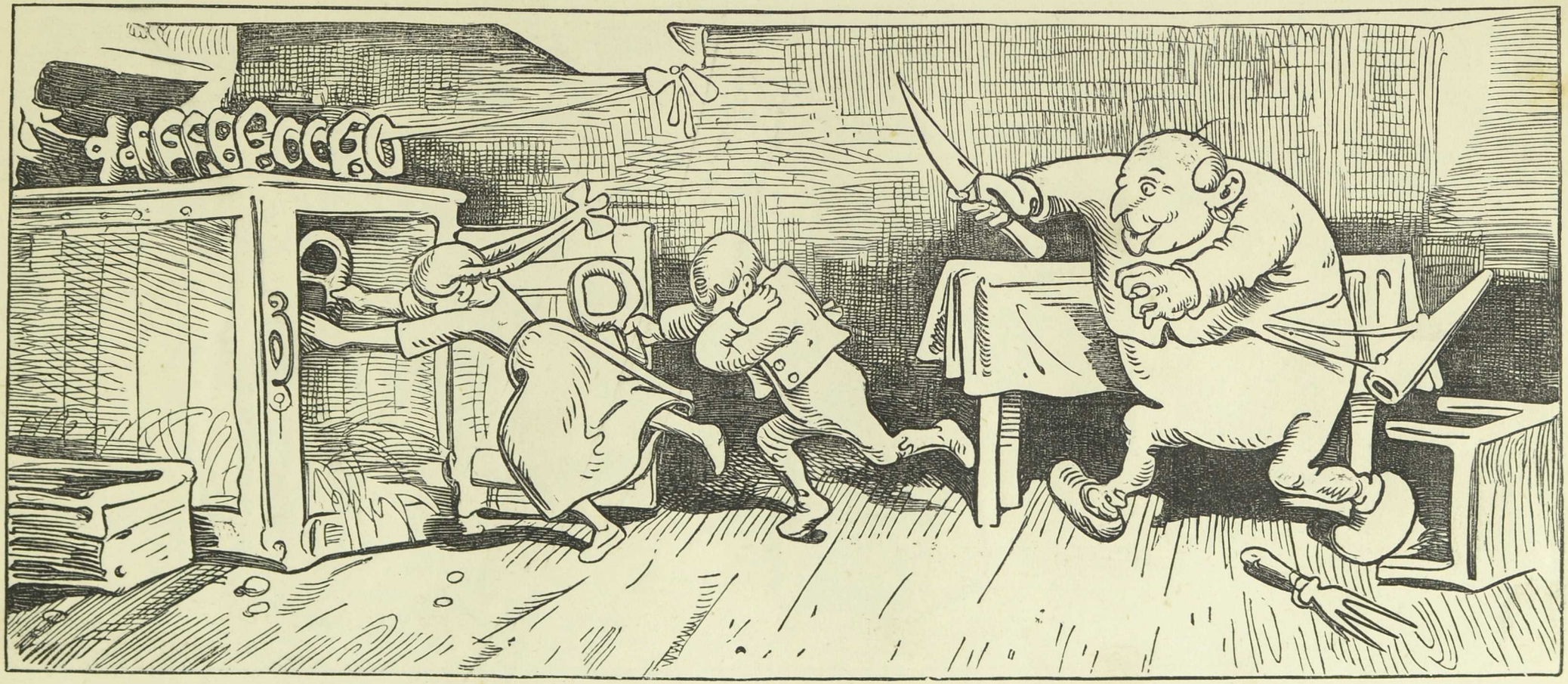
But little Darling's brother thought and said,
''Twere better some one should be boiled instead;'

So from his cage the youthful hero got,
And tipped the bad wife plump into the pot.



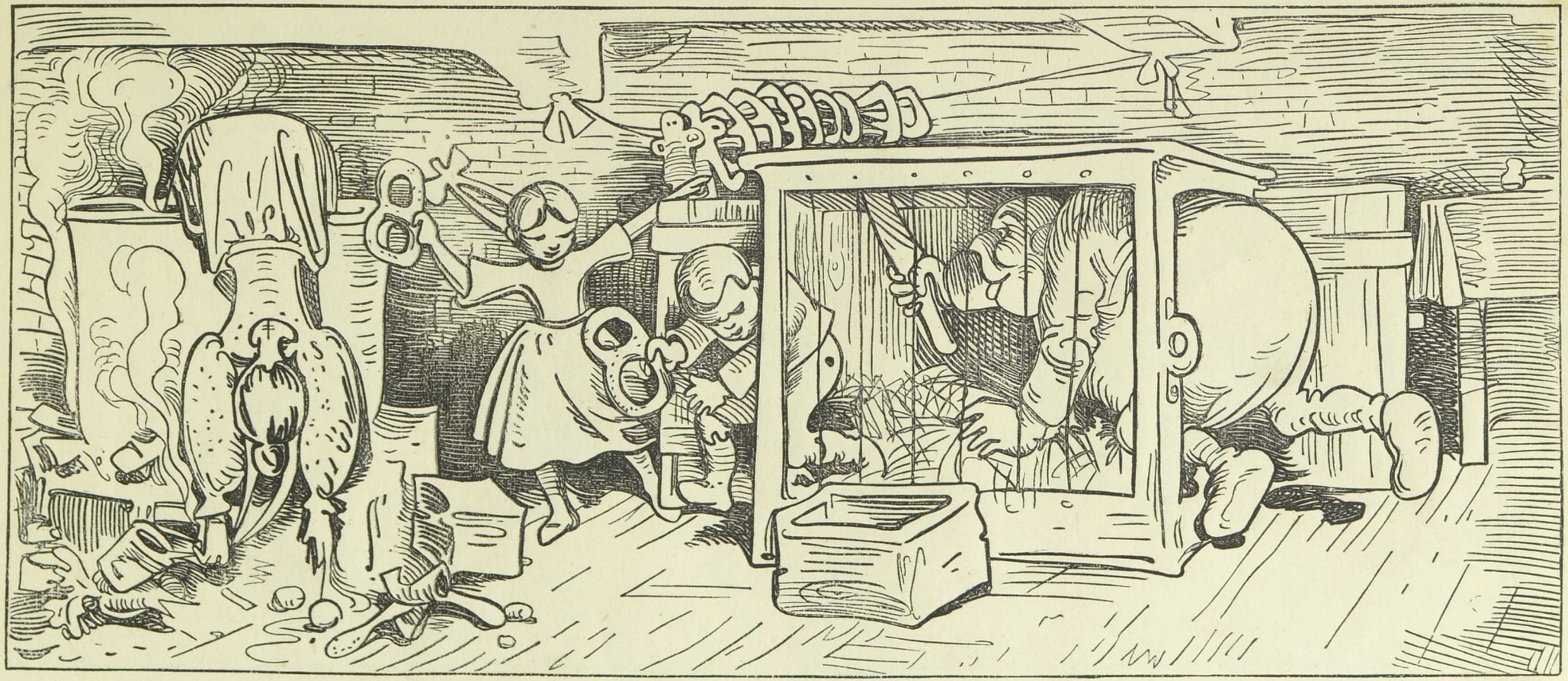
The Ogre, hoping still for signs of life,
With a great prong forked out his wicked wife;

While at the same time both the children fed
With gusto on their favourite Sugar-bread.



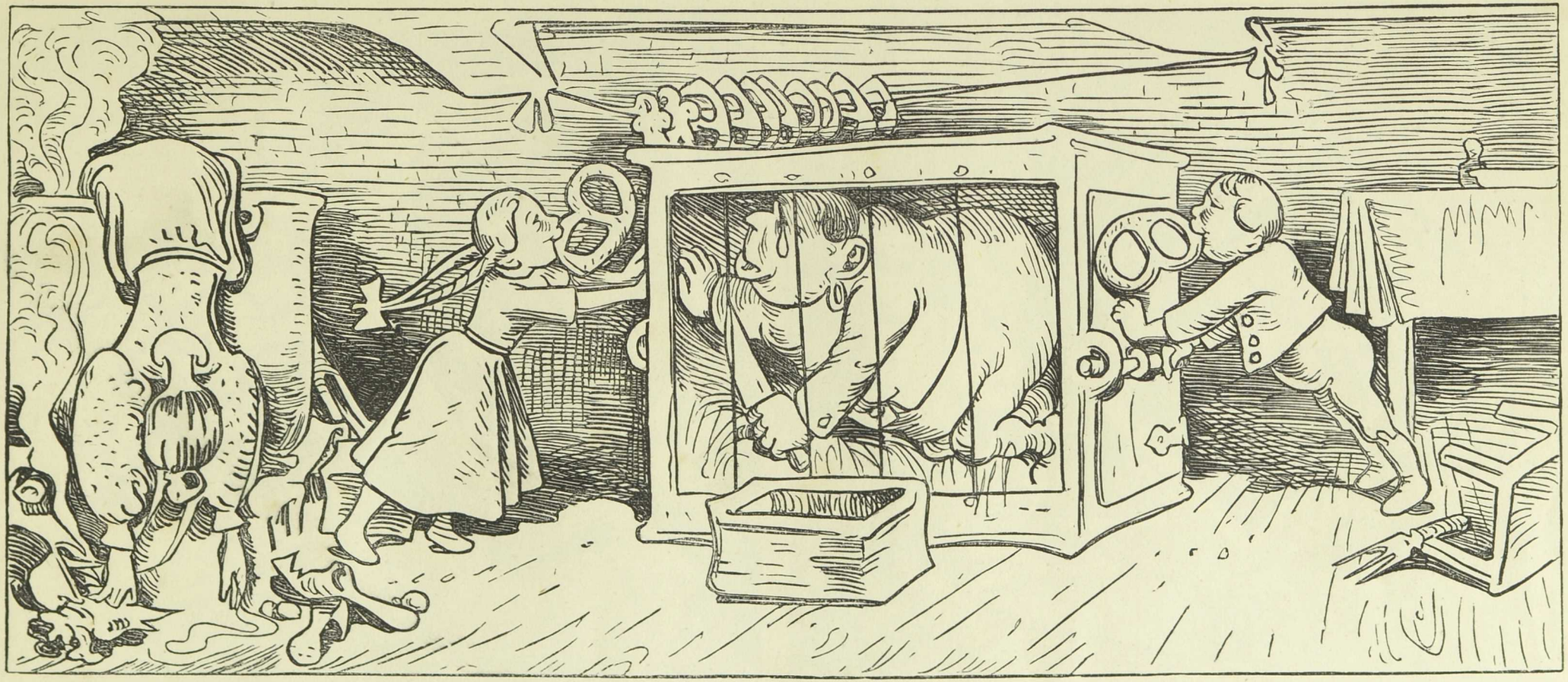
The hungry Ogre now, with sharpened knife,
Rushes to take the little creatures' life;

They seeking refuge from his murderous rage
In their uncomfortable baby cage.



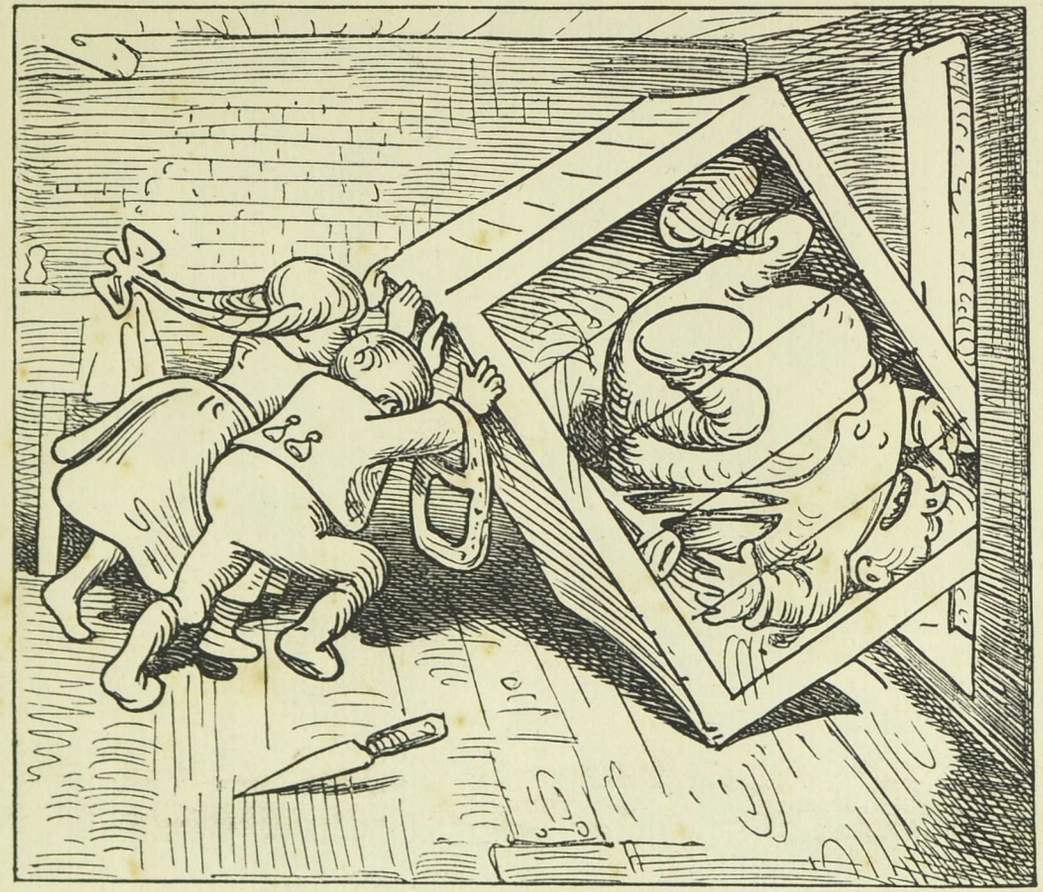
Now baby cages always have, you 'll find,
One door in front, another door behind,

Which proved a godsend to our little chicks,
But put the greedy Ogre in a fix.

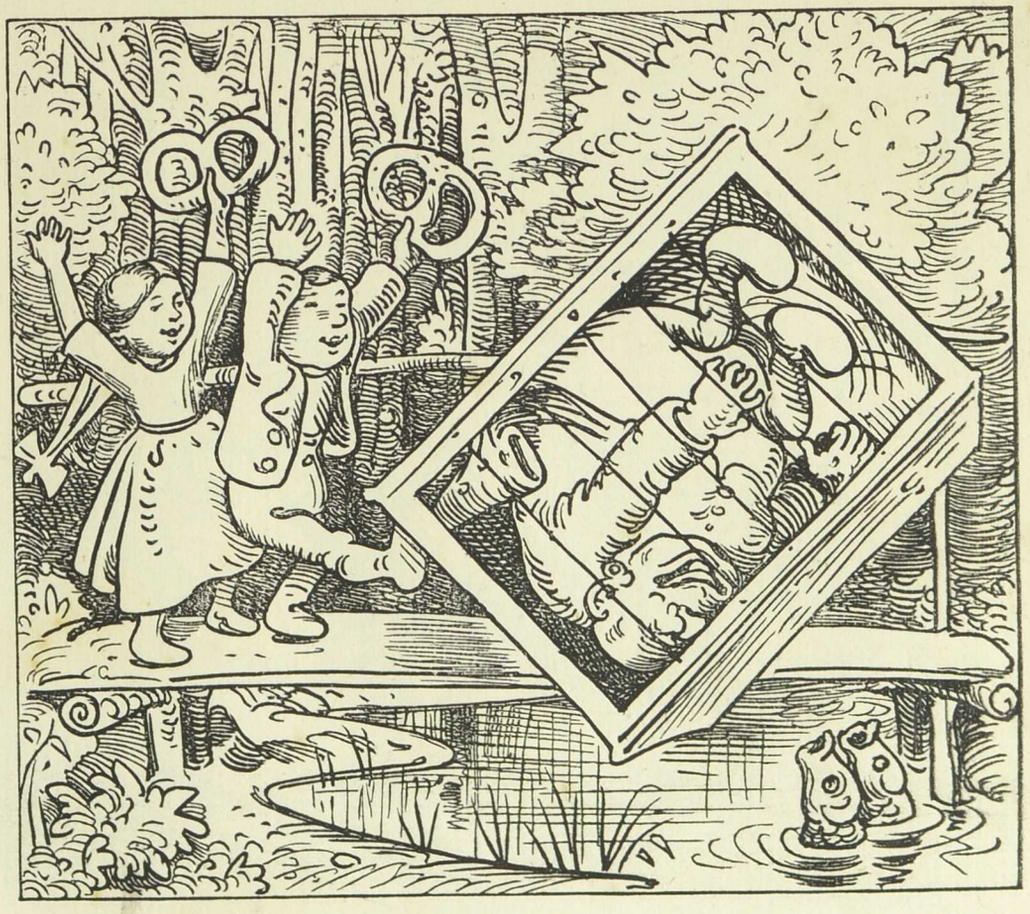


For now they plan a way to help each other—
Darling this side, the other side her brother.

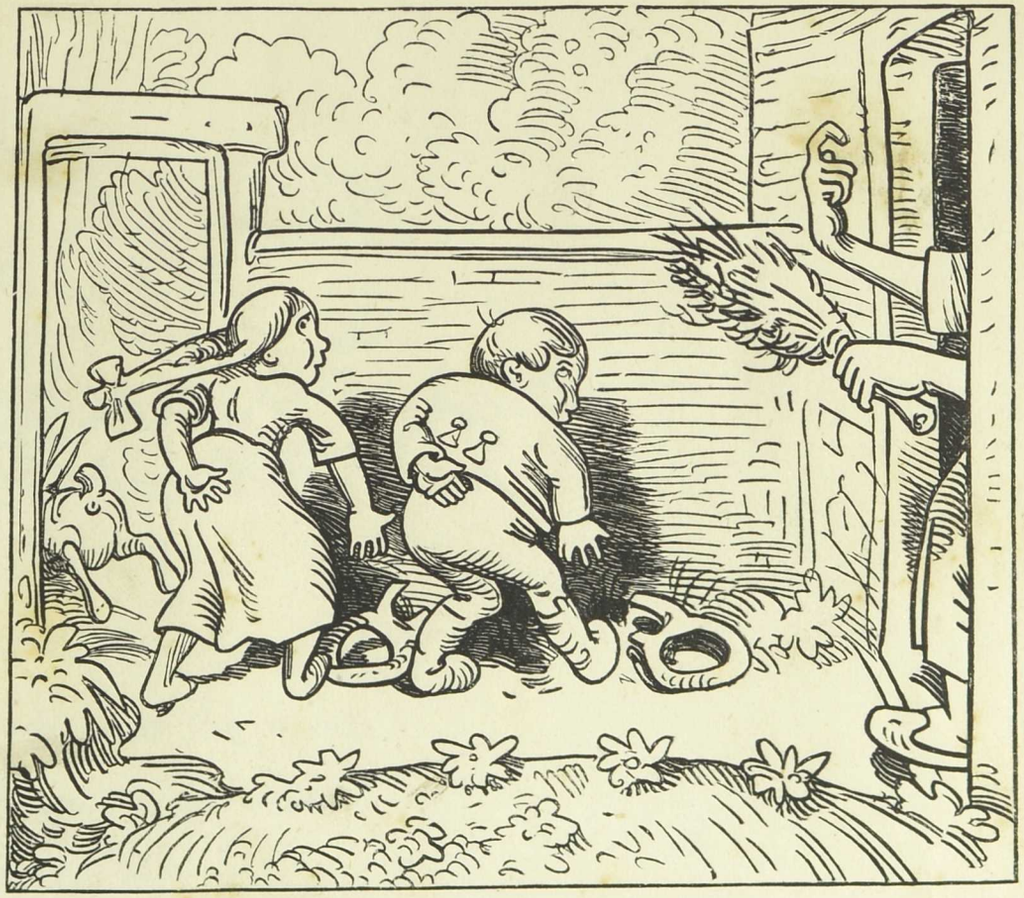
How hard they push you 'll see upon this page,
Till safe the Ogre 's bolted in the cage.



And then they roll the cage along like steam,
Resolved to pitch the Ogre in the stream;



And, as he overturns, their only wish is
That he 'll be well digested by the fishes.



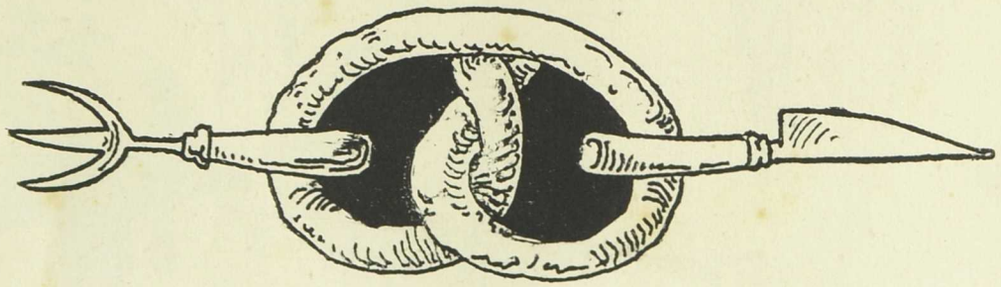
Think how delighted were they when they could
Be now once more 'The Children in the Wood;'

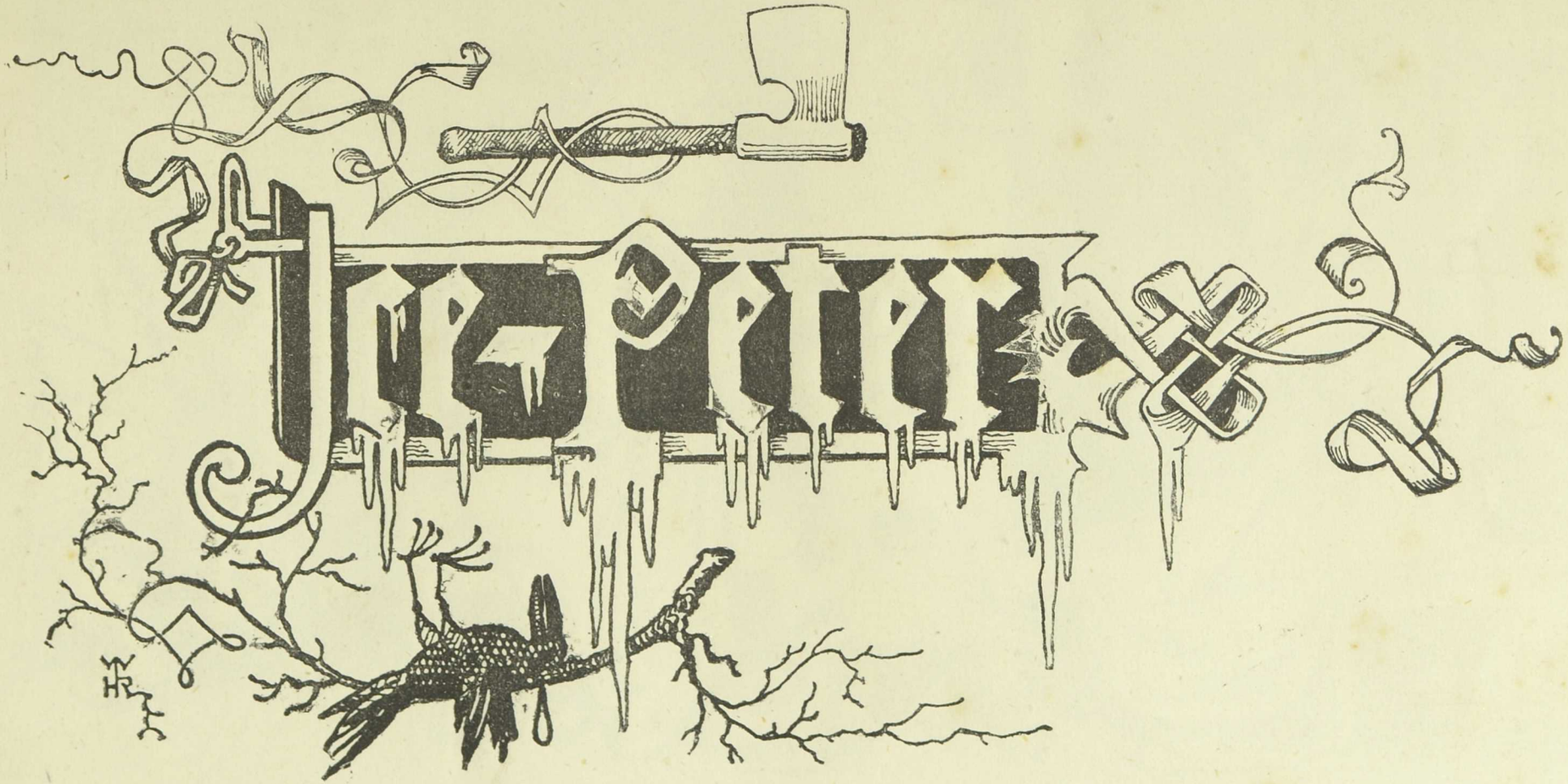
But what they got at home I won't express,
But rather leave my little friends to guess.

UNLESS you have permission first, be good,
And, hare or no hare, don't go near the wood.
When once in trouble, don't give way to fits
Of nervous helplessness, but use your wits;
For if these little ones had merely holloaed,
And screamed for help, by this time they'd been swallowed.

Moral.

Mind that you never let me hear it said
You set your hearts too much on Sugar-bread;
For the big Ogre all his time employs
In looking out for greedy girls and boys.
And now, my dears, as I must end my rhyme,
Good-bye—another tale another time.



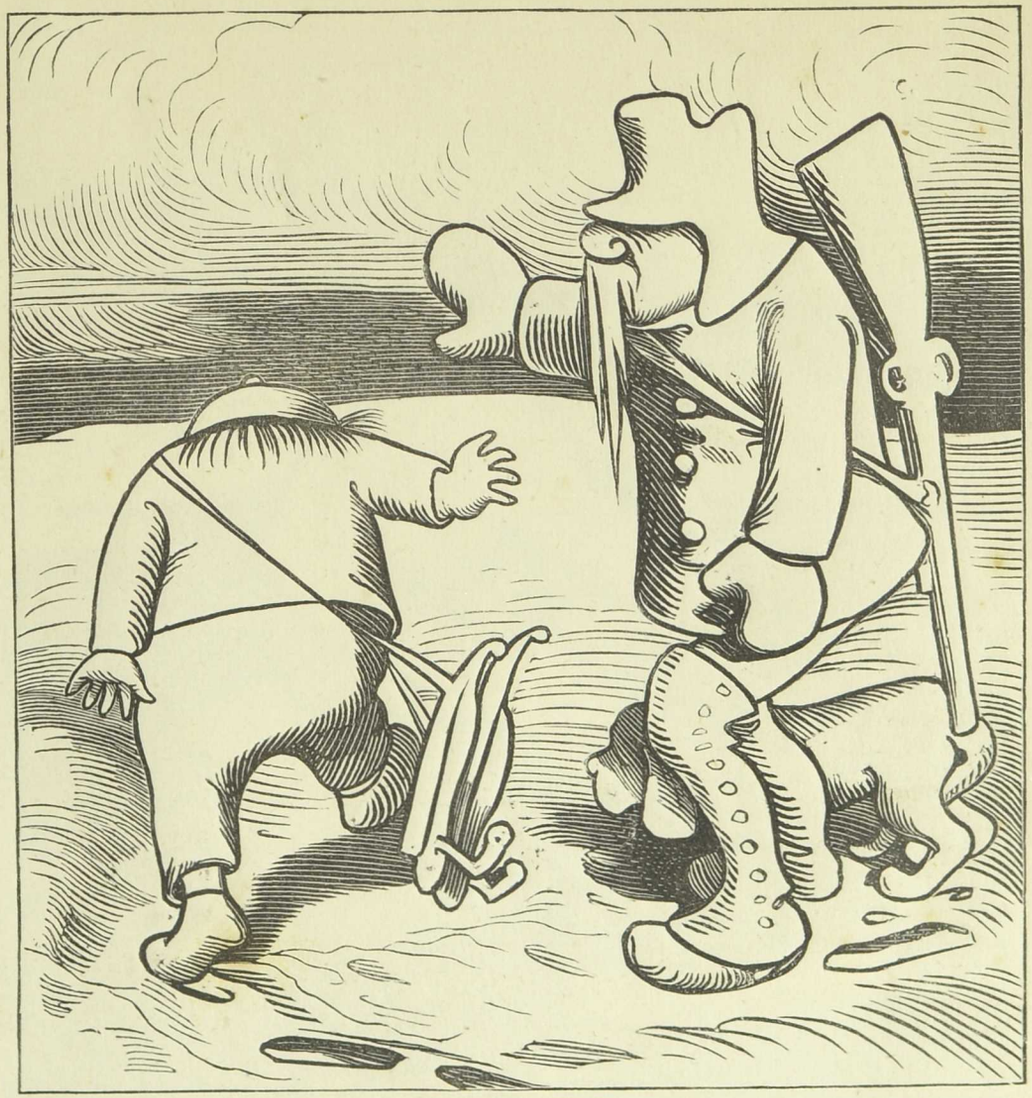


WITH EXPLANATORY VERSES BY W. HARRY ROGERS.

FUEL was scarce, the weather icy cold;
Who could do more than nurse the fire and scold?

Who 'd venture out? Why, much against the rule,
Peter must needs go skating on the pool.

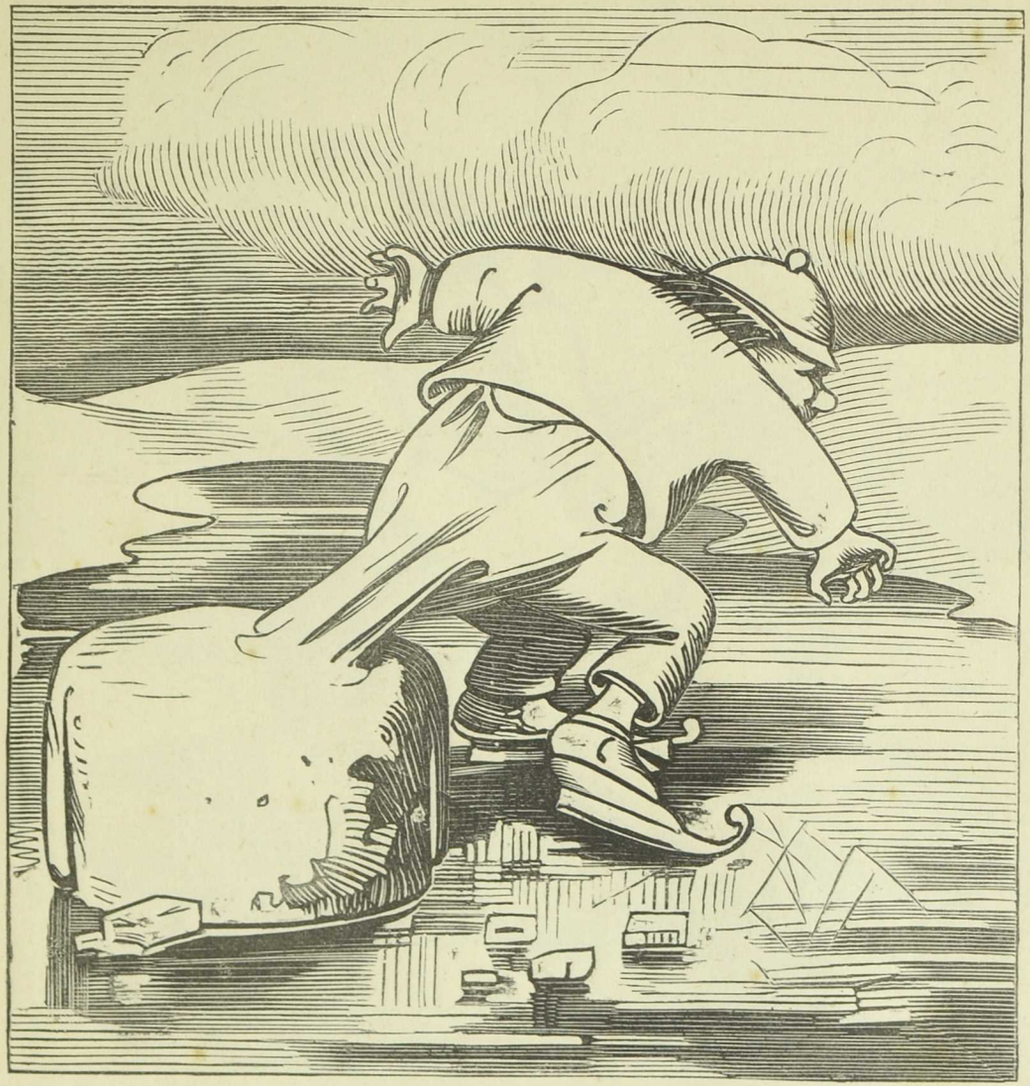
Imagine if it did or did not freeze—
The very rooks dropped frozen from the trees;



And so a Sportsman said, along the way,
'Peter, don't think of going there to-day.'

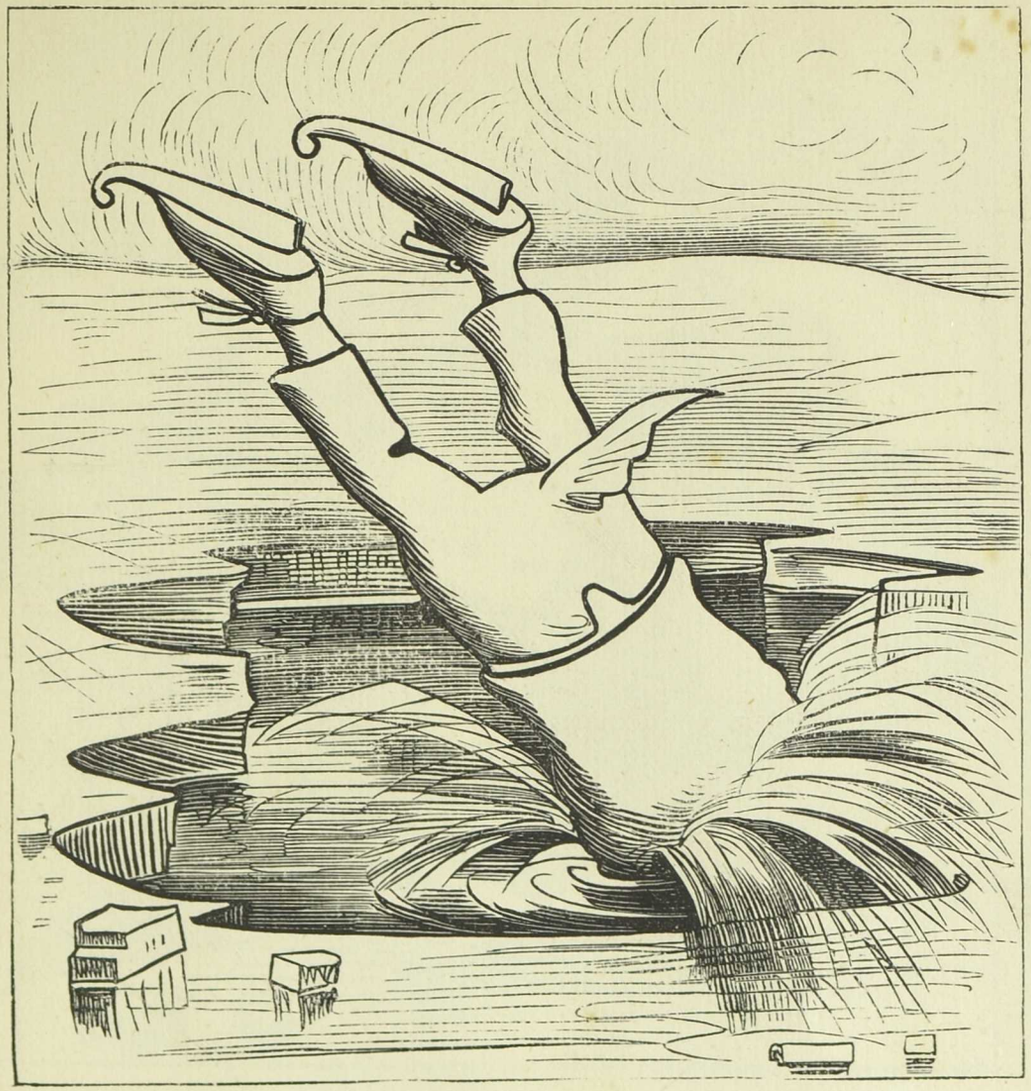
Obstinate boy, he meets a frozen hare—
'T would warn the wise, but what does Peter care?

Off to the ice he goes, and all alone,
To put his skates on sits upon a stone.

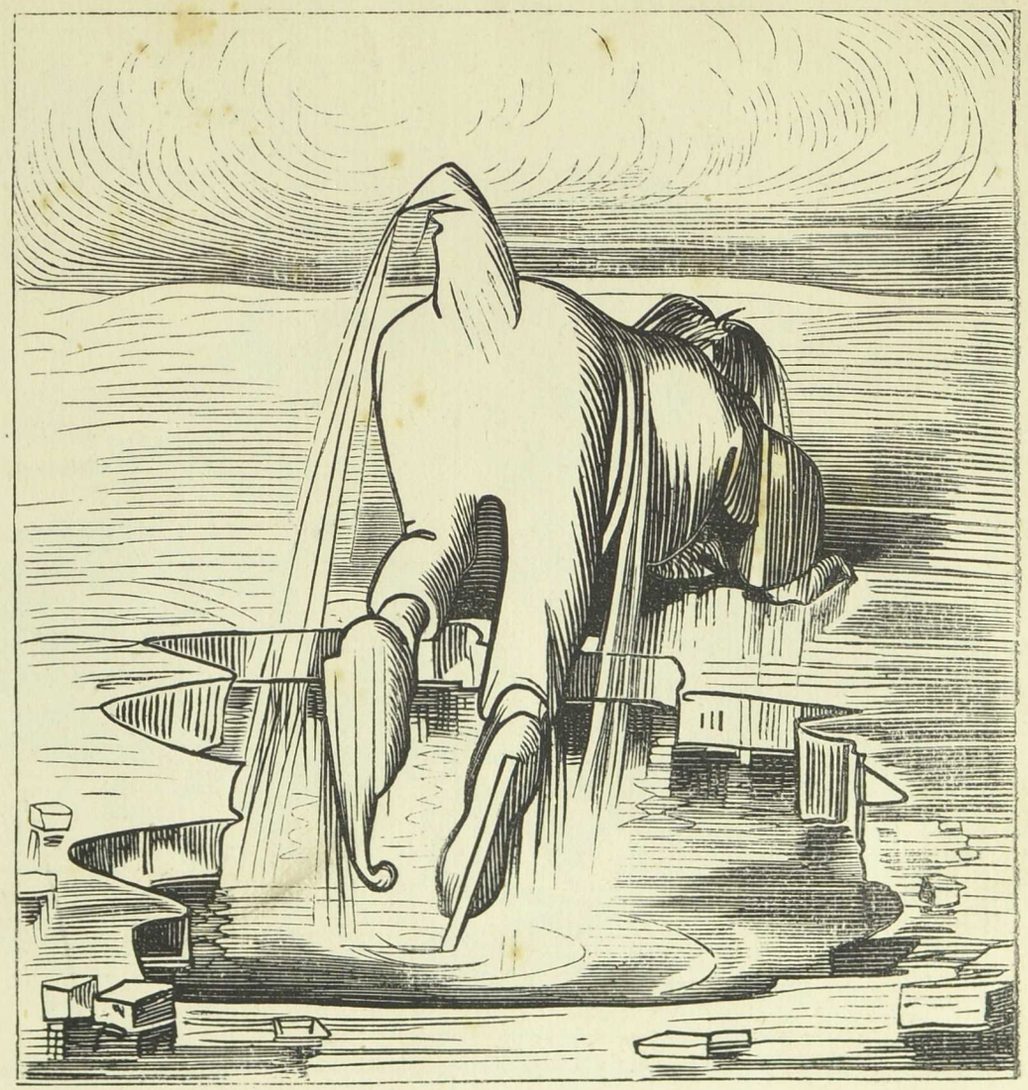


Now sitting down is plain enough, of course,
But getting up 's a different-coloured horse;

And if you look upon this page you 'll find
Peter left part of his costume behind.



Ice his idolatry, and ice his soul,
Onward he rushed, and fell into a hole;

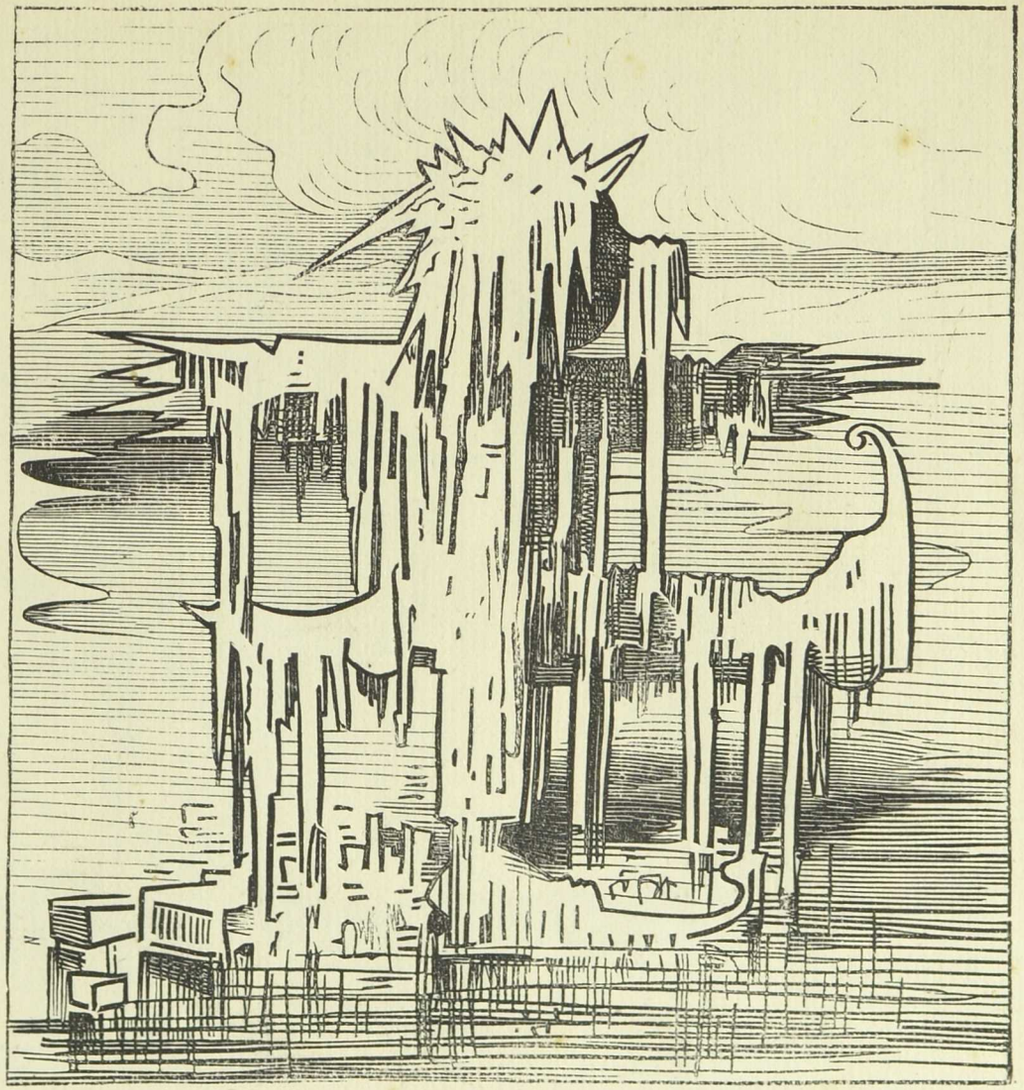


But by judicious twisting, in a trice,
Out of the water he regained the ice.

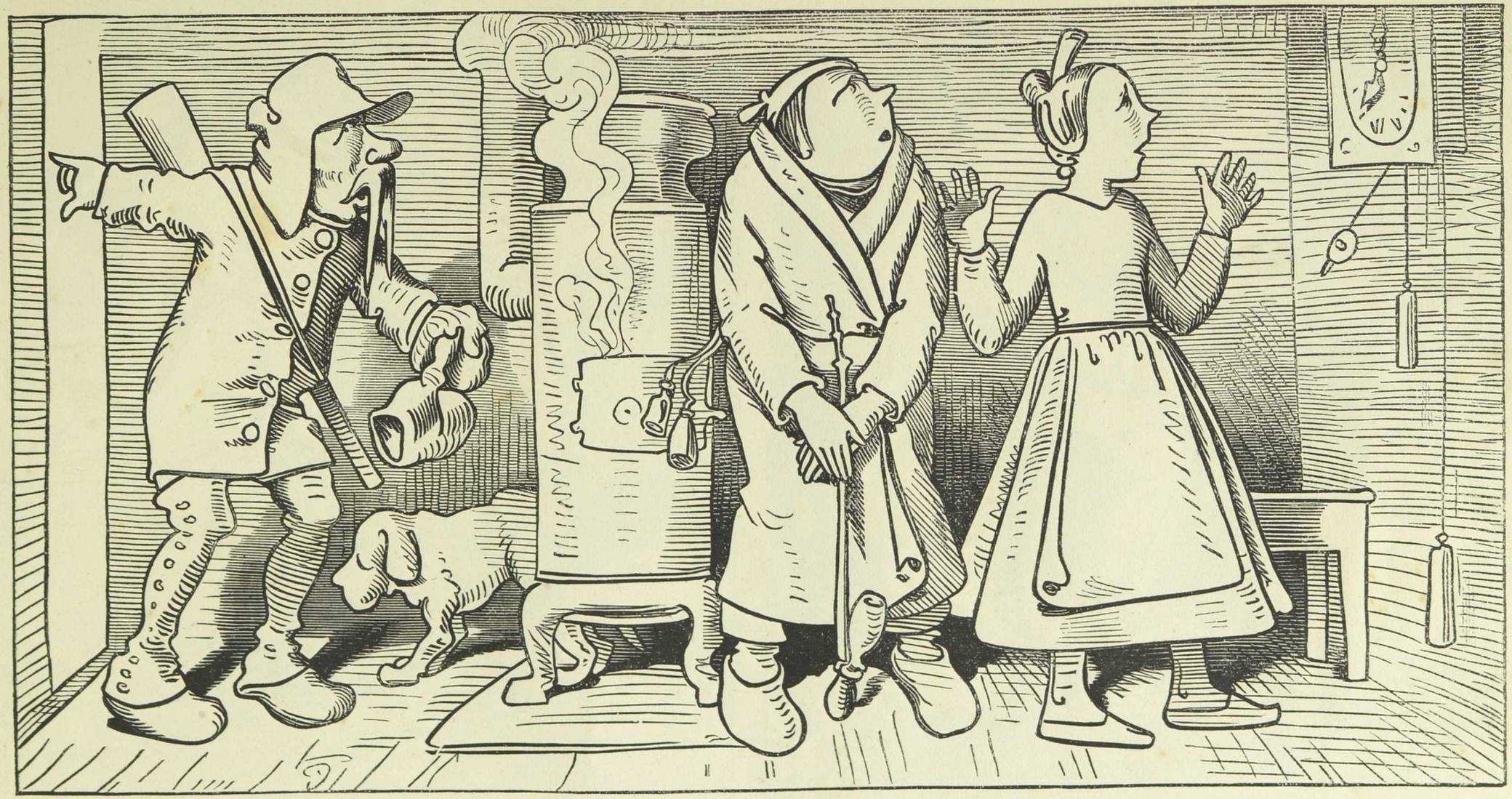
But Peter now with water drips and drips,
Icicles start from all his finger-tips;

Icicles hang from his exuberant nose,
And point like daggers from his frosty clothes.

Drip! and then comes the ice. Drip! ice again,
Till all contending struggles are in vain.



The ice-bound lad at last presents a fine
Resemblance to a frozen porcupine.

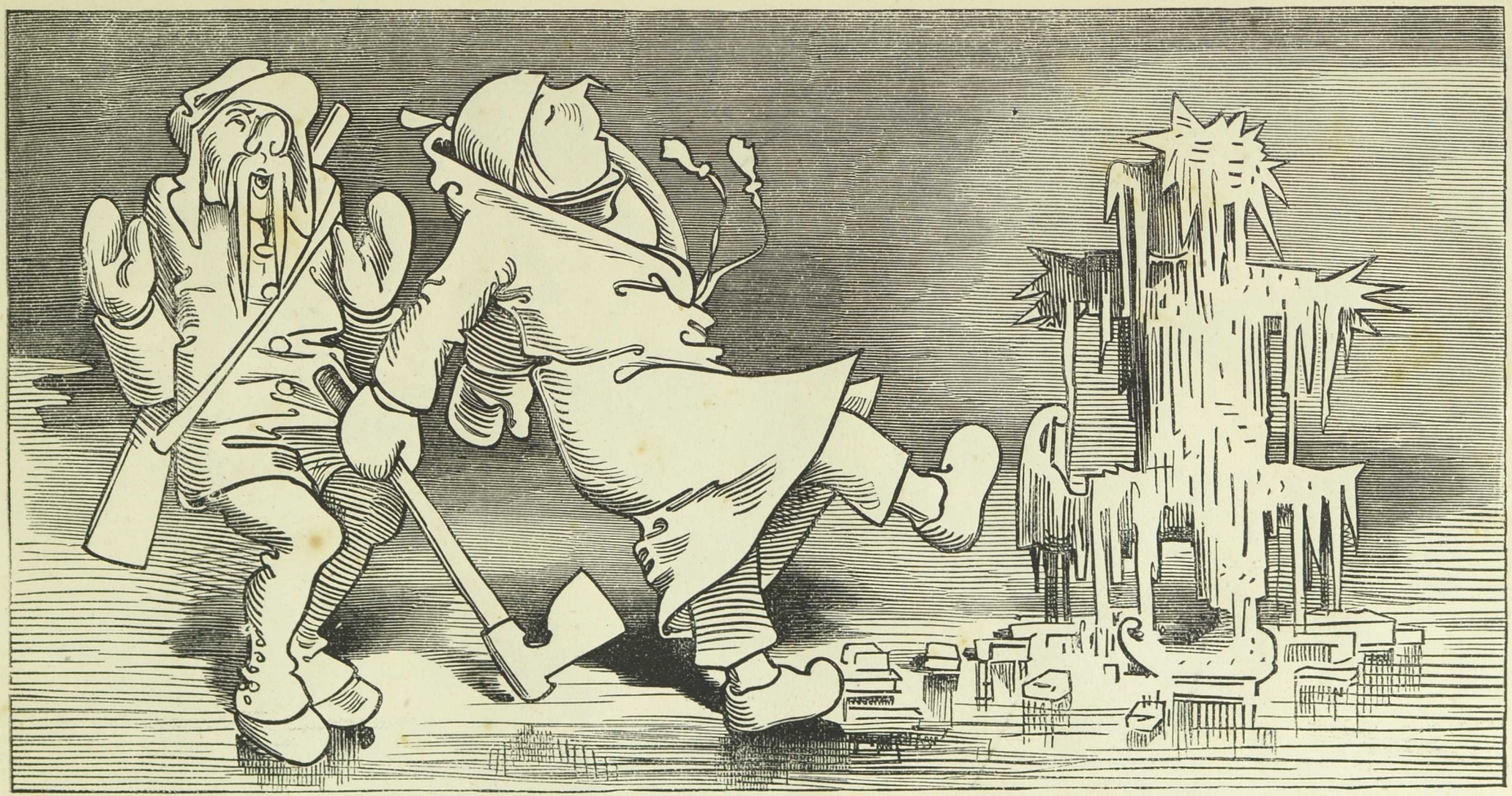


Just as the anxious mother cries 'Dear me!
'Good gracious, Pa! where can poor Peter be?'

The Sportsman brings the news—not over nice—
'Your precious boy's gone skating on the ice.'

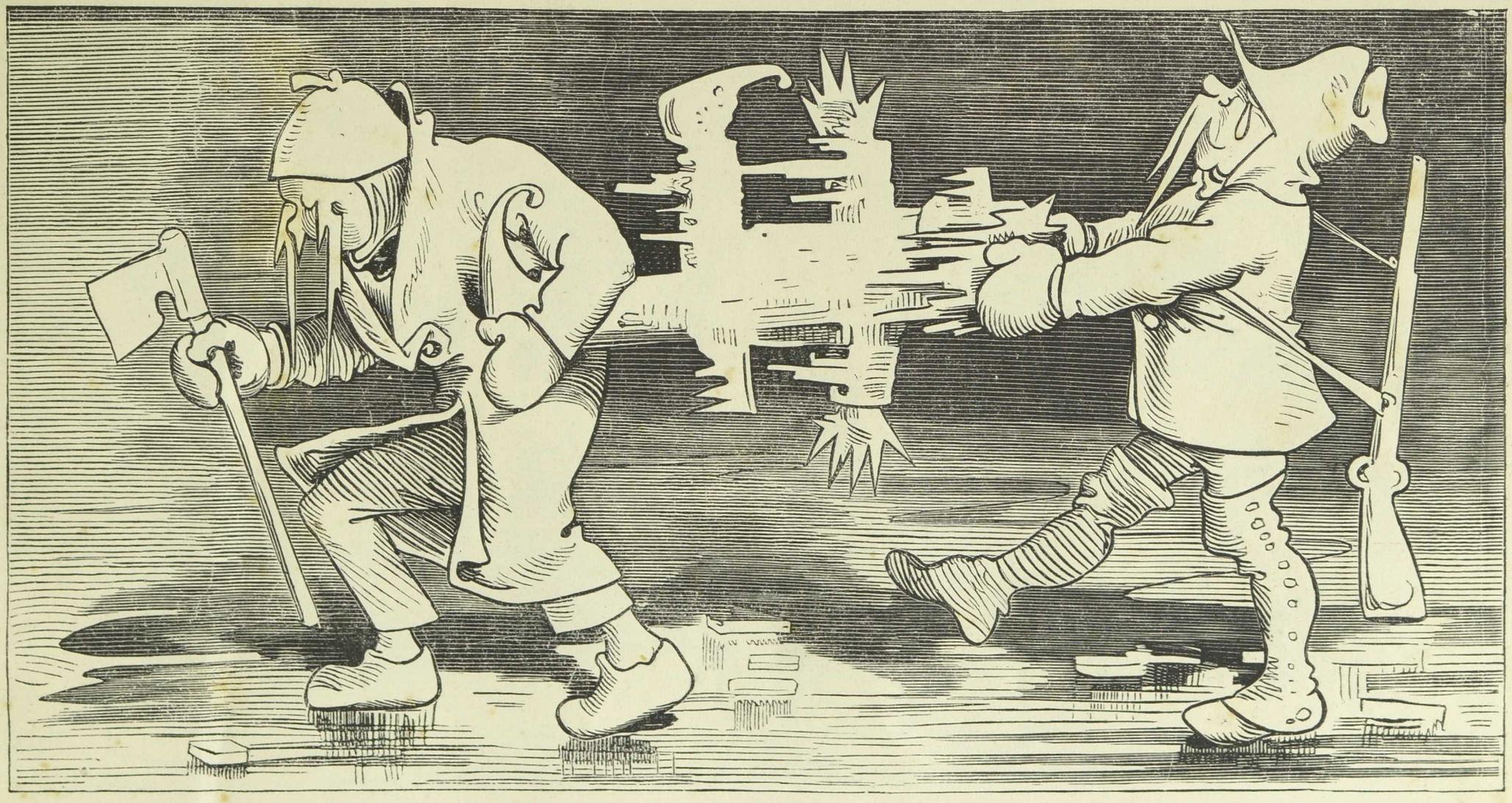
The father starts to seek his boy astray,
Whilst the rough Sportsman leads the wintry way;

And soon they recognise with fear and loathing,
Stuck to the stone a part of Peter's clothing.



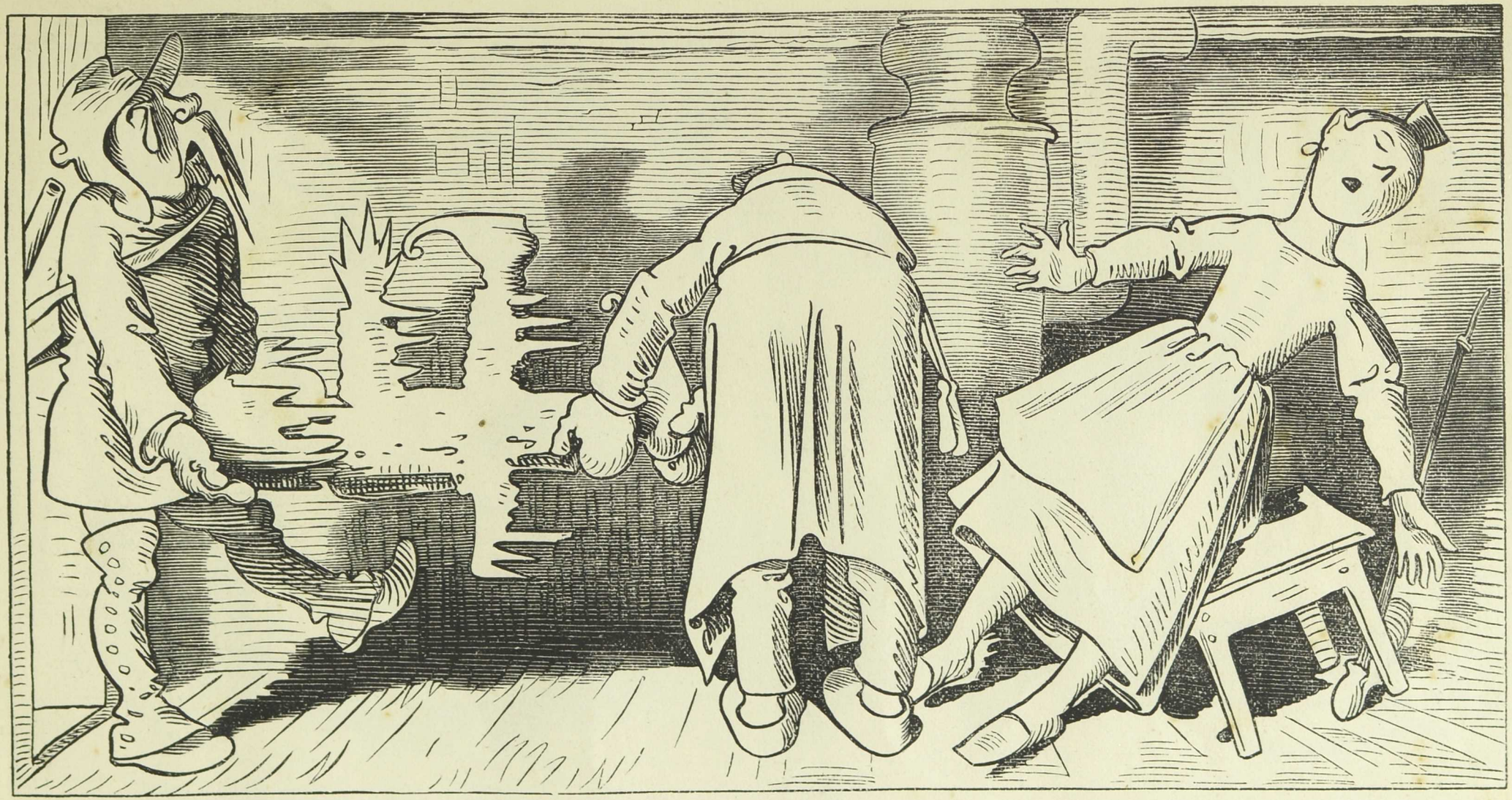
At the next step, lo! Peter's self appears,
One mass of prickly icicles and spears;

The father then, with mingled grief and joy,
With his broad axe cuts out the spiky boy.



One takes his foot, the other takes his head,
And off they carry him with slippery tread,

The father saying, as they onward roam,
'The best thing we can do 's to take him home!'



As in the house, with cautious steps they bear
The mother's darling and the father's heir,

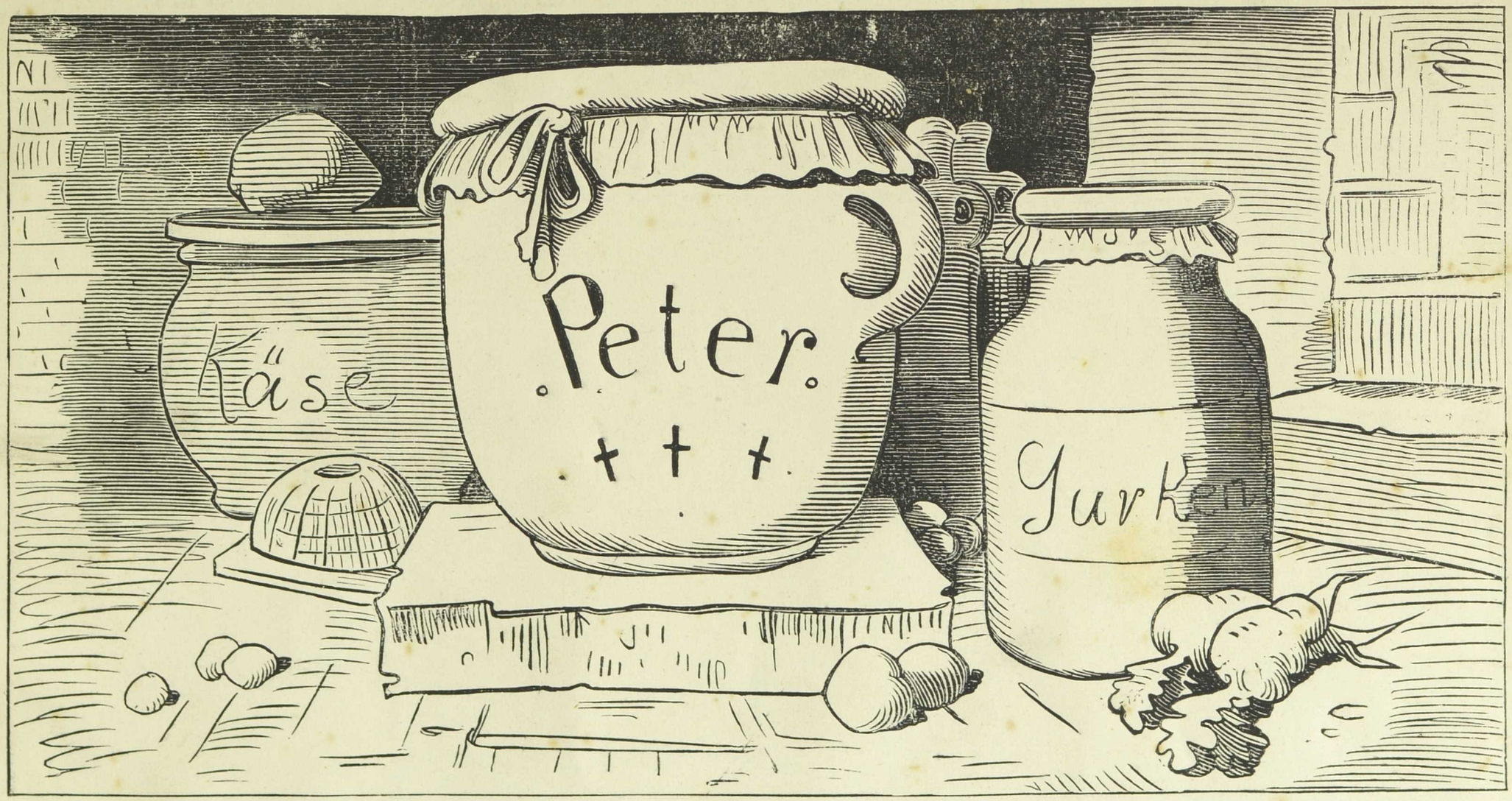
The Sportsman hints, in language somewhat broad,
'He's been a good while froze, it's time he thawed.'

Pa and the Sportsman now their pipes enjoy—
Warmth must, they think, resuscitate the boy;

And fancy what delight the parents felt
When at the stove their son began to melt.

But Peter too much melted—dire mishap!
Got to the soft consistency of pap.

So each fond parent, as the only plan,
Scooped up the mollient Peter in a pan;



And lastly, in the well-stocked cupboard, where
Preserves are kept in pots of earthenware,

One jar, which most the curious fancy tickles,
Is PETER, stored among the jams and pickles.