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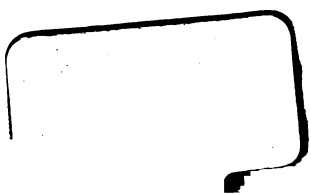

THE SOARING LARK.

THE

SOARING LARK

AND OTHER TALES

COLLECTED BY

THE BROTHERS GRIMM

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY E. H. WEHNERT

GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS
LONDON: BROADWAY, LUDGATE HILL
NEW YORK: 416 BROOME STREET

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THE HOUSE IN THE WOOD.
THE OLD WOMAN IN THE WOOD.
THE GOOSE GIRL.
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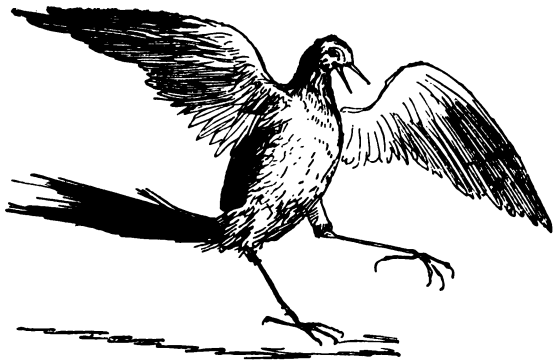

THE SOARING LARK.

THERE was once a man who had to go a very long journey, and on his departure he asked his three daughters what he should bring them. The eldest chose pearls, the second diamonds, but the third said, "Dear father, I wish for a singing, soaring lark." The father promised her she should have it if he could meet with one; and then, kissing all three, he set out.

When the time came round for his return, he had bought the pearls and the diamonds for the two elder

sisters, but the lark he had sought in vain everywhere; and this grieved him very much, for the youngest daughter was his dearest child. By chance his road led through a forest, in the middle of which stood a noble castle, and near that a tree, upon whose topmost bough he saw a singing, soaring lark. "Ah! I happen with you in the very nick of time!" he exclaimed, and bade his servant climb the tree and catch the bird. But as soon as he stepped up to the tree a Lion sprang from behind, shaking his mane, and roaring so that the leaves upon the branches trembled. "Who will steal my singing, soaring lark?" cried the beast; "I will eat you up!"

"I did not know," replied the man, "that the bird belonged to you; I will repair the intended injury, and buy myself off with gold; only let me have my life."

"Nothing can save you," said the Lion, "except you promise me the first person who meets you on your return home; if you do that, I will give you not only your life, but also the bird for your daughter."

This condition the man refused, saying, "That might be my youngest daughter, who is dearest to me, and will most likely run to meet me on my return." But the servant was anxious, and said, "It does not follow that your daughter will come; it may be a cat or a dog. At length the man let himself be persuaded

and, taking the singing, soaring lark, he promised the Lion whatever should first meet him.

Soon he arrived at home, and on entering his house the first who greeted him was no other than his dearest daughter, who came running up, kissed and embraced him, and when she saw the lark in his hand was almost beside herself with joy. The poor father, however, could not rejoice, but began to weep, and said, "My dearest child, this bird I have bought very dear; I was forced to promise you for it to a wild Lion, and when he gets you he will tear you in pieces and eat you." Then he told her all that had passed, and begged her not to go away, let what might be the consequences. But his daughter consoled him and said, "My dear father, what you have promised you must perform; I will go and soften the heart of this Lion, so that I shall soon return to you."

The next morning she had the way shown to her, and, taking leave, she went boldly into the forest. But this Lion was an enchanted Prince, who by day with all his attendants, had the forms of lions, and by night they resumed their natural human figure. On her arrival, therefore, the maiden was received kindly, and led into the castle; and when night came on, and the Lion took his natural form, the wedding was celebrated with great splendour. Here they lived contented with each other, sleeping by day and watching by night. One day the Prince said to his

wife, "To-morrow is a feast-day in your father's house, because your eldest sister is to be married, and if you wish to go, my lions shall accompany you."

She replied that she should like very much to see her father again, and went, accompanied by the lions. On her arrival there was great rejoicing, for all had believed that she had been torn in pieces by the lions, and killed long ago. But she told them what a handsome husband she had, and how well she fared, and stopped with them so long as the wedding lasted; after which she went back into the forest.

Not many weeks afterwards the second daughter was to be married, and the youngest was again invited to the wedding but she said to the Lion, "This time I will not go alone, for you must accompany me." But the Lion said it would be dangerous for him; for should a ray from a burning light touch him, then he would instantly be changed into a pigeon, and in that form fly about for seven long years.

"Oh! do go with me!" entreated his bride; "I will protect you and ward off all light."

So at last they went away together, taking their little child with them; and the Princess caused a room to be built, strong and thick, so that no ray could pierce through, wherein her husband was to sit when the bridal lights were put up. But the door was made of green wood, which split and left a little chink

which no one perceived. Now the marriage was performed, but, as the train returned from church with its multitude of torches and lights passing by the door, a ray pierced through the chink and fell like a hair line upon the Prince, who, in the same instant that it touched him, was changed into a Dove. When, then, the Princess entered the room she found only a white Dove, who said to her, "For seven years must I fly about in the world, but at every seventh mile, I will let fall a drop of red blood and a white feather, which shall show you the way; and, if you follow in their track, ultimately you may save me."

With these words the Dove flew out of the doors, and she followed it; and at every seventh mile it let fall a drop of blood and a feather, which showed her its path. Thus she travelled further and further over the world, without looking about or resting, so that the seven years were at length almost spent; and the prospect cheered her heart, thinking that so soon they would be saved; and yet were they far enough off it. Once while she walked on no feather fell, and not even a drop of blood, and when she cast her eyes upwards the Dove had disappeared. Then she thought to herself, "No man can help you now;" so she mounted up to the Sun, and asked, "Hast thou seen a white Dove on the wing, for thou shinest into every chasm and over every peak?"

"No, I have not seen one," replied the Sun; "but

I will give you this little casket; open it if you stand in need of help."

She thanked the Sun and walked on till evening, when the Moon shone out, and then she asked it, "Hast thou seen a white Dove on the wing, for thou shinest over every field and through every wood all night long?"

"No, I have not seen one," replied the Moon; "but I will give you this egg; break it if ever you fall into trouble."

She thanked the Moon and walked on till the North Wind passed by, and she asked again, "Hast thou not seen a white Dove, for thou passest through all the boughs, and shakest every leaf under Heaven?"

"No, I have not seen one," replied the North Wind; "but I will ask the three other Winds, who may, perhaps, have seen him you seek."

So the East and West Winds were asked, but they had seen nothing; but the South Wind said, "I have seen the white Dove; it has flown to the Red Sea, where it has again become a Lion, for the seven years are up; and the Lion stands there in combat with a caterpillar, who is really an enchanted Princess."

At these words the North Wind said to her, "I will advise you; go to the Red Sea; on the right shore thereof stand great reeds; count them, and cut off the eleventh, and beat the caterpillar therewith. The

Lion will then vanquish it, and both will take again their human forms. This done, look round, and you will see the griffin which sits on the Red Sea, and upon its back leap with your beloved Prince, and the bird will bear you safely to your home. There, I give you a nut to let fall when you are in the midst of the sea; for a large nut-tree will then grow out of the water, upon which the griffin will rest; and if it cannot rest there you will then know that it is not strong enough to carry you over; but if you forget to let the nut drop, you will both fall into the sea."

So the Princess set out, and found everything as the North Wind had said. She counted the reeds on the shore, and cut off the eleventh one, wherewith she beat the caterpillar till it was conquered by the lion, and immediately both took their human forms. But, as soon as the Princess who had been a caterpillar regained her nature, she seized the Prince, and leapt with him on to the back of a griffin, and so flew away. Thus the poor wanderer was again forsaken, and sat down to weep, but soon she recovered herself and said, "So far as the wind blows, and so long as the cock crows, I will travel, until I find my husband again!"

With this resolve she travelled on further and further, till she at length arrived at the place where they had lived together. Here she heard that a

festival would soon be held, when the marriage of her husband and the Princess would be performed, and in her distress she opened the casket which the Sun had given her, and found a dress in it as glittering as the Sun himself. She took it out, and, putting it on, went up to the castle, and everybody, the Princess included, regarded her with wonderment. The dress pleased the intended bride so much that she thought it would make a magnificent bridal garment, and inquired if it were for sale.

"Not for gold or silver," was the reply, "but for flesh and blood!"

The Princess asked the stranger what she meant, and she replied, "Let me for one night sleep in the chamber of the bridegroom?"

To this request the bride would not at first accede, but for love of the dress she consented, and ordered her servant to give the Prince a sleeping-draught. Then when night came the stranger was led into the room where the Prince was already fast asleep. There she sat herself down upon the bed, and said, "For seven long years have I followed you, the Sun and the Moon have I visited and inquired after you, and at the Red Sea I helped you against the caterpillar: will you, then, quite forget me?"

But the Prince slept so soundly that her words appeared only like the rushing of the wind through the fir-trees; and so at daybreak she was conducted

out of the chamber, and had to give up the golden dress. Then thinking how little it had helped her, she became very sad, and going away to a meadow, sat down there and wept. While she did so she suddenly bethought herself of the egg which the Moon had given her, and on cracking it there came out a hen with twelve chickens : all of gold, which ran about to peck, and crept under the old hen's wing, so that nothing in the world could be prettier. She got up and drove them before her on the meadow, till the bride saw them out of her window, and they pleased her so much that she even came down and asked if they were not for sale. "Not for gold or silver, but for flesh and blood," replied the stranger: "let me sleep once more in the chamber where the bridegroom sleeps."

The bride consented, and would have deceived her as the night before, but the Prince, on going to bed, asked the servant what the rustling and murmuring he had heard the previous night had been caused by. The servant told him all that had happened, and that he had given him a sleeping-draught, because a poor maiden had slept that night in his room, and would again do so. The Prince bade him pour out the sleeping-draught, and when the maiden came at night, and began to tell her sorrowful tale as she had done before, he recognized the voice of his true wife, and sprang up, exclaiming, "Now am I saved! all

this has passed to me like a dream, for the strange Princess has bewitched me, so that I must have forgotten everything, had not you been sent at the right time to deliver me."

Then as quickly as possible they both went out of the palace, for they were afraid of the father of the Princess, who was an enchanter. They set themselves upon the griffin, who carried them over the Red Sea, and as soon as they were in the middle of it, the Princess let drop her nut. Thereupon a great nut-tree grew up, whereon the bird rested, and then it carried them straight to their home, where they found their child grown tall and handsome, and with him they ever afterwards lived happily to the end of their lives.

THE GIANT AND THE TAILOR.

A CERTAIN Tailor, who was a large boaster but very small performer, took it once into his head to go and look about him in the world. As soon as he could, he left his workshop, and travelled away over hills and valleys, now on this, and now on that; but still onwards. After he had gone some way, he perceived in the distance a steep mountain, and behind it a lofty tower, which rose from the midst of a wild dense forest. "Good gracious!" cried the Tailor, "what is this?" and driven by his curiosity, he went rapidly towards the place. But he opened his mouth and eyes wide enough when he got nearer; for the tower had legs, and sprang in a trice over the steep

hill, and stood up a mighty Giant before the Tailor. "What are you about here, you puny fly-legs?" asked the Giant in a voice which rumbled on all sides like thunder. "I am trying to earn a piece of bread in this forest," whispered the Tailor.

"Well, then, it is time you entered my service," said the Giant fiercely.

"If it must be so, why not?" said the Tailor, humbly; "but what will you give me?" "What wage shall you have?" repeated the Giant contemptuously; "listen and I will tell you: every year, three hundred and sixty-five days, and one besides, if it be leap-year. Is that right?"

"Quite," said the Tailor; but thought to himself, "one must cut according to his cloth; I will seek to make myself free very soon."

"Go, little rascal, and fetch me a glass of water," cried the Giant.

"Why not the whole well, and its spring too?" said the Tailor, but fetched as he was bid. "What! the well and its spring too?" bellowed the Giant, who was rather cowardly and weak, and so began to be afraid, thinking to himself, "This fellow can do more than roast apples; he has a heap of courage. I must take care, or he will be too much of a servant for me." So, when the Tailor returned with the water, the Giant sent him to fetch a couple of bundles of faggots from the forest, and bring them

home. "Why not the whole forest at one stroke, every tree, young and old, knotty and smooth?" asked the Tailor, and went away. "What! the whole forest, and the well, too, and its spring!" murmured the frightened Giant in his beard; and he began to be still more afraid, and believed that the Tailor was too great a man for him, and not fit for his servant. However, when the Tailor returned with his load of faggots, the Giant told him to shoot two or three wild boars for their supper. "Why not rather a thousand at one shot, and the rest afterwards?" cried the boaster. "What, what!" gasped the cowardly Giant, terribly frightened. "Oh, well! that is enough for to-day, you may go to sleep now!"

The poor Giant, however, was so very much afraid of the little Tailor, that he could not close his eyes all the night, but tossed about thinking how to get rid of his servant, whom he regarded as an enchanter conspiring against his life. With time comes counsel. The following morning the Giant and the Dwarf went together to a marsh where a great many willow-trees were growing. When they got there the Giant said, "Sit yourself on one of these willow rods, Tailor; on my life I only wish to see if you are in a condition to bend it down."

The boasting Tailor climbed the tree, and perched himself on a bough, and then, holding his breath, he

made himself heavy enough thereby to bend the tree down. Soon, however, he had to take breath again, and immediately, having been unfortunate enough to come without his goose in his pocket, the bough flew up, and to the great joy of the Giant, carried with it the Tailor so high into the air that he went out of sight. And whether he has since fallen down again, or is yet flying about in the air, I am unable to tell you satisfactorily.

THE TRUE BRIDE.

ONCE upon a time there lived a Girl, young and pretty, who lost her Mother at an early age, and her Stepmother behaved very cruelly to her. Although she sometimes had to do work beyond her years, she was left to herself, and forced to do, unpitied, more than her strength would allow. She could not by any means touch the heart of the wicked woman, who was always discontented and unsatisfied. The more industriously she worked the more was laid upon her, and the Stepmother was always contriving how to inflict an additional burden, and make her daughter's life more intolerable.

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One day the Stepmother said to the Girl, "Here are twelve pounds of quills for you to strip, and remember if you are not ready with them by this evening, you will get a good beating. Do you think you are to idle all day?" The poor Girl set to work, while the tears rolled fast down her cheeks, for she saw that it was impossible to finish her work by the time. Every now and then as the heap of feathers before her increased, she sighed and clasped her hands, and then, recollecting herself, stripped the quills quicker than before. Once she put her elbows on the table, and burying her face in her hands, exclaimed, "Alas! then, is there nobody on earth who will pity me?" As she spoke she heard a soft voice reply, "Comfort yourself, my child; I am come to help you." The Girl looked up and saw an Old Woman standing by her side, who took her hand, and said to her, "Trust me and tell me what are your troubles." Encouraged by her kind voice, the Girl told the Old Woman of her sad life, how one burden was heaped upon another, until she could make no end even with the most unremitting labour. She told her also of the beating promised by her Stepmother if she did not finish the feathers that evening. Her tears began to flow again as she concluded her tale, but the Old Woman said to her, "Dry your tears and rest yourself while I go on with your work." The Girl lay down upon a bed and went to

sleep ; and the Old Woman sat down at the table, and made such short work with her thin fingers that the twelve pounds of feathers were soon ready. When the girl awoke she found a great heap of snow-white feathers before her, and everything in the room put in order, but the Old Woman had disappeared. So the Girl thanked God, and waited till evening, when the Stepmother, coming into the room, was astonished to see the work finished. "Do you not see, simpleton," she cried, "what one can do when one is industrious? But was there nothing else that you could have begun, instead of sitting there with your hands in your lap?" and she went out muttering, "The Girl can eat more than bread ; I must set her some harder job."

The next morning, accordingly, she called the Girl and gave her a spoon, saying, "Take this, and empty the pond at the bottom of the garden with it, and mind, you know what will follow if you have not finished by the evening." The Girl took the spoon, and perceived that it had a hole in it, and even if there had not been, she never could have emptied the pond in time. However, she fell on her knees by the side of the water, and began to scoop it out. Soon the Old Woman appeared again, and as soon as she heard the cause of the Girl's grief, she said to her, "Well, never mind ; do you go and lay down in yon thicket, and let me do your work." The Girl did as

she was bid, and the good Old Woman, when she was alone, only touched the pond, and immediately all the water ascended in the form of vapour, and mingled with the clouds. The pond was then completely dry, and when the sun set, the Girl awoke, and saw nothing but the fishes skipping about in the mud. So she went and told her Stepmother she had done her work. "You ought to have been ready long ago," she said pale with rage, and turned away, to think of some fresh device.

The next morning she said to the Girl, "You must build me a fine palace in yon plain, and get it ready by the evening," The poor Maiden was terrified when she heard this, and asked, "How can I possibly complete such a work?" "I will take no refusal," screamed the Stepmother; "if you can empty a pond with a spoon with a hole in it, you can also build a palace. And I require it done to-day, and should it be wanting in one kitchen or cellar you will catch what you well deserve."

So saying, she drove the Girl out-of-doors, who went on till she came to the valley where the stones lay piled up; but they were all so heavy that she could not move the very smallest of them. The poor Maiden sat down and cried, but hoped still the good Old Woman would came to her assistance. In a short time she did make her appearance, and bade the Maiden go and sleep in the shade while she

erected the castle for her, in which she told her she might dwell when she was happy. As soon as the Old Woman was alone, she touched the stones, and immediately they raised themselves and formed the walls as if giants were building. Then the scaffolding raised itself, and it seemed as if countless hands were laying stone upon stone. The tiles were laid on in order on the roofs by invisible hands, and by noonday, a large weathercock, in the shape of a figure with a turning wand, appeared on the summit of the tower. The interior of the castle was also completed by the evening,—how the Old Woman did it, I know not,—but the walls of the various rooms were hung with silk and velvet, and highly ornamented chairs were also placed in them, and richly-carved armchairs by marble tables, while crystal chandeliers hung in the halls, and mirrored themselves in the smooth walls; green parrots also were there in golden cages, and many other peculiar birds, which sang charmingly; and about everything there was a magnificence as if a king were to inhabit the palace.

The sun was just about to sink when the Maiden awoke and perceived the light of a thousand lamps shining from the castle. With hasty steps she entered it through the open door, passing up a flight of steps covered with red cloth, and adorned with flowers on the gilt balustrade. As soon as she

entered the room, and saw its magnificence, she stood aghast; and how long she might have remained so I know not, had she not thought of her Stepmother. "Ah!" said she to herself, "perhaps if she were established here she would be contented, and harass me no more." With this thought she ran to her Stepmother and pointed to the finished palace. "I will go and see it," said she, and hastened off; but as soon as she entered the hall she was forced to cover her eyes for fear of being blinded by the glare of the lamps.

"You see, now," she said to the Maiden, "how easily it is done; I wish I had set you something harder to do!" and then, going into every room, she peered about in all corners to find out something that was wanting, but she could not. "Now we will go upstairs," said she, with an envious look at the Maiden; "I must also inspect the kitchens and cellars, and if there is anything forgotten, you shall suffer for it." There was the fire, however, burning on the hearth, the meat cooking in the pots, nippers and scales hanging on the wall, and the bright copper utensils ranged in rows. Nothing was wanting, not even the coal-scuttle or the water-pails! "Where is the door to the cellar?" exclaimed the old woman, after she had looked all round. "I warn you; you will catch it, if it is not well filled with wine-casks!" So saying, she raised the trap-door herself and went down

the steps; but before she got down very far the heavy door fell upon her. The Maiden heard a cry, and raised the door up as quickly as she could to render assistance, but before she reached the bottom of the stairs, she found the old woman lying dead upon them. The noble castle belonged now to the Maiden, who dwelt there all alone, and felt quite bewildered with her good fortune. For in every closet the most beautiful dresses were hung upon the walls, with their trains powdered with gold and silver, or with pearls and precious stones; and, moreover, she had not a wish which was not immediately fulfilled. Soon the fame of her beauty and riches went abroad through the whole world, and every day suitors introduced themselves to her presence, but none of them pleased her. At length, however, came a young Prince, who touched her heart, and to whom she betrothed herself. Now, in the castle garden stood a green linden-tree, under which they were one day sitting enaged in conversation. "I will go home and obtain my father's consent to our marriage," said the young Prince to his companion; "wait here for me under this tree, for I shall be back in a few hours." The Maiden kissed him first on his left cheek, and said, "Keep true to me, and let nobody kiss you on this cheek, till you return. I will wait for you here."

So she remained under the tree until the sun went

down, but the Prince did not return; and although she waited three days afterwards, from morning till evening, he came not. When the fourth day passed with the same result, the Maiden thought that some misfortune had fallen upon him, and she resolved to go out and search for him till she found him. So she packed up three of her most beautiful dresses; the one powdered with stars of gold, the second with silver moons, and the third with golden suns; she took also a handful of jewels in a handkerchief, and, thus furnished, began her travels. At every place she came to she inquired after her betrothed lover, but nobody had seen him or knew him. So she wandered on, far and wide, over the world, but with no result; and at last, in despair, she hired herself to a farmer as a Shepherdess, and concealed her clothes and jewels under a stone.

Thus she lived for a couple of years, tending her flocks in sadness, and ever thinking of her beloved Prince. At this time she possessed a calf, which would feed out of her hands, and if she said to it the following rhyme, it would kneel down while she stroked it:—

> "Little calf, little calf, kneel you down,
> Forget not your Mistress, deary!
> Like the King's son, who his sweetheart left
> Under the linden dreary."

When two years had passed, a report was spread

everywhere, that the King's daughter was about to be married. Now, the road to the city passed through the village where the Maiden dwelt, and so it happened that one day as she was watching her flocks, the Bridegroom of the Princess passed by. He was sitting proudly upon his horse and did not observe the Shepherdess, who recognized him at once as her former lover. The shock was, as it were, like a sharp knife thrust into her heart. "Alas!" she cried, "I thought he was true to me, but he has, indeed, forgotten me."

The next day he rode by her again: as he passed she sung—

"Little calf, little calf, kneel you down,
Forget not your Mistress, deary!
Like the King's son, who his sweetheart left
Under the linden dreary."

The Prince looked round when he heard the voice, and stopped his horse. He looked earnestly at the face of the Shepherdess, and pressed his hand to his forehead, as if trying to recollect something; but in a minute or two, he rode on and disappeared. "Alas! alas!" cried the Maiden, "he knows me no longer!"

Soon after this occurrence, a great festival of three days' duration was appointed to be held at the royal court, and all the King's subjects were invited to it. "Now I will make a last trial," thought the Maiden;

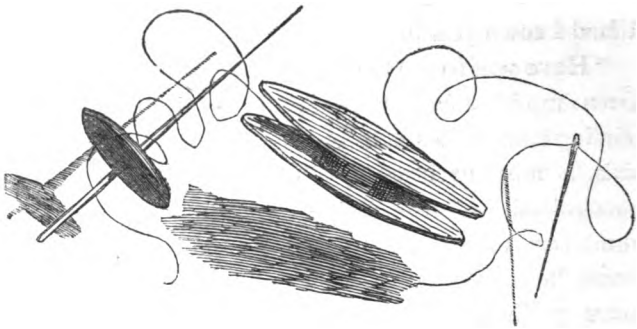
and on the evening of the first day she went to the stone under which she had buried her treasures. She drew out the dress adorned with the golden suns, and putting it on, bedecked herself also with the jewels. Her hair, which till now she had hidden under a cap, she allowed to fall down in its natural curls, and, thus apparelled, she went to the city unperceived in the dusky twilight. As soon, however, as she entered the well-lighted ball-room, all were struck with her beauty, but nobody knew who she was. The Prince went up to her, but did not recognize her; and after he had danced with her, her manners so enchanted him, that he altogether slighted the other bride. As soon as the ball was over, she disappeared in the crowd, and, hastening back to the village, put on her shepherd's dress before the day broke.

The second evening she took out the dress with the silver moons, and adorned her hair with a crescent of precious stones. As soon as she appeared in the ball-room all eyes were turned on her, and the Prince, intoxicated with love, danced with her alone, quite forgetful of any other person. Before she went away, he made her promise to come again on the following evening.

When she thus appeared for the third time, she wore her star dress, which glittered with every step she took, not to mention her girdle and head-dress, which were stars of diamonds. The Prince took her

arm as soon as she entered the room, and asked her whom she was, "For," said he, "it seems to me as if I had known you before."

"Have you forgotten what I did when you parted from me?" asked the Maiden, at the same time kissing him on his left cheek. As soon as she did this, a mist, as it were, fell from his eyes, and he recognized his true Bride. "Come," he said, "I must remain here no longer;" and taking her by the hand, he led her out to his carriage. As if the wind were pulling, the horses galloped to the wonderful castle, whose windows were already lighted up, and shone to a long distance. As the carriage passed beneath the linden-tree, innumerable glow-worms swarmed among the boughs, so that the leaves were shaken and sent down their fragrance. On the castle steps bloomed the flowers, and from the aviaries came the songs of many rare birds; but in the hall the whole court stood assembled, and the priests to celebrate the marriage of the young Prince and the True Bride.



THE SPINDLE, THE SHUTTLE, AND THE NEEDLE.

THERE was once upon a time a little Girl whose father and mother died when she was quite young. At the end of the village where she lived, her Godmother dwelt in a small cottage, maintaining herself by spinning, weaving, and sewing, and she took the poor child to maintain, teaching her to work and educating her piously. Just when the girl had reached the age of fifteen, the Godmother fell ill, and calling her to her bedside said to her, "My dear daughter, I feel my end approaching. I leave you this cottage, where you will be protected from wind and weather, and also this Spindle, Shuttle, and Needle, with which you may earn your living."

With these words she laid her hands on the Girl's head and blessed her, saying, "So long as you remember God, everything will prosper with you." Soon afterwards the good Godmother closed her eyes in death, and when she was carried to the grave, the poor Maiden followed the coffin, weeping bitterly, to pay her the last respect.

The little Girl now lived alone in her cottage, industriously spinning, weaving, and sewing, and upon everything that she did rested the blessing of God. It seemed as if the flax in her room increased by itself; and when she wove a piece of cloth or tapestry, or hemmed a shirt, she always found a purchaser readily, who paid her so handsomely, that she had enough for herself and could spare a little for others who were poorer.

Now about this time the Son of the King of this country was looking about him for a bride, and as he was not allowed to marry a poor wife, he would not have a rich one. So he said, "She shall be my bride who is at once the richest and the poorest." When he came to the village where the Maiden dwelt, he asked, as was his custom, who was the richest and poorest maiden in the place. The people first named the richest, and then told him that the poorest was the Maiden who dwelt in the cottage at the end of the village. The young Prince therefore went first to the rich Maiden, and found her sitting before her

door in full dress: but as soon as she saw him approaching, she got up and made him a very low curtsey. He looked at her once, and then, without speaking a word, rode away to the house of the poor Maiden, whom he found not standing at the door, but sitting in her kitchen. He stopped his horse, and, looking through the window into the kitchen, perceived how brightly the sun shone into it, and how industriously the girl herself was engaged at her Spinning-wheel. She looked up, but as soon as she saw the Prince peeping at her, she blushed as red as a rose, and looked down again, industriously turning her wheel round. Whether the thread just then was quite even or not, I know not, but she spun on till the Prince rode away. Then she stepped to the window and opened it, saying, "It is so hot in this kitchen!" but she remained at the window looking out as long as she could see the white feathers upon the Prince's hat.

After this she sat down again to her work, and presently a sentence came into her head which her Godmother had often repeated whilst she was working. She sang:—

> "Spindle, Spindle, out with you,
> And bring a wooer home."

Scarcely had she spoken the words when the Spindle sprang from her hands and out of the door,

and as she sprang up and looked after it, she saw it merrily dancing along over the field, leaving a golden thread behind it. In a short time it was out of sight, and then the Maiden, having no other Spindle, took the Shuttle in her hand and began to weave.

Meanwhile the Spindle still danced on, and as the thread came to an end it reached the King's son. "What do I see?" exclaimed he; "the Spindle showing me the way?" and turning his horse's head round, he rode back guided by the golden thread. At the same time the Girl sitting at work, sang:—

"Shuttle, Shuttle, out with you,
And bring a wooer home."

Immediately it sprang out of her hands and through the door, before which it began to weave a carpet more beautiful than was ever before seen. On both borders were represented roses and lilies blooming and in the middle, on the golden ground, green vine-branches; hares and rabbits, too, were represented jumping about, and fawns and does rubbing their heads against trees, on whose boughs were sitting pretty birds, who wanted nothing but the gift of song. And all this pattern the Shuttle wove so quickly that it seemed to grow by itself.

But, because the Shuttle had run away, the Maiden sat down to her sewing; and while she stitched her work she sang:—

"Needle, Needle, sharp and fine,
Fit the house for wooer mine."

As soon as she had said this, the Needle flew out of her fingers, and sprang all about the room like a flash of lightning. It seemed as if invisible spirits were at work, for in a few minutes the table and bench were covered with green cloths, the chairs with velvet, and on the walls were hung silken curtains. And scarcely had the Needle put the last stitch to them when the Maiden saw through the window the white feathers on the hat of the Prince, who was coming towards her cottage drawn by the golden thread of the Spindle. As soon as he approached the door he dismounted, and walked upon the carpet into the cottage, and as soon as he entered the room there stood the Maiden in her shabby clothes glowing like a rose in a bush.

"You are the poorest, and yet the richest, Maiden," said the Prince to her; "come with me, and you shall be my Bride."

She said nothing, but held out her hand, which the Prince took, and giving her a kiss, he led her out of the cottage and seated her behind him on his horse. He took her to the King's castle, where the wedding was performed with great magnificence, and afterwards the Spindle, the Shuttle, and the Needle, were placed in the treasure-chamber and held in great esteem.

THE MASTER-THIEF.

AN old man and his Wife were, many years ago, sitting one day before their miserable hut, resting for a while from their work. All at once a handsome carriage, drawn by four black steeds, drew up at the door, and out of it stepped a well-dressed Man. The Peasant got up and asked the seeming Lord what he wanted, and how he could serve him. The stranger offering his hand to the Peasant, said, "I desire nothing more than to enjoy a homely repast with you. Cook some potatoes in your usual fashion, and when they are ready I will sit down at your table and eat them."

The Peasant laughed, and replied, "You are some

Count, or Prince, or perhaps some Archduke; distinguished Lords like you have often such fancies; but your will shall be done."

The Peasant's Wife thereupon went into the kitchen, and began to wash the potatoes, peel them, and make them into dumplings, as they were used to prepare them. While she thus proceeded with her work, the Peasant invited the Lord to come and look round his garden, which yet yielded a little produce. Now, in the garden he had dug holes, in order to set trees.

"Have you no children to help you in your work?" asked the Stranger.

"No!" replied the Peasant; "but I once had a son, but he wandered out into the world a long while ago. He was a wild youth, and very spirited, and so, instead of learning anything, he was always up to some tricks; at last he ran away from me, and I have heard nothing of him since."

As the Man spoke he took a young tree, and placing it in one of the holes, planted a pole beside it. Then, as he filled in the soil, and pressed it down, he tied the stem at the bottom, middle, and top to the pole, with a straw band.

"But tell me," suddenly said the Stranger, "why do you not bind the crooked, knotty stem, in yon corner, which is almost bent to the ground, likewise to a pole that it may grow straight?"

"My Lord," replied the Peasant, with a laugh, "you talk as you know; one may easily see that you understand nothing of gardening. Yon tree is old and knotted by age, and nobody could make it straight again. Trees should be trained while they are young." "So it is with your son," said the Stranger; "had you trained him when he was young in right ways, he would not have run away; now, he will also grow hardened and knotted."

"Truly, it is long since he went away," replied the Old Man, "but perhaps he is changed."

"Would you know him again if he came back?" asked the Stranger abruptly.

"Not by his face, indeed," replied the Peasant; "but he has a mark upon him, a mole upon his shoulder as large as a bean."

At these words the Stranger drew off his coat, and, baring his shoulder, showed his father the mole.

"You are indeed my son," said the old Man, and all his love returned for his child; "but yet, how can you be my son? you have become a great Lord, rolling in riches and abundance; by what path have you arrived at this?"

"Alas! my Father," replied the Son, "the young tree was bound to no pole, and grew crooked; now is it too old to become straight again. How have I gained this, you ask; I have been a Thief. But do not be frightened; I am a Master-Thief. Neither

locks nor bolts avail against me; whatever I wish for is mine. Think not that I steal like a common thief; no, I only take from the abundance of the rich. The poor are safe, for I rather give to them than take from them. So also I touch not what I can obtain without craft or skill."

"Alas! my son," replied the old Man, "I can have no pleasure in this; a thief is a thief, whether clever or not, and, I warn you, comes not to any good end." So saying, he led him to his mother, and when she heard that he was her son, she wept for joy, but when she was also told that he had become a thief, two rivers, as it were, of tears flowed from her eyes. At length she said, "He is still my son, although become a Master-Thief, and mine eyes have seen him once more.

The three then sat down to table, and he ate again with his parents the coarse fare which he had not tasted for so long. During the meal the old Peasant said to his son, "If our master, the Count of the castle above there, knew who you were, and what you were doing, he would not, methinks, take you in his arms and rock you, as he once did, at your christening; he would rather cause you to be hung on the gallows."

"Do not be afraid, my dear Father, he will do nothing to me; I understand my trade too well. To-day even I will go to him."

So when it was evening, the Master-Thief got into his carriage and drove to the castle, where the Count received him with courtesy, because he took him for some noble personage. But when the Stranger disclosed his real character, the Count turned pale, and sat in silence for some time. At last he said, "Since you are my godson, I will forego justice for mercy, and show forbearance to you. But because you profess to be a Master-Thief, I will put your art to the proof, and if then you fail, you must keep your wedding with the hangman's daughter, and the cawing of the rooks shall be the music to celebrate it."

"My lord Count," replied the Master-Thief, "think of three as difficult tasks as you can, and if I do not fulfil my pretensions, do with me as you will."

The Count considered for some minutes, and then said, "For the first task you shall steal out of its stable my favourite horse; for the second you shall take away from my wife and me, when we are asleep, the counterpane under which we lie, without our knowledge, and also the ring off my wife's finger. For the third and last task, you shall steal out of the church the parson and the clerk. Now mark all this well, for your neck depends upon its due performance."

Thereupon the Master-Thief went to the nearest town, and there purchased the old clothes of a

country-wife, and put them on. Then he dyed his face a deep brown, and fashioned wrinkles on it so that nobody could have recognized him. Lastly, he filled a small cask with old Hungary wine, in which he mixed a powerful sleeping drug. Then, laying the cask in a basket which he carried upon his shoulder, he walked with wavering and tottering steps to the castle of the Count. It was quite dark when he arrived there, and so, sitting down upon a stone in the courtyard, he began to cough like an asthmatic old woman, and rubbed his hands together as if they were cold. Now, before the door of the stables, soldiers were lying round a fire, and one of them remarking the old Woman, called to her to come nearer and warm herself. The seeming old Woman tottered up to the group, and taking her basket from her head, sat down near them. "What have you got in your basket, old Woman?" cried one. "A good taste of wine," she replied; "I maintain myself by trading with it; for some money and your fair words I will give you a glassful." Come along, then," returned the Soldier; but as soon as he had drunk what was given him, he said, "Ah! this wine is very good; I would rather have two glasses than one!" and so he took a second glass, and then his comrades followed his example.

"Holloa, there!" exclaimed one of the soldiers to another inside the stable, "here is an old Woman

with some wine so good, that it will warm your chest more than all the fire." As he spoke she carried her cask into the stable, and saw there three Soldiers; one of whom sat on the saddled horse. Another had the bridle in his hand, and a third held on by the tail. The old Woman served out to them the wine as long as it lasted, and then its effects began to show themselves. He who held the bridle let it drop from his hand, and, sinking to the ground, soon began to snore; the other let go the tail and fell asleep, snoring louder than the other; and the soldier who was sitting on the horse bent his head upon its neck, and so fell asleep, and snored like the noise of a smith's bellows. The Soldiers outside, also, had long before fallen asleep, and were lying motionless as stones round their fire. When the Master-Thief saw himself so favoured, he gave to him who held the bridle a rope in his hand, and to the other who held the tail a wisp of straw; but what to do with him who sat upon the horse's back puzzled him. He could not throw him off, for that would have awakened him, and he would have called for help, so he was obliged to adopt a stratagem. He unbuckled the saddle girths, and knotted fast to the saddle a couple of ropes, which passed through rings in the wall. This done, he drew the sleeping rider, saddle and all, up in the air, and then made the ropes secure to the posts of the stable. He next

unchained the horse, but before he led him over the stone floor of the yard, he wrapped his hoofs round with old rags, so that they might not make any noise which could awaken the watchers. Then he led his prize out cautiously, and swinging himself upon his back rode off in haste.

As soon as the day broke, the Master-Thief returned to the castle, mounted on the stolen steed. The Count was up already, and looking out of his window.

"Good morning, sir Count," said the Thief; "here is your horse, which I have luckily taken from his stable. Look around, and see your soldiers lying in the yard fast asleep; and if you go into the stable you will find them equally well occupied there."

The Count was forced to laugh, and said, "Well, for once you have succeeded; but this second time you will not come off so easily. And, I warn you, if you meet me as a Thief, I shall treat you as a thief."

By-and-by night came, and the Countess went to bed, with her wedding ring held fast in her closed hand. "All the doors are locked and bolted," said the Count, "and I shall keep awake and watch for this Thief, that, if he makes his appearance at the window, I may shoot him."

The Master-Thief, however, went in the dark to

the gallows, and cutting down from the rope a poor criminal who been hung there that day, carried him on his back to the castle. There he placed a ladder up to the sleeping-chamber of the Count, and hoisting the dead man upon his shoulders, began to mount. As soon as he had got so high that the head of the dead man was on a level with the window, the Count, concealed by the curtain, pointed a pistol at it and fired. Immediately the Master-Thief pitched the corpse over, and then, rapidly descending the ladder, concealed himself in a corner. The night was bright, with a clear moonshine, and the Master-Thief plainly saw the Count descend the ladder, and bear the dead man away into the garden, where he began to dig a hole in which to bury him. "Now is the lucky moment!" said the Thief to himself; and slipping from his hiding-place, he ran up the ladder, and entered the sleeping-room. "Dear wife," he began, imitating the Count's voice, "the Thief is dead, but he is nevertheless my godson, and more of a rogue than a criminal; I do not wish, therefore, to put his family to shame, for I pity his poor parents. I wish, therefore, before daybreak, to bury him in the garden, that the affair may be kept quiet. Give me the bed-covering, that I may wrap his body in it, and bury him decently."

The Countess gave him the counterpane readily, and as she did so, the Thief continued, "Do you know,

I have a fit of magnanimity; give me your ring; since this unfortunate fellow has perilled his life for it, I will bury it with him."

The Countess did not wish to disoblige the Count, and so, drawing off her ring, though unwillingly, she handed it to him. Thereupon the Thief made off with both his prizes, and luckily reached his home before the Count had finished his grave-digging.

You may fancy what a long face the Count pulled the next morning when the Master-Thief brought him the bed covering and the ring. "Are you a wizard?" he said to him. "Who has fetched you out of the grave, in which I myself laid you, and who has brought you to life again?"

"You did not bury me," replied the Thief, "but a poor criminal from the gallows;" and then he related circumstantially all that had occurred, so that the Count was compelled to believe that he was a clever and crafty fellow.

"But your tasks are not ended yet," said the Count; "you have still the third to do, and if you do not manage that all your former work will be useless."

The Master-Thief laughed, but made no answer; and when night came he went to the village-church with a long sack on his back, a bundle under his arm, and a lantern in his hand. In the sack he had some crabs, and in the bundle some short wax-lights,

When he got into the churchyard he stopped and took a crab from his sack, and fixing one of his wax-lights upon its back he placed it on the ground and made it crawl about. Then he took out a second, and a third, and so on, till he had emptied the sack. After that he put on a long black cloak, like a monk's gown, and fastened a grey beard with wax to his chin. Then, being thus completely disguised, he took the sack in which the crabs had been, and going to the church, proceeded up the chancel. At the same moment the steeple-clock struck twelve, and as soon as the last stroke had rung, the Master-Thief began to cry with a clear, loud voice, "Hear, all you sinners! hear, hear! the end of the world is come, the eternal day is near; hear, hear! Whoever will go to heaven with me, let him creep into this sack. I am Peter, who opens and shuts the gate of heaven. See out there in the churchyard the dead wandering about, collecting their bones together. Come, come, come, and creep into the sack, for the world passes away."

His words resounded through the whole village; but the Parson and Clerk, who lived close to the Church, first understood what he said; and when they perceived the lights wandering about in the churchyard, they believed that something uncommon was happening, and went into the church. They listened for a while to the preacher; and at length

the Clerk nudged the Parson, and said to him, "It would not be a bad plan if we made use of this opportunity, before the dawning of the eternal day, to get to heaven in an easy way."

"Oh, certainly!" replied the Parson, "that is exactly what I think; if you desire it, we will forthwith enter on the journey."

"Yes!" said the Clerk; "but you have the precedence, Mr. Parson; I will follow you."

So the Parson mounted the chancel steps, and crept into the sack, which the Master-Thief held open, closely followed by the Clerk. Immediately the Thief drew the neck of the sack tight, and, swinging it round, dragged it down the steps, and so often as the heads of the poor fellows in it knocked against the floor, he cried to them, "Ah, now we are going over the mountains!" When they were out of the church he dragged them in the same manner through the village, and called the puddles which the sack went into "the clouds." By-and-by they came to the castle, and as he dragged the sack up the steps he named them as those which led to the gate of heaven, and said he, "We shall soon be in the entrance-court now." As soon as he got to the top, he pushed the sack into the dove-cote; and when the doves fluttered about he told the Parson and the Clerk to listen to the angels fluttering their wings. Then he pushed the bolt to and went away.

The next morning the Master-Thief presented himself before the Count, and told him that he had performed the third task, and drawn the Parson and Clerk out of the church. "Where have you left them then?" asked the Count.

"They are lying in a sack in the dove-cote," said the Thief, "and fancy themselves in heaven."

The Count went himself and saw that the Thief had spoken the truth; but he freed the poor men from their imprisonment. After he had done so he said to the Thief, "You are indeed an arch thief, and have won your wager. For this time you may escape with a whole skin, but take care to keep away from my provinces; for if you venture again into my power, you shall be elevated on the gallows."

The Master-Thief then took his leave; and after he had said good-bye to his parents, he went away to a distant country, and nobody has seen or heard of him since.

THE ROBBER AND HIS SONS.

ONCE upon a time there lived in a large forest a Robber and his band, who concealed themselves in caves and clefts of rocks; and when any princes, nobles, or rich merchants, passed near them, they started out and robbed them of their money and other property. But in course of time the head Robber grew old; and then he took an aversion to his employment, and repented of the many bad actions he had done. He determined, therefore, to lead a better life, like an honest man, doing good wherever he could. People wondered to see him change so quickly, but they were nevertheless glad of it. Now, he had three Sons, whom, when they had

grown up, he called to him, and bade them choose what trade or profession they would be, that they might earn their living honestly. The Sons consulted with one another, and then answered, "The apple falls not far from its tree; we will maintain ourselves as you did, we will become Robbers. A business whereat we must work from morning till night, and yet earn a scanty living and little gains, does not please us at all."

"Alas! my dear children," replied the Father, "why will you not live quietly, and be content with little? Honest gains last the longest. Robbery is a wicked and godless trade, which leads to bad endings; in the riches which you may acquire, you will have no peace, for that I know from my own experience. I tell you again it has an evil ending; the jug is taken once too often to the well, and gets broken; you will be caught at last and hung on the gallows."

His Sons, however, paid no attention to his warnings, but remained unconvinced. So the three youths resolved to make a trial, and because they knew that the Queen had a fine horse of great value in her stables, they determined to steal it. They were aware that the horse ate no other fodder than a tender kind of grass, which grew in a certain marshy wood. Thither they went and cut some of this grass, which they made into a large bundle, and in the middle

thereof the two elder brothers hid the younger so cleverly, that he could not be seen. This bundle they carried to the market, and the Queen's stable-keeper purchased it, caused it to be carried to the stable of the horse, and there thrown down. As soon as midnight came, and everybody was fast asleep, the boy made his way out of the bundle of grass, and, untying the horse, bridled it with its golden bridle, and laid across it the cloth picked out with gold, which formed the saddle, and the bells which hung from it he stopped with wax, that they might not make any sound. This done he opened the stable door and rode away in great haste back to his brothers. The watchmen in the town, however, remarked the thief and pursued him ; and catching him, together with his brothers, they took all three prisoners, and carried them off to gaol.

The next morning they were taken before the Queen, and when she saw how young they were, she made inquiries about their parentage, and learnt that they were the three sons of an old Robber, who had changed his mode of life, and was now living an obedient subject. She caused them to be taken back to prison, and asked the Father if he would release his Sons. The Old Man said, "My Sons are not worthy of a penny being spent to release them."

"You are a well-known and notable Robber," replied the Queen to him; "tell me the most remark-

able adventure which you have met with in your life, and I will release your Sons."

Thus bidden, the old Robber replied, "My lady Queen, hear my tale of an occurrence which frightened me more than fire or water. While travelling about, I learnt that in a wild wooded ravine between two hills, twenty miles distant from any human habitation, there dwelt a Giant in possession of an immense treasure of many thousand pieces of gold and silver. So I selected for my companions as many as a hundred men, and we set out together to the place. It was a long and toilsome road among rocks and precipices, and when we came to the spot, to our great joy we did not find the Giant at home, so we took as much as we could carry of the gold and silver. Just as were making our way home with this treasure, and fancied ourselves quite safe, we were unawares surrounded and taken prisoners by the Giant, who was accompanied by nine others. They divided us amongst them, each taking ten, and I with nine others fell to the lot of the Giant from whom we had taken the treasure. He bound our hands behind our backs and carried us like sheep to a rocky cave, and when we offered to ransom ourselves with money or property, he replied, 'I do not want your treasures; I shall keep you and devour you, for that is what I reckon upon.' So saying, he felt of us all, and, singling out one, said, 'This is the fattest of you all,

and I will make a beginning with him.' Then he struck him down, and putting his flesh in morsels into a kettle full of water, he set it on the fire till it was boiled through, and afterwards made his meal of it. Thus every day he devoured one of us, and because I was the leanest, I was the last. So when my nine companions were devoured, I bethought myself of a stratagem to escape my turn, and at length I said to the Giant, 'I see you have bad eyes, and suffer with pain in your face; I am a physician, and well experienced in my profession, and therefore if you will spare my life, I will heal your eyes.'

"He promised me my life if I were able to do what I said, and gave me everything that I asked for. I put oil in a vessel and mixed it with sulphur, pitch, salt, arsenic, and other destructive ingredients, and then I put it over the fire, as if I were preparing a plaster for his eyes. As soon then as the oil boiled I caused the Giant to lie down, and I then poured over his eyes, head, and body, the whole contents of the vessel, so that he fully lost his sight, and the whole skin of his body was blistered and burnt. With a fearful howl he jumped up, threw himself then on the ground again, and wallowed here and there, uttering dreadful cries, and roaring like a bull or lion. Then again, springing up in his rage, he caught up a large club which was lying on the ground, and ran all over the cave striking now

against the floor and then on the walls, thinking each time to hit me. I could not escape, for the cave was everywhere surrounded with high walls, and the doors were closed with iron bolts. I jumped from one corner to the other, and at last, because I knew not what else to do, I mounted by a ladder to the roof and hung thereon by both hands. There I remained a day and a night, and then, because I could bear it no longer, I climbed down again and mixed with the sheep. There I was obliged to be very active and always run between the Giant's legs with the flock that he might not notice me. At length, I found in one corner of the sheepfold a ram's skin, and managed to draw it on so well that the beast's horns came where my head was. Now the Giant was accustomed when the sheep were going to the meadows to make them run between his legs, by which means he counted them, and also picked out the fattest one, whom he caught and cooked for his dinner. On this occasion I thought I should easily escape by pressing through his legs as the sheep did ; but he caught me, and finding me heavy, said, 'You are fat, and shall fill my belly to-day." I gave one leap and sprang out of his hands, and he caught me again. I escaped a second time, but he caught me again ; and seven times I thus alternately eluded and fell into his grasp. Then he flew into a passion and said to me, 'You may run

away, and may the wolves devour you, for you have fooled me enough!' As soon as I was outside the cave I threw off the skin which disguised me, and shouted in a mocking tone to him that I had escaped him in spite of all. While I did so he drew a ring from his finger and held it out to me, saying, 'Take this ring as a pledge from me; you have well deserved it. It would not be becoming either, that so crafty and clever a man should go unrewarded by me.' I took the gold ring and put it on my finger, not knowing that it was enchanted, and that it compelled me to utter, whether I wished or not, the words, 'Here I am! here I am!' In consequence of this the Giant was made aware where I was, and pursued me into the forest. But there, because he was blind, he ran every moment against some roots or trunks of trees, and fell down like an immense rock. Each time, however, he quickly raised himself, and, as he had such long legs, and could make such enormous strides, he gained on me very soon, while I still cried, without cessation, 'Here I am! here I am!' I was well aware that the ring was the cause of my exclamations, and I tried to draw it off, but without success. At last, as there was no other resource, I bit off my finger with my own teeth, and, at the same time, I ceased to cry, 'Here I am!' and so luckily escaped the Giant. Certainly I thus lost one of my fingers, but I preserved my life by doing so."

Here the Robber broke off and said to the Queen, "Madam, if it please you, I have told you this adventure to ransom one of my Sons; and now, to liberate the second, I will narrate what further happened to me:—

"As soon as I had escaped from the Giant, I wandered about the wilderness totally unable to tell which way to turn. I climbed to the tops of the firs, and up all the hills, but wherever I looked, far and wide, there was no house, nor field, nor a single trace of a human habitation: the whole country was one terrible wilderness. From mountains, which reached up to heaven, I reached valleys which were only to be compared with abysses. I encountered lions, bears, buffaloes, zebras, poisonous snakes, and fearful reptiles; I saw two wild uncouth men, people with horns and beaks, so frightful, that I shudder even now when I think of them. I hurried on and on, impelled by hunger and thirst, though I feared every minute I should sink with exhaustion. At last, just as the sun was going down, I came to a high mountain, from whence I saw in a deserted valley a column of smoke rising, as it were, from a baker's oven. I ran out as quickly as I could down the mountain in the direction of the smoke, and when I got below I saw three dead men hanging on the bough of a tree. The sight terrified me, for I supposed I had fallen into the power of some other Giant, and I

feared for my life. However, taking courage, I went on, and soon came to a cottage whose door stood wide open; and by the fire on the hearth, sat a woman with her child. I entered, greeted her, and asked her why she sat there alone, and where her husband was; I asked, too, if it were far from any human habitation. She told me, in reply, that any country where there were men's dwellings was at a very great distance; and she related, with tears in her eyes how, on the previous night, the wild men of the wood had entered her house and stolen her away with her child from the side of her husband, and carried her to this wilderness. She said, too, that that morning the monsters, before going out, had commanded her to kill and dress her own child, that they might devour it on their return. As soon as I had heard this tale I felt great pity for the poor woman and her child, and resolved to rescue them from their situation. So I ran away to the tree, on which hung the three thieves, and, taking down the middle one, who was the stoutest, carried him into the house. I cut him in pieces and told the woman to give them to the robbers to eat. Her child I concealed in a hollow tree, and then I hid myself behind the house, where I could see when the wild men arrived, and if it were necessary, hasten to the relief of the woman. As soon as the sun set, the three Giants came down from the mountain; they were fearful objects to look

at, being similar to apes in their stature and figure. They were dragging behind them a dead body, but I could not see what it was. As soon as they entered the house, they lighted a large fire, and, tearing the body to pieces with their teeth, devoured it uncooked. After that they took the kettle, in which was cooked the flesh of the thief, off the fire, and divided the pieces among them for their supper. As soon as they had done, one of them, who appeared to be the head, asked the woman if what they had eaten were the flesh of her child. She said 'Yes.' And then the monster said, 'I believe that you have concealed your child, and given us to eat one of the thieves off the tree.' So saying, he told his companions to run off and bring him a piece of the flesh of each of the three thieves that he might assure himself they were all there. As soon as I heard this I ran and hung myself by the hands between the two thieves on the rope which had been round the neck of the third. When the monsters came, they cut a piece of flesh from the side of each of us, and I endured the pain without suffering any cry to escape me. I have even now the scar for a witness of the truth of the tale."

Here the Robber again ceased, and told the Queen that what he had said was intended as a ransom for his second Son, and for the third he would narrate the conclusion of his tale. Then he went on thus :—

"As soon as the wild people had gone away with these three pieces of flesh, I let myself down again, and bound up my wound as well as I could with strips of my shirt, but I could not stop the blood which streamed down me still. I paid no attention to that, however, but kept thinking still how to perform my promise of saving the woman and her child. I hastened back, therefore, to my concealment, and listened to what was passing in the cottage. I could scarcely keep my attention fixed, however, for I felt so much pain from my wound, and besides, I was quite worn out with hunger and thirst. I observed, nevertheless, the Giant trying the three pieces of flesh which were brought to him, and when he took up the third, which was mine, he exclaimed to his three comrades, 'Run at once and fetch me the middle thief, for his flesh seems to me the best flavoured!' As soon as I heard this I hurried to the gallows and suspended myself again by the rope between the two thieves. Soon the monsters came, and pulling me down, dragged me over the thorns and stones to the house, where they threw me on the floor. Then, sharpening their knives, they prepared to slay and devour me, but just as they were about to begin, there suddenly rolled such a clap of thunder, accompanied by lightning, over the house, that the monsters themselves trembled and paused in their work. The thunder and lightning continued and the

rain fell in torrents, while the wind blew as if the whole cottage would be swept away. In the midst of the noise and confusion the monsters fled out of the cottage through the window and roof, and left me lying on the ground. The storm lasted for three hours, and then daylight appeared, and soon the sun shone out. I got up, and seeking the woman and her child, we left the ruined hut, and for fourteen days wandered about the wilderness, subsisting on nothing but roots, herbs, and berries, which grew on our path. At length we arrived in a civilized country, and I found the husband, whose joy you may easily imagine on the return of his wife and child."

Here the robber ended his tale, and as soon as he had concluded, the Queen said to him, "You have atoned for much evil by your restoration of this poor woman to her husband, and, therefore, I now liberate your three Sons."

WISE HANS.

HOW happy is the man, and how well his affairs go on at home, who has a wise boy who listens to every word that is said to him, and then goes and acts according to his own discretion! Such a wise Hans was once sent by his Master to look for a lost cow. He remained a long while absent; but the Master thought, "My trusty Hans spares himself no trouble in his work!" When, however, a still longer time had elapsed, and the Boy did not return, his Master began to fear something had happened, so he made himself ready to go in search of him. He looked about for a long while, and at length found Hans running up and down in a wide field. "Now,

my good Hans," cried his Master when he had overtaken him, "have you found the cow which I sent you after?"

"No, Master," he replied, "I have not found the cow, for I have not looked for it."

"What have you been looking for, then, Hans?" asked the Master.

"Something better, and I have found it, too, luckily."

"What is it, Hans?"

"Three Blackbirds," answered the Boy.

"And where are they?" continued his Master.

"One I hear, the second I see, and the third I am hunting," said the Boy.

Take now example by this; do not trouble yourself with your Master's business or his orders; but do rather whatever may please you at the moment, and then you will be reckoned as fine a fellow as this wise Hans.

THE DRUMMER.

ONE evening a young Drummer was walking all alone on the sea-shore, and as he went along he perceived three pieces of linen lying on the sand. "What fine linen!" said he; and, picking up one of the pieces, he put it in his pocket and went home, thinking no more of his discovery. By-and-by he went to bed, and just as he was about to fall asleep, he fancied he heard some one call his name. He listened, and presently distinguished a gentle voice, calling, "Drummer, Drummer! awake!" He could see nothing, for it was quite dark; but he felt, as it were, something flitting to and fro over his bed. "What do you want?" he asked at length. "Give

me back my shirt," replied the voice, "which you found yesterday on the sea-shore."

"You shall have it again if you tell me who you are."

"Alas! I am the Daughter of a mighty King; but I have fallen into the power of a Witch, who has confined me on the glass mountain. Every day I am allowed to bathe with my two sisters in the sea; but I cannot fly away again without my shirt. Yestereve my sisters escaped as usual, but I was obliged to stay behind, so I beg you to give me my shirt again."

"Rest happy, poor child," replied the Drummer, "I will readily give it back;" and feeling for it in his pocket, he handed it to her. She hastily snatched it, and would have hurried away, but the Drummer exclaimed, "Wait a moment, perhaps I can help you!"

"That you may do," said the voice, "if you climb up the glass mountain and free me from the Witch; but you cannot get there, nor yet ascend, were you to try."

"Where there's a will there's a way," said the Drummer. "I pity you, and I fear nothing; but I do not know the way to the glass mountain."

"The path lies through the large forest, where the Giants are," said the child; "more I dare not tell you;" and so saying, she flew away.

At break of day the Drummer arose, and hanging

his drum round him, walked straight away without fear into the forest. After he had traversed some distance without perceiving any Giant he thought to himself he would awake the sleepers ; and so, steadying his drum, he beat a roll upon it, which disturbed all the birds so much that they flew off. In a few minutes a Giant raised himself from the ground, where he had been lying asleep on the grass, and his height was that of a fir-tree. "You wretched wight!" he exclaimed, "what are you drumming here for, awaking me out of my best sleep?"

"I am drumming," he replied, "to show the way to the many thousands who follow me."

"What do they want here in my forest?" asked the Giant.

"They are coming to make a path through, and rid it of such monsters as you," said the Drummer.

"Oho? I shall tread them down like ants."

"Do you fancy you will be able to do anything against them?" said the Drummer. "Why, if you bend down to catch any of them, others will jump upon your back ; and then when you lie down to sleep, they will come from every bush and creep upon you. And each one has a steel hammer in his girdle, with which he means to beat out your brains."

The Giant was terribly frightened to hear all this, and he thought to himself, "If I meddle with these crafty people they will do me some injury. I can

strangle wolves and bears, but these earthworms I cannot guard against." Then, speaking aloud, he said, "Here, you little fellow, I promise for the future to leave you and your comrades in peace; and if you have a wish tell it to me, for I will do anything to please you."

"Well, then," replied the Drummer, "you have got long legs, and run quicker than I, so carry me to the glass-mountain, and I will beat a retreat-march to my companions, so that for this time you shall not be disturbed."

"Come hither, you worm," said the Giant, "set yourself on my shoulder, and I will bear you whither you desire."

The Giant took him up, and the Drummer began to beat with all his might and main. "That is the sign," thought the Giant, "for the others to go back." After a while a second Giant started up on the road, and took the Drummer from the shoulders of the first, and put him in his button-hole. The Drummer took hold of the button, which was as big as a plate, to hold on by, and looked round in high spirits. By-and-by they met with a third Giant, who took him out of the button-hole and placed him on the rim of his hat. Here the Drummer walked round and round observing the country; and, perceiving in the blue distance a mountain, he supposed it to be the glass mountain, and so it was. The Giant took only a couple more

strides and arrived at the foot of the mountain, where he set down the Drummer. The latter desired to be taken to the summit, but the Giant only shook his head and went away, muttering something in his beard.

So there the poor Drummer was left standing before the mountain, which was as high as if three hills had been placed upon each other, and, withal, as smooth as a mirror, so that he knew not how he should ascend it. He began to climb, but it was in vain, he slipped back every step. "Oh that I were a bird!" he exclaimed; "but of what use was wishing! wings never grew for that." While he ruminated, he saw at a little distance two men hotly quarrelling. He went up to them and found that their dispute related to a saddle, which lay on the ground before them, and for the possession of which they were contending. "What fools you are," he exclaimed, "to quarrel about a saddle, for which you have no horse!"

"The saddle is worth fighting about," replied one, "for whoever sits upon it may wish himself where he will, and may even go to the end of the world if he so desire. The saddle belongs to us in common; but it is now my turn to ride, and this other will not let me."

"I will soon end your quarrel!" exclaimed the Drummer, walking a few steps forward, and planting a white wand in the ground; "run both of you to

that point, and whoever gets there first shall ride first."

The two men started off at once, but they had scarcely gone two steps when the Drummer sat himself hastily down on their saddle, and, wishing himself on the top of the glass mountain, was there before one could turn his hand round. On the summit was a large plain, whereon stood an old stone mansion, and before its door a fish-pond, and behind, a dark wood. The Drummer saw neither man nor beast, all was still, but the noise of the wind among the trees; while, close above his head, the clouds were rolling along. He stepped up to the door of the house and knocked thrice, and after the third time, an old Woman, with red eyes and a brown face, opened it. She had spectacles upon her nose, and looked at him very sharply before she asked what his business was.

"Entrance, a night's lodging, and provisions," replied the Drummer boldly.

"That you shall have, if you promise to perform three tasks!" said she.

"And why not?" he replied. "I am not afraid of work, be it ever so hard!"

So the old Woman let him come in, and gave him supper, and afterwards a good bed.

The next morning when the Drummer arose, the old Woman handed him a thimble off her withered finger, and said, "Now, go to work and empty the

pond out there with this thimble, but you must finish it before night; and, besides that, you must take out all the fishes, and range them according to their species upon the bank."

"That is a queer job!" said the Drummer; but, going to the pond, he began to thimble out the water. He worked all the morning, but what could he do with a single thimble, if he had kept at work for a thousand years? When noonday came he stopped and sat down; for, as he thought, "It is no use, and all the same whether I work or not." Just then a Girl came from the house, and brought him a basket of provisions. "What do you want," she asked, "that you sit there so sorrowful?"

The Drummer looked up, and, seeing that she was very beautiful, he replied, "Alas! I cannot perform the first task, and how I shall do the others, I cannot tell! I have come here to seek a King's Daughter, who lives hereabouts, but I have not found her, and I must go further."

"Stop here!" said the Girl, "I will assist you out of your trouble. You are tired, so lay your head in my lap and go to sleep; when you awake again the work will be done!"

The Drummer needed not twice telling; and as soon as his eyes were closed, the Maiden pressed a wishing-ring, which she had, and said, "Out water, out fishes." Immediately the water rose in the air like a white

vapour, and rolled away with the other clouds; while the fishes all jumped out and arranged themselves on the banks according to their size and species.

By-and-by the Drummer awoke, and saw, to his astonishment, the work completed. "One of the fishes," said the Maiden, "does not lie with his companions, but quite alone; and so, when the old Woman comes this evening and sees all that is done she will ask why this fish is left out, and you must take it up and throw it in her face, saying, "That is for you, old Witch."

So when it was evening the old Woman came and asked the question, and he immediately threw the fish in her face. She did not appear to notice it, but only looked silently and maliciously at him. The next morning she said to him, "You got off too easily yesterday, I must give you a harder task; to-day you must cut down all my trees, split the wood into faggots, and range them in bundles, and all must be ready by night."

With these words she gave him an axe, a mallet, and two wedges; but the first was made of lead, and the others of tin. When, therefore, he began to chop, the axe doubled quite up, while the mallet and wedges stuck together. He knew not what to do; but at noon the Maiden came again with his dinner and comforted him. "Lay your head in my lap," said she, "and when you awake the work will be

done." Thereupon she turned her wishing-ring, and at the same moment the whole forest fell down with a crash, the timber split of itself, and laid itself together in heaps, as if innumerable giants were at work. As soon as the Drummer awoke, the Maiden said to him. "See, here is all your wood properly cut and stacked, with the exception of one bough which, if the old Woman, when she comes this evening, asks the reason of, give her a blow with it, and say, "That is for the old Witch."

Accordingly, when the old Woman came, she said, "See, how easy the work is; but for whom is this bough left out?"

"For you, old Witch!" he replied, giving her a blow. But she appeared not to feel it, and, laughing fiendishly, said to him, "To-morrow you shall lay all the wood in one pile, and kindle and burn it."

At daybreak he arose again and began to work; but how could a single man pile up a whole forest? The work proceeded very slowly. The Maiden, however, did not forget him in his troubles, and brought him as usual his midday meal, after eating which he laid his head in her lap and slept. On his awaking he found the whole pile burning in one immense flame, whose tongues of fire reached up to heaven. "Attend to me," said the Maiden to him; "when the Witch comes she will demand something singular, but do what she desires without fear, and

you will take no harm ; but if you are afraid, the fire will catch and consume you. Lastly, when you have fulfilled her demands, take her with both hands and throw her into the midst of the flames."

Thereupon the Maiden left him, and presently the old Woman slipped in, crying, "Hu! hu! how I freeze! but there is fire to warm me and my old bones ; that is well ; but," she continued, turning to the Drummer, "there is a log which will not burn, fetch it out for me ; come, if you do that, you shall be free and go where you will, only be brisk."

The Drummer plunged into the flames without a moment's consideration ; but they did him no harm, not even singeing a single hair. He bore the faggot off and laid it beside the old Witch ; but as soon as it touched the earth it changed into the beautiful Maiden, who had delivered him from his troubles, and he perceived at once by her silken shining robes that she was the King's daughter. The old Woman laughed fiendishly again, and exclaimed, "Do you think you have her? not yet, not yet!" And, so saying, she would have seized the Maiden ; but the Drummer, catching her with both his hands, threw her into the middle of the burning pile, and the flames closed in around her, as if rejoicing in the destruction of such a Witch.

When this was done the Maiden looked at the Drummer, and, seeing that he was a handsome

youth, and that he had ventured his life to save hers, she held out her hand to him, and said, "You have dared a great deal for me, and I must do something for you; promise me to be true and faithful, and you shall be my husband. For wealth we shall not want; we have enough here in the treasure which the old Witch has gathered together."

Thereupon she led him into the house and showed him chests upon chests, which were filled with treasures. They left the gold and silver, and took nothing but diamonds and pearls; and then, as they no longer wished to remain on the glass mountain, the Drummer proposed that they should descend on the wishing-saddle. "The old saddle does not please me," said the Maiden, "and I need only turn the ring on my finger and we shall be at home."

"Well, then, wish ourselves at the city gate," replied the Drummer; and in the twinkling of an eye they were there. "I will go and take the news to my parents first," said the Drummer; "wait here for me, for I shall soon be back."

"Ah! I pray you, then, take care not to kiss your parents when you arrive on the right cheek, else will you forget everything, and I shall be left here all alone in this field." "How can I forget you?" said he, and promised her faithfully to return in a very short time. When he entered his father's house nobody knew him, he was so altered, for the three

days which he had imagined he had spent on the glass mountain were three long years. He soon recalled himself to their remembrance, and his parents hung round his neck, so that, moved by affection, he entirely forgot the Maiden's injunctions, and kissed them on both cheeks. Every thought concerning the Princess at once faded from his mind, and, emptying his pockets, he laid handfuls of precious stones upon the table. The parents could not tell what to do with so much wealth, till at length they built a noble castle, surrounded by gardens, woods, and meadows, and fit for a prince to inhabit. When it was done the mother of the Drummer said to him, "I have looked out for a wife for you, and you shall be married in three days' time."

Now, the Drummer was quite content with all that his parents proposed; but the poor Princess was very disconsolate. For a long time after he first left her she waited for him in the fields; but when evening fell she believed that he had kissed his parents on the right cheek, and forgotten all about her. Her heart was full of grief, and she wished herself in some solitary forest that she might not return to her father's court. Every evening she went to the city and passed by the Drummer's house, but although he saw her many times he never recognized her. At last she heard one day the people talking of the wedding of the Drummer, and she thereupon resolved

to make a trial if she could regain his love. As soon as the first festival day was appointed, she turned her wishing-ring, saying, "A dress as shining as the sun." Immediately the dress lay before her, and seemed as if wove out of the purest sunbeams! Then, as soon as the guests had assembled, she slipped into the hall, and everybody admired her beautiful dress; but most of all the Bride elect, who had a passion for fine dresses, and went up to her and asked if she would sell it. "Not for money," she replied, "but for the privilege of sleeping for one night next to the chamber of the Bridegroom."

The Bride elect could not resist her wish for the dress, and so she consented; but first of all she mixed in the sleeping draught of the Bridegroom a strong potion, which prevented him from being awakened. By-and-by, when all was quiet, the Princess crept to the chamber-door, and, opening it slightly, called gently,—

"Drummer, Drummer, O list to me,
Forget not what I did for thee;
Think of the mountain of glass so high,
Think of the Witch and her cruelty;
Think of my plighted troth with thee:
Drummer! Drummer! O list to me!"

She cried all in vain, the Drummer did not awake, and when day dawned the Princess was forced to leave. The second evening she turned her wishing-ring, and said, "A dress as silvery as the moon."

As soon as she had spoken it lay before her; and when she appeared in it at the ball, the Bride elect wished to have it as well the other, and the Princess gave it to her for the privilege of passing another night next the chamber of the Bridegroom. And everything passed as on the first night.

The servants in the house, however, had overheard the plaint of the strange Maiden, and they told the Bridegroom about it. They told him, also, that it was not possible for him to hear anything about what was said because of the potion, which was put into his sleeping-draught.

The third evening the Princess turned her ring and wished for a dress as glittering as the stars. As soon as she appeared in the ball-room thus arrayed, the Bride elect was enchanted with its beauty, and declared rapturously, "I must and will have it." The Maiden gave it up, like the former, for a night's sleep next the Bridegroom's chamber. This time he did not drink his wine as usual, but poured it out behind the bed; and so, when all the house was quiet, he heard a gentle voice repeating,—

"Drummer, Drummer, O list to me,
Forget not what I did for thee;
Think of the mountain of glass so high,
Think of the Witch and her cruelty;
Think of my plighted troth with thee:
Drummer! Drummer! O list to me!"

All at once his memory returned, and he exclaimed,

"Alas! Alas! how could I have treated you so heartlessly? but the kisses which I gave my parents on the right cheek, in the excess of my joy, they have bewildered me." He jumped up, and, taking the Princess by the hand, led her to the bedside of his parents. "This is my true Bride," said he; "and if I marry the other I shall do a grievous wrong." When the parents heard all that had happened, they gave their consent, and thereupon the lights in the hall were rekindled, the drums and trumpets refetched, the friends and visitors invited to come again, and the true wedding was celebrated with great pomp and happiness.

But the second Bride received the three splendid dresses, and was as well contented as if she had been married!

THE EARS OF WHEAT.

AGES upon ages ago, when the angels used to wander on earth, the fruitfulness of the ground was much greater than it is now. Then the Ears of Wheat bore, not fifty or sixty-fold, but four-times five-hundred-fold. Then the corn grew from the bottom of the stalk to the top; and so long as the stalk was, so long were the Ears. But as men always do in the midst of their abundance, they forgot the blessing which came from God, and became idle and selfish.

One day a Woman went to a corn-field, and her little child who accompanied her fell into a puddle

and soiled her frock. The Mother tore off a handful of Wheat-ears and cleaned her Daughter's dress with them. Just then an Angel passed by, and saw her. He became very angry, and declared to her that henceforth the Wheat-stalks should no longer produce Ears, for, said he, "You mortals are not worthy of heaven's gifts." The bystanders who heard him, fell on their knees, weeping and praying him to leave the Wheat-stalks alone, if not for themselves, yet for the poor fowls, who must otherwise perish with hunger. The Angel pitied their distress and granted part of their prayer; and from that day the Ears of Wheat have grown as they do now.

THE GRAVE-MOUND.

ONCE upon a time a rich Farmer was standing in his yard, looking out over his fields and gardens, where the corn was growing quite yellow, and the trees hanging down with fruit. The produce of the previous year lay yet in his granaries, and its weight was so great that the beams could scarcely support it. Next he went into his stables, and there stood stall-fed oxen, fat cows, and sleek horses. Lastly, he went back to his kitchen and his parlour, where stood the iron chests in which his gold was contained. Whilst he stood meditating upon his riches he heard suddenly a knock close to him. It was not the door of his house, but at his heart. He listened, and heard

a voice which said to him, "Have you done good with your wealth? have you cared for the troubles of the poor? have you shared your bread with the hungry? have you been contented with what you possess, or have you desired more?" His heart replied without delay, "I have been hard and unmerciful to all; I have done good to no one; when a poor man has come to my door I have turned away my eyes; nor have I concerned myself about a God, but thought only how to increase my riches, and had all that heaven covered been mine, I should not even then have been satisfied!" As soon as these answers had passed through his mind, he became terribly frightened; and his knees trembled so much that he was forced to sit down. Then a second knock was heard by him, but this time it was not at his heart, but at the door. It was his neighbour, a poor Man, who had a great many children, more than he could satisfy. "I know that my neighbour is rich," the poor fellow had thought to himself; "but he is also very stingy: I do not believe that he will help me, but my children cry so for bread, I will venture it!" When the Rich Man answered the knock, the Poor Man said to him, "You are not accustomed, I know, to give readily to the poor; but I stand here like one whose head is nearly under water; my children are hungry, lend me four measures of meal?"

The Rich Man looked at him for some time, and

soon the first sunbeam of compassion began to melt the ice of his selfishness. "I will not lend you four measures," he replied; "but I will give you eight measures, on one condition!"

"What is that?" asked the Poor Man.

"When I am dead, you must watch three nights by my grave."

This condition caused the Poor Man much secret uneasiness; still on account of the necessity in which he was, he consented; and promising all, he carried the corn home with him.

It seemed as if the Rich Man had a presentiment of what was to happen, for after three days he suddenly fell dead on the ground; nobody knew the cause of his decease, but no suspicion was excited. After he was buried, the Poor Man remembered his agreement, from which he wished he could have released himself; but he thought, "The man behaved very compassionately to me, and I satisfied my children's hunger with his corn; and, besides, I promised, and must perform."

As soon, then, as night fell, he went to the churchyard and sat down on a grave-mound. All was still, only the moon was shining on the hillocks, and many times an owl flew by, making her doleful cries. As soon as the sun again rose, the Poor Man returned home wearied out; and in due time passed the second night in similar quiet. But on the third

evening he felt a peculiar terror; it seemed as if something stood before him. As soon as he got out he perceived a man on the wall of the churchyard, whom he had never seen before. He was by no means young, for his face was full of wrinkles; but his eyes shown with a bright light. He was quite enveloped by a large cloak, and only his large jack-boots were to be seen. "What are you seeking here?" asked the Peasant; "are you not afraid of the lone churchyard?"

"I fear nothing and desire nothing," replied the Man. "I am like the youth who travelled to learn what shivering meant, and wearied himself in so doing, but still received a Princess for his wife, and great riches; but I have always been poor; I am nothing but a discharged Soldier, and want to pass the night here, because I have no other shelter."

"If you have no fear, then," said the Peasant, "remain with me, and assist me to watch this grassy mound."

"Keeping guard is part of the Soldier's business," replied the stranger; "so whatever meets us here, whether bad or good, we will bear in common."

To this the Peasant assented, and the pair sat down by the grassy mound. Everything was quiet till midnight; and then all at once a cutting sound was heard in the air, and the two watchers perceived an Evil Spirit standing before them.

"Away, you rascals!" he cried, "away! the man who lies in this grave belongs to me; I am come to fetch him, and if you do not take yourselves off I will break your necks." "Captain with the red feather!" replied the Soldier, "you are not my captain; I need not obey you; and to fear I have never learnt. Go your way! we shall stop here."

When the Soldier had spoken this, the Evil Spirit began to think to himself that perhaps he could manage the two watchers better by offering them money; and so, moderating his tune, he asked civilly whether they would not be satisfied to go home on the receipt of a purse of gold.

"That deserves consideration," said the Soldier; "but we shall not be sufficiently rewarded with one purseful of gold: if, however, you will give us as much as will fill one of my jack-boots, we will leave the field to you and go away."

"I have not so much with me," replied the Evil Spirit; "but I will fetch it. In the neighbouring town lives a banker, who is an intimate friend of mine, and he will readily lend me all I require."

So saying, the Spirit disappeared; and as soon as he was gone, the Soldier, drawing off his left boot, said to his companion, "Ah! now see how we will pull the nose of this coal-burner; only give me your knife, cousin."

He first cut off the sole and then set the boot

upright in the long grass on the edge of a half-dug grave, near the one they were watching. "That is well done," he said: "now the chimney-sweeper may come as soon as he likes."

The pair sat down again to watch, and in a short time the Spirit returned, carrying a bag of gold in his hand.

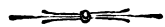
"Shoot it in!" said the Soldier, raising the boot up a little as he approached; "but that lot will not be enough." The Spirit emptied the bag; but the gold fell through the boot of course, so that there remained nothing of it. "Stupid Spirit!" exclaimed the Soldier; "it is nothing at all, did I not tell you so? You must return and fetch more." Shaking his head, the Spirit went and returned in an hour with a much larger bag under his arm. "Shoot it in!" said the Soldier again, "but I doubt there is still not enough." The gold clinked as it fell, but the boot was still empty, and the Spirit himself, looking in with fiery eyes, convinced himself of the fact. "You have shamefully big calves!" exclaimed the Spirit, making a wry face.

"Did you think," answered the Soldier, "that I had hoofs like you? Since when have you been so illiberal! Come, make haste, and fetch some more gold, or our bargain will be at an end."

The Evil Spirit trotted off a third time, and after some long while returned with a sack upon his

shoulders which nearly bent him double. He shot its contents quickly into the boot, but still it remained as empty as before. Thereupon he flew into a dreadful passion, and tried to snatch the boot out of the ground ; but at the same moment the first dawn of daylight appeared, and the sun began to rise, so that the Evil Spirit was forced to fly away with loud shrieks. And the body of the Rich Man thenceforth rested in peace.

The Peasant would have shared the gold which the Spirit had left behind him : but the Soldier said, "No! give to the poor what should belong to me, and I will return with you to your cottage, and there we will spend the remainder of our days in quiet happiness, so long as it shall please God to spare us."



OLD RINKRANK.

THERE was once a King who had a Daughter; and he had a glass mountain built, and said that whoever could run over it without tumbling should have his Daughter for his wife. Then there was one who was so fond of the King's Daughter that he asked the King whether he might not marry her. "Yes," said the King, "if you can run over the mountain without tumbling, then you shall have her." The King's Daughter said she would run over with him, so that she might hold him up if he were going to fall; so they ran over together, but when they got up to the middle the King's Daughter slipped and fell, and the glass mountain opened itself, and she tumbled

right into it. Her Sweetheart couldn't see a bit where she had gone through, for the mountain had closed again directly. Then he fretted and cried so much, and the King too was so wretched, that he had the mountain broken down again, thinking he would get his Daughter out again; but they could never find the place where she had tumbled through. In the meantime the King's Daughter had got quite deep into the ground, in a great cave. There, there came to her an old fellow with a tremendous long grey beard, and he told her that if she would be his servant and do all he bade her, she should remain alive; if not he would make away with her. So she did all he told her. In the morning he took his ladder out of his pocket and placed it against the mountain, and climbed up out of it. Then he pulled the ladder up after him. She had then to cook his dinner, to make his bed, and to do all his work; and when he came home again he always brought great heaps of gold and silver with him.

Now, when she had been many years with him, and had already grown quite old, he called her Mother Mansrot, and she had to call him Old Rinkrank. One day, when he was out again, she made his bed, and washed his dishes, and then she shut up all the doors and windows quite close; but there was a little loop-hole, through which the light shone into the house, and that she left open. When Old Rinkrank came

home again he knocked at his door, and called out, "Open the door for me." "Nay, Old Rinkrank," said she; "I shan't open the door." Then he said:

"Here stand I, poor Rinkrank,
Upon my seventeen long shanks;
Mother Mansrot, wash my dishes!"

"I have already washed your dishes," said she. Then he said again:

"Here stand I, poor Rinkrank,
Upon my seventeen long shanks;
Mother Mansrot, make my bed!"

"I have already made your bed," said she. Then he said again:

"Here stand I, poor Rinkrank,
Upon my seventeen long shanks;
Mother Mansrot, open the door!"

Then he ran all round about the house, and saw that the little loophole was open, so he thought, "I will just look in there to see what she is about that she won't open the door for me." So he went and tried to look in, but he couldn't get his head through on account of his long beard; so he poked his beard through the loophole first, and when he had got it quite through Mother Mansrot ran up, and fastened the trap-door with a band which she had tied to it, and so the beard was fastened in quite tight. Then he began to scream most miserably, it hurt him so;

and he begged and prayed she would let him loose; but she said, not before he gave her the ladder on which he climbed out of the mountain. Then, whether he willed or not, he was obliged to say where the ladder was. So she tied a very long band to the trap-door, and placed the ladder against the mountain, and climbed up out of it; and when she was at the top she pulled the trap-door open. She went then to her father and narrated all that had happened to her. The King was greatly rejoiced; and her Sweetheart was there still; so they went and dug up the mountain, and found old Rinkrank with all his gold and silver. Then the King had old Rinkrank killed, and took home all his silver and gold. And the King's Daughter married her old Sweetheart, and they lived right merrily in splendour and happiness.

THE COUNTRYMAN AND THE EVIL SPIRIT.

ONCE there lived a bold and cunning Countryman, whose tricks are too numerous to be told entire; but one of the best tales is that showing how he managed to over-reach an Evil Spirit and make a fool of him.

It was growing quite dusky one day, when, having ploughed over his fields, he was preparing to return home. Just then he perceived in the middle of his field a heap of red-hot coals, and as he approached it, full of wonder, he observed a little Black Spirit sitting on the top. "You are sitting upon some treasure?" said the Countryman, inquiringly. "Yes, indeed," replied the Spirit; "a treasure containing more gold aud silver than you ever saw in your life."

"Then the treasure belongs to me, because it lies on my field," said the Countryman, boldly.

"It shall be thine," replied the Spirit, "if you give me for the next two years half the produce of your land. Of gold I have more than enough, and I wish for some of the fruits of the earth."

To this bargain the Countryman agreed; but first stipulated that to avoid dispute in the division of the produce, what was above ground should belong to the Spirit, and what was beneath the surface to himself. To this, the Spirit readily consented, but the crafty Countryman sowed turnip-seed. So when the harvest time arrived, the Spirit appeared to claim his fruits; but he found nothing but withered yellow stalks, while the Countryman contentedly dug up his turnips. "For once you have got the advantage of me," exclaimed the angry Spirit, "but it shall not happen so again; mine is what grows under the ground and yours what grows above it." "Very well, I am satisfied," said the Countryman; and when sowing time came round, he put maize seed in the ground instead of turnips. The corn ripened in due course, and the Spirit appeared to fetch away his crops. Just before he came, the Countryman had cut and carried all his corn, and so when the Evil Spirit arrived he found nothing else but stubble, and thereupon he hurried off in a terrible rage. "So must one toss foxes in blankets!" cried the Countryman when the Evil Spirit was gone, and went and fetched the treasure.

THE BALL OF CRYSTAL.

THERE was once upon a time an Enchantress who had three sons, who loved one another dearly, but yet their mother would not trust them, and was always suspecting that they would rob her of her power: so she changed the eldest into an Eagle, and condemned him to dwell on the tops of a rocky chain of mountains, where one might see him many times wheeling round and round in the air in great circles. The second brother she changed into a Whale, and he dwelt in the deep sea, where one might see him now and then throwing up a huge stream of water. These two could retake their human

form for two hours a-day. The third son, however, fearing that he might be changed into some wild beast, bear or lion, secretly took his departure, for he had heard that in the Castle of the Golden Sun sat an enchanted Princess awaiting a deliverer. Many a youth had felt bound to venture his life in her cause, but already had three-and-twenty met with horrible deaths, and only one remained to tell the dreadful tale. Our hero drove away all fear from his mind, and resolved to search out this wonderful castle. For a very long time he had wandered about, when one day he unexpectedly arrived in a large forest, from which he could not get out. He peceived, however, in the distance, two Giants, who beckoned him with their hands. He went towards them, and they told him that they were fighting for the possession of a hat; but, as they were both equally strong, neither could gain the mastery, and they wished, therefore, to leave the decision to him, since men of his size were generally very wise and crafty.

"What can induce you to fight for an old hat?" asked the Youth.

"You do not know the wonderful properties which belong to it," answered the Giants; "it is a wishing hat, and whoever wears it may go instantly whither he wishes."

"Give me the hat," said the Youth; "I will go a short way, then do you both run as if for a wager,

and whoever comes up to me first shall have the hat." With these words he put the hat on and walked off; but, beginning to think of the Princess, he forgot the Giants, and walked on and on. All at once he heaved a sigh from the bottom of his heart, and exclaimed, "Ah! that I were near the Castle of the Golden Sun." Scarcely had the words passed his lips when he found himself standing on a high mountain before the very place. He entered the castle by the door and passed through all the rooms till he came to the last, where he found the Princess. But how startled he was when he saw her! Her face was full of wrinkles, her eyes were sunk deep in her head, and her hair was red. "Are you the King's Daughter of whose beauty all the world talks?" asked the Youth. "Alas!" she replied, "this is not my form; the eyes of mortal men can only see me in this hateful guise; but that you may know how beautiful is the reality, look in this mirror which cannot err, that will show you my face as it is in reality." She gave him a mirror, and he beheld in it the portrait of the most beautiful Maiden the earth could contain, and over her cheeks he could even see the tears of sorrow rolling. "How can I save you?" he asked; "no danger will appal me." The Princess replied, "He who can obtain possession of the Crystal Ball, and hold it before the Enchanter, will, thereby, break his power, and I shall return to

my original shape. But, alas! already many a one has met death for me, and I shall grieve for your youthful blood if you dare these great perils."

"Nothing can keep me from the attempt," said the Youth; "but what must I do?"

"You shall know all," said the Princess: "if you descend the mountain on which this castle stands you will find a wild Ox, with which you must fight; and if you are lucky enough to kill it, a Fiery Bird will rise from its carcase, in whose body is a red-hot egg, the yolk of which forms the Crystal Ball. This Bird will not drop the egg till it is compelled; but if it falls to the ground it will burn and consume whatever is near it, and then the iron will melt, and with it the Crystal Ball, and all your trouble will be futile."

The Youth, thereupon, descended to the bottom of the mountain, where he saw the Ox, who commenced, as soon as he appeared, to bellow and run at him. After a long fight the Youth plunged his sword into its body, so that it fell dead to the ground. At the same instant the Fiery Bird rose from the carcase, and was about to fly away, when the Eagle, the brother of the Youth, who was just then passing over the spot swooped down and struck the Bird towards the sea, so that in its endeavours to escape it let fall the egg. The egg, however, did not fall into the sea, but on the roof of a Fisherman's

hut which stood on the shore. The roof began to burn, for the egg instantly blazed up; but at the moment, immense waves dashed out of the sea, and, rolling quite over the hut, extinguished the fire. It was the other brother, the Whale, who had caused this, having luckily swum there at the right time. As soon as the fire was out, the Youth searched for the egg, and found it very quickly; it was not quite molten, but the shell was so cracked by the sudden cooling of the cold sea-water, that he managed easily to extract the Crystal Ball.

The Youth took it at once to show to the Enchanter, who, as soon as he saw it, said, "My power is destroyed, and you are henceforth King of the Castle of the Golden Sun. Your brothers, also, can now return to their human forms."

The Youth then hastened to the Princess, and as soon as he entered the room her former beauty returned in all its glory, and they both exchanged rings with great joy, which means to say, I suppose, that they married and were very happy.

JUNGFRAU MALEEN.

THERE was once upon a time a King's Son, who went a-wooing the Daughter of another mighty King, and her name was Jungfrau Maleen. Her father, however, refused his permission to the match, because he wished her to marry some one else. But they both still loved one another so dearly, that Jungfrau Maleen told her father she could not and would not marry any one except this Prince. When she said so, her father flew into a great passion, and caused a gloomy tower to be built, into which no ray of either sun or moon could penetrate. When it was completed he said to his Daughter, "For seven years you shall sit therein;

and at the end of that period I will come and see if your stubborn disposition is conquered." Meat and drink sufficient for these seven years were carried into the tower, and then the Princess and her Maid were led into it, and bricked up, so that earth and heaven were shut out from them. They were quite in darkness, and knew no difference between day and night. The Prince often came to the outside of the tower and called their names, but they heard nothing, for no sound could penetrate through the thick walls. What could they do, then, except weep and lament their fate! So time passed by; and, by the decreasing of their food and drink, they perceived that the end of their imprisonment was approaching. They imagined that their release was at hand; but no sound of a hammer was to be heard, nor were any stones picked out of the wall, and it seemed as if the King had forgotten them. So, when they had sufficient food left for only a few days, and the prospect of a miserable death stared them in the face, Jungfrau Maleen said to her companion, "It is time now that we should try to break through the wall."

So saying, she took their bread-knife, and picked and scraped away the mortar round one stone; and when she was tired, the Maid assisted her. After a long time they succeeded in taking out one stone, then a second, and a third, and thus, after three

days' labour, a ray of light illumined their cell; and then they made the opening so large that they could peep through it. The heaven was blue and a fresh breeze came in their faces, but how mournful looked everything around! The castle of the King lay in ruins; the towns and villages, as far as the eye could reach, were burnt to the ground; the fields far and near were laid waste; and not one human being was to be seen. Soon the opening in the wall was so large that they could pass through it; and the Maiden first jumping out, her Mistress followed her. But where were they to turn? Enemies had depopulated the whole kingdom, and driven away or slain the King, with all his subjects. The pair therefore wandered on and on, seeking some other country; but nowhere could they find a shelter, or any man to give them bread to eat, and their hunger compelled them to eat the burnt roots of nettles.

However, after much weary travelling, they did at last come to cultivated land, and there, at every house, they offered their services; but nobody would take them in, or show them any pity. At last they arrived at a large city, and went to the King's palace; but there, also, they were on the point of being turned back, when the cook told them they might stop and serve as kitchen-maids if they liked.

Now the son of this King was the very same who

was betrothed to Jungfrau Maleen, and his father had engaged him to another maiden, who was as wickedly disposed in her heart as she was ugly in her looks. When the two travellers arrived, the wedding-day had been already appointed, and the bride was come, but she had shut herself up in her room, and would not be seen, because of her ugliness, and Jungfrau Maleen was ordered to take in her meals. When the day came that the betrothed couple should go to church, the bride elect was so ashamed of her ugliness that she feared she should be laughed at, and derided by the common people if she showed herself to them. So she said to Jungfrau Maleen, "A great piece of luck is presented to you, for I have hurt my foot and cannot walk at all on the road; so you shall put on my bridal clothes, and take my place; a greater honour could not have fallen to your share."

Jungfrau Maleen, however, refused, and said, "I desire no honour that does not belong to me;" and she would not be tempted even with gold. At last the bride elect exclaimed passionately; "If you do not obey me, it shall cost you your life. I have only to say one word, and your head will lie at my feet."

Jungfrau Maleen was now forced to comply, and she arrayed herself in the bridal clothes and ornaments. As soon as she appeared in the royal apartments all were astonished at her great beauty, and

the King told his son she was the bride whom he had chosen for him, and it was time now to go to church. The Prince was astonished, and thought to himself, "She looks like my Jungfrau Maleen, and I almost believe it is she; but no! she is dead, or shut up in the tower." He took the Maiden by the hand, and led her to the church, and on the road they passed a nettle-bush, whereupon the bride sang in a strange language,

"Nettle-bush! oh, nettle-bush!
Have you forgot the day
When I cooked your juicy roots,
My hunger sharp to stay?"

"What did you say then?" asked the Prince. "Nothing! I was only thinking of Jungfrau Maleen," replied the seeming Bride. He marvelled that she should know her, but he said nothing, and when they came to the church steps she sang,—

"Church steps, break not, I pray,
The true Bride comes not to-day."

"What did you say?" asked the Prince. "Nothing," she replied, as before: "I was but thinking of Jungfrau Maleen."

"Do you know that Maiden, then?" asked the Prince. "No, how should I? I have only heard of her," said she; and when they passed through the church-door she sang,

"Church door, crack not, I pray,
The true Bride comes not to-day."

"What did you say?" asked the Prince a third time. "Alas! I was only thinking of Jungfrau Maleen," she said. Then he drew out a costly chain and fastened it around her neck, and thereupon they walked into the church, and the priest, joining their hands together at the altar, married them in due form. The ceremony over, the Bridegroom led back the Bride, but she never spoke a single word all the way home. As soon as they arrived at the palace, she hastened into the Bride's chamber, and, laying aside her beautiful clothes and ornaments, she put on her grey kirtle, but kept the chain round her neck, which she had received from the Bridegroom.

When night came, and it was time for the Bride to be ushered into the Bridegroom's chamber, the ugly Maiden let fall her veil over her features, that the deceit might not be discovered. As soon as they were alone, the Bridegroom asked her, "What did you say to the nettle-bush which we passed on the road?"

"To what nettle-bush?" she asked, "I spoke to no nettle-bush!"

"If you did not, you are not my real Bride," said he. Thereupon she left the room, and, seeking Jungfrau Maleen, asked her what she had said to the nettle-bush. She sang the words over,—

"Nettle-bush! oh, nettle-bush!
Have you forgot the day
When I cooked your juicy roots,
My hunger sharp to stay?"

And as soon as she had done, the Bride ran back to the room and repeated them to the Prince. "But what did you say to the church-steps as we passed up them?" he inquired. "To the church-steps!" she echoed in surprise; "I spoke to none." "Then you are not the right Bride!" said the Bridegroom again. "I will go and ask my Maid what my thoughts were," said the Bride; and, seeking Jungfrau Maleen, she inquired of her what she had said. The Maid repeated the words,—

"Church-steps, break not, I pray,
The true bride comes not to-day."

"That shall cost you your life!" exclaimed the Bride; but, hastening back to the chamber, she told the Prince the words which she had just heard. "But what did you say to the church-door?" he inquired next. "To the church-door!" she replied; "I spoke to no church-door."

"Then you are not the right Bride," said the Prince. Thereupon away she went a third time to Jungfrau Maleen, and inquired what she had said. The Maid repeated the words,—

"Church door, crack not I pray,
The true Bride comes not to-day."

"Your neck shall be broken for saying so!" exclaimed the Bride in a rage; but hastening back to the chamber, she repeated the words she had just heard to the Bridegroom.

"But where have you put the chain I gave you at the church-door?" asked the Prince.

"What chain? you gave me no chain?" exclaimed the Bride. "But I hung it round your neck myself, and fastened it myself; and if you do not remember that you are not the right Bride." With that he tore the veil from her face, and when he saw her extreme ugliness, he exclaimed springing away from her, "Who are you? whence come you?"

"I am your betrothed Bride," she replied; "but, because I feared the people would mock me if I showed myself to them, I ordered our Kitchen-Girl to put on my dresses, and go to church in my place."

"Where is the Girl, then, now? Go and fetch her immediately," said the Prince.

She went out and told the other servants that the Kitchen-Girl was an enchantress, and that they must drag her away from the court and cut off her head. The servants soon caught the Maiden, and would have done as they were told; but she cried so loudly for help, that the Prince heard her voice, and hastening out of his room, gave orders for the Maiden's instant release. Lights were immediately

brought, and then the Prince perceived round the Maiden's neck the gold chain which he had given her at the church-door.

"You are the true Bride who went to church with me!" he exclaimed; "come with me now!" As soon as they were alone, he said to her, "On the way to church you named Jungfrau Maleen, who was once betrothed to me. Now, if I thought it possible, I should say that you were that Maiden, for you are so like to her."

"I am Jungfrau Maleen!" she replied; "and for seven long years have I been shut up in darkness; hunger and thirst, too, I have suffered; and in poverty and distress have I lived ever since; but on this day the sun shines again. I did, indeed, accompany you to church, and it was to me that you were married."

So the Prince recovered his true Bride, Jungfrau Maleen, and with her lived happily for many long years.

But the false Bride had her head cut off.

THE BOOTS MADE OF BUFFALO-LEATHER.

A SOLDIER who is afraid of nothing, cares for nothing. Now such an one had received his discharge, and because he had learnt no trade, he could earn no money; and so he wandered about hither and thither, begging alms of good people. Over his shoulders hung an old weather-proof cloak, and he had still left a pair of Buffalo-leather Boots. One day, thus equipped, he went on walking through the fields without attending to the guide-posts, and at last he came to an immense forest. He did not know where he was, but he saw a man sitting upon the trunk of a tree, who was well dressed in a green

huntsman's coat. The Soldier held out his hand to him, and then laying himself down on the grass stretched out his legs. "I see you have a pair of fine shining boots on," said he to the Huntsman; "but if you had to walk about as much as I, they would not last you very long. Look at mine! they are made of Buffalo-leather, and although they have served me a long time, they would still go through thick and thin." The Huntsman made no answer; and after a while, the Soldier got up and said, "I can stop here no longer; hunger urges me forward; but pray, Brother Thin-Boots, where does this path lead to!" "I do not know myself," replied the Huntsman; "I have lost myself in this forest." "Then you are in the same plight as I," returned the Soldier; "like and like please one another; we will remain together and seek the way." The Huntsman only laughed, but they set out together and kept on till nightfall. "We shall not get out of this forest to-night," exclaimed the Soldier at last; "but I can see a light glimmering in the distance, where they will give us something to eat." It was a stone cottage, and when they knocked at the door, an old Woman opened it. "We are seeking a night's lodging," said the Soldier to her, "and some fodder for our stomachs, for mine is as empty as my purse."

"You cannot stop here, answered the old Woman;

"this is a robbers' house, and you will be wise if you go away before they return, or you will be lost."

"It cannot be worse," said the Soldier; "for two days I have not eaten a morsel; and so it is all one to me whether I perish in this house or out in the forest. I shall come in and risk it!"

The Huntsman did not wish to follow, but the Soldier, drawing his arm within his own, drew him in, saying, "Come, comrade, we will suffer together!"

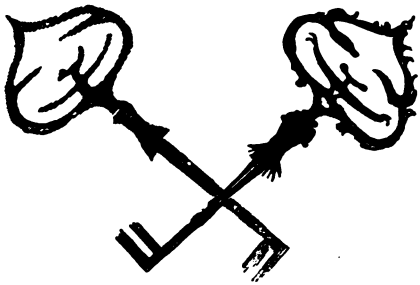
The old Woman pitied them, and told them to creep behind the stove, and then when the robbers were satisfied and slept, she would give them something to eat. Scarcely had they hid snugly in the corner, than in came the twelve robbers; and placing themselves round the table, demanded their supper with harsh language. The old Woman soon brought in an immense dish of baked meat, and the robbers prepared to fall to. Soon the smell of the savoury mess ascended the Soldier's nose, and he said to the Huntsman, "I can hold out no longer, I must sit down at the table and take a share!" "You will lose your life!" whispered the Huntsman, holding him fast by the arm. The Soldier began to cough loudly, and as soon as the robbers heard this, they threw aside their knives and forks, and rising hastily from the table discovered the pair behind the stove. "Aha, you rascals!" they called; "what are you sitting there in that corner for? Are you sent as spies? Just wait a bit, and you shall learn how to

fly on a bare branch!" "Oh! have some manners, if you please?" returned the Soldier; "give us something to eat first, and afterwards you shall do what you like with us!" The robbers were astonished to hear such bold words, and the Captain said, "Good! I see you are not afraid; eat you shall, but afterwards you shall die." "We shall see!" muttered the Soldier; and sitting down at the table, he began to cut and eat in earnest. "Brother Thin-Boots," he exclaimed to the Huntsman, "come and eat; you are hungry as well as I, and a better joint than this you could not have at home." The Huntsman, however, refused; and the robbers looking at the Soldier, said to one another, "This fellow makes no ceremony." When he had done eating, he asked for something to drink, saying, "Well, the meat was good enough; now let us have a good draught of wine." The Captain happened to be in a good humour, and so he told the old Woman to fetch a bottle of the very best wine out of the cellar. When it was brought, the Soldier drew out the cork so that it made a great noise; and then, going to the Huntsman, he whispered to him, "Pay attention, my brother, and you shall see a grand wonder; I will now drink the health of the whole company!" So saying, he swung the bottle over the heads of the robbers, at the same time shouting out, "You shall all live, but with your mouths open, and your right hands uplifted!" Scarcely were the

words out of his mouth, than the robbers all sat motionless as if they were made of stone, their mouths open and their right arms stretched out. "I see," said the Huntsman to the Soldier, "you can play any other trick you please; but, come now, let us go home." "Oh, no, Brother Thin-Shoes!" replied the Soldier, "that were too early to march away; we have beaten the enemy and now we must take the booty. Come now, eat and drink what you like." So they stopped there three days, and every day the old Woman had to fetch up fresh wine. The fourth day the Soldier said to his companion, "It is time now to break the spell, but that we may have a short march the old Woman shall show us the nearest road."

As soon as they arrived at the town the Soldier went to his old comrades, and told them that he had found in the forest a nest of thieves, and if they wished he would show them where. They agreed to go, and the Soldier persuaded the Huntsman to accompany him again, and see how the robbers behaved when they were caught. So first he placed the soldiers round the robbers in a circle, and then drinking a draught of wine out of the bottle, he swung it over them and exclaimed, "You shall all live." In a moment they had the power of motion again, but they were soon thrown down and bound hand and foot with ropes. Then they were thrown like sacks upon a waggon, and the Soldier bade

his comrades drive it away to the prison. But the Huntsman, taking aside one of the Soldiers, gave him a commission and sent him off to the town. They walked on, and by-and-by as they approached the town, the Soldier perceived an immense crowd of men rushing out at the gates, hurrahing loudly and waving green branches of trees in the air. He soon saw that it was the body-guards of the King who were approaching them; and turning to the Huntsman he asked, "What does this mean?" "Do you not know," he replied, "that the King has been absent from his kingdom for a length of time? To-day he returns, and these are coming out to meet him." "But where is the King? I do not see him," said the Soldier. "Here he is," answered the Huntsman; "I am the King, and I caused my return to be proclaimed." With these words he opened his hunting-coat and showed his royal dress. The Soldier was frightened, and falling on his knees he begged the King's pardon for having treated him so unceremoniously, and called him by such names. The King, however, holding out his hand, said to him, "You are a brave Soldier, and have saved my life; you shall suffer poverty no longer; I will care for you, and if at any time you want a piece of meat as good as we had in the forest, come to my palace and dine with me. But before you drink healths you must ask my permission."



THE GOLDEN KEY.

ONE winter, when a deep snow was lying on the ground, a poor Boy had to go out in a sledge to fetch wood. As soon as he had collected together a sufficient quantity, he thought that before he returned home he would make a fire to warm himself at, because his limbs were so frozen. So sweeping the snow away, he made a clear space, and presently found a small gold key. As soon as he picked it up, he began to think that where there was a key there must also be a lock; and digging in the earth he found a small iron chest. "I hope the key will fit," thought he to himself; "there are certainly great treasures in this box!" He looked all over it, but could not find any key-hole; till at last he did discover one, which was, however so small, that it could scarcely be seen. He tried the key, and behold! it fitted exactly. Then he turned it once round, and now we must wait until he has quite unlocked it, and lifted the lid up, and then we shall learn what wonderful treasures were in the chest!

CHILDREN'S LEGENDS.

THE LEGEND OF SAINT JOSEPH IN THE FOREST.

THERE was once upon a time a Mother who had three Daughters, the eldest of whom was stupid and bad-tempered; the second, however, was much better, though she, too, had her faults; but the youngest was a pious, good child. The Mother was odd in her tastes, for she loved the eldest the most, and could not endure her youngest Daughter; and therefore she often sent the poor girl out into the forest, where she hoped to be rid from her, hoping

that she would wander about so as to lose herself. Her guardian angel, however (and such an one watches over every good child), did not forsake her, but led her always along the right road. Once the angel seemed to have forsaken her, and the Child wandered on by herself. She walked on till evening, and then saw a light burning in the distance. She went up to it, and found a little cottage, and knocking at the door it opened, and she came to a second door, where she knocked again. An old man, with a snow-white beard and a venerable countenance, opened it, and he was no other than S. Joseph. In a friendly voice he said, "Come in, dear Child; sit down on my stool by the fire and warm yourself; I will fetch you some clear water if you are thirsty, but I have nothing for you to eat but a couple of roots, and those you must scrape and cook for yourself." With these words S. Joseph handed her the roots, and, carefully peeling them, she took up a small saucepan and put them in. Then she added to them some water and the bread which her Mother had given her, and put them over the fire till they were boiled down to a soup. When it was done, S. Joseph said, "I am so hungry, give me some of your broth to eat." This the Girl very willingly did, and gave him more than she took for herself. Still, however, with God's blessing, she had quite sufficient. As soon as they had finished their

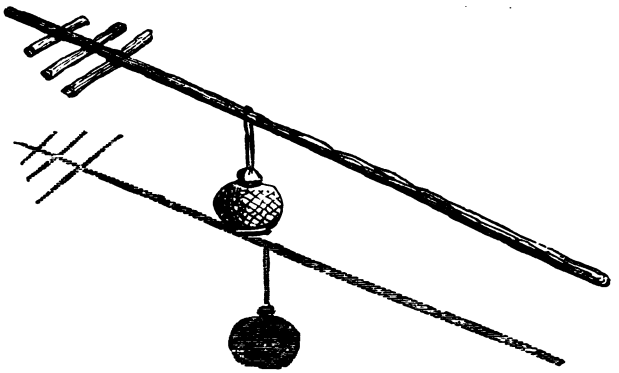
supper, S. Joseph said, "It is time now to go to bed, but as I have only one bed, do you lie down in that, and I will make my bed of straw." "No, no," she replied; "keep you your own bed, the straw is tender enough for me." S. Joseph, however, would carry her to the bed, and there laying her down, she went to sleep as soon as she had said her prayers. The next morning, when she awoke, she would have said, "Good morning!" to S. Joseph, but she could nowhere see him. She arose and looked for him, but she could not find him in any corner; and while she searched she perceived hanging behind the door a sackful of money, on which it was written that it was for the Maiden who had slept there that night. She took the sack, and jumping merrily along under its weight, took it to her Mother, who was obliged for once to be satisfied with her youngest Daughter.

The following day the second Daughter also took a fancy to go into the forest, and her Mother gave her a much larger pancake and a piece of bread. It happened to her the same as it had done to her Sister. Towards evening she came to the cottage where S. Joseph lived, and he told her to make herself some soup. As soon as it was ready he said as before, "I pray you give me some of that to eat, for I am so hungry." The child told him to eat with her; and when afterwards he proposed to give her

his bed and lie himself on the straw, she said to him, "Share the bed with me, there is room enough for us both!" But S. Joseph laid her down in the bed by herself and slept on the straw, and by the next morning, when she awoke, he had disappeared. Behind the door she found a small bag of gold, as long as her hand, and on it was written that it was for the Maiden who had slept there that night. She took the bag and hastened home to her Mother, but she kept secretly two pieces of gold for herself.

Now, the eldest Sister became covetous, and the next morning she prepared to go to the forest. Her Mother gave her several pancakes, as many as she liked, and not only bread, but cheese. About evening she arrived, like her Sisters, at the cottage of S. Joseph, and found him there. She was also bidden to cook her soup, and when it was ready S. Joseph said, "I am so hungry, give me some of your soup to eat." But the Maiden replied, "Wait until I am satisfied, and then what I leave you shall have." So she went on eating till she had nearly finished, and S. Joseph had only the scrapings of the basin. The good old man, however, offered her his bed, and said he would lie on the straw, and this kindness she took as if it were her due, and she let the Saint lie down on his hard couch. The next morning, when she awoke, he had disappeared, but she cared nothing about that, and thought only of

the bag of gold, which she expected to find behind the door. She certainly did see something lying there, but because she could not exactly tell what it was, she bent herself down so that her nose touched it. It stuck to her nose, and when she stood up, and looked at herself she found to her terror that it was a second nose growing from the first! She began to howl and shriek, but to what purpose? she could not help seeing her nose, because it was so long. She ran out of the house with a loud cry, and ran on till she met S. Joseph, and as soon as she saw him she fell down on her knees and begged him to take away the second nose. Out of pity for her he did at last remove it and gave her two pennies. As soon as she reached home her Mother met her at the door, and asked her what she had received. She told a lie, and answered, "A great sack full of money, but I lost it on the way." "Lost it!" repeated the Mother, "then let us look for it again;" and catching her Daughter's hand, she dragged her back to search. At first she wept and would not go, but at length she consented, and on they went. At every step they took snakes and lizards started up, so many that they could not guard them off; and soon one stuck its fang into the breast of the Daughter and she fell dead; and then another pierced the foot of the Mother because she had not brought her Child up better.



HUMILITY AND POVERTY LEAD TO HEAVEN.

ONCE upon a time there was a King's Son, who went into the fields sad and thoughtful. He looked up at the sky, which was so beautifully blue and clear, and said with a sigh, "Ah! how happy must they be who are in heaven." At the same moment he perceived a grey old Man, who was walking the same way, and he asked him the question how he could go to heaven. "Through humility and poverty," answered the old Man. "Put on my old clothes, and wander about the world for seven years to learn what misery is: take no money with you,

but when you are hungry, beg a piece of bread of charitable people, and thus you will approach gradually the gate of heaven."

Thus advised, the Prince drew off his fine clothing, and putting on instead the Beggar's rags, he went forth into the world, and endured much misery. He took only the scantiest meals, spoke never a word, but prayed daily to God, to take him, if he pleased to heaven. When seven years had passed, he returned to his father's house, but nobody recognized him. He told the servants to go and tell his parents that he was returned; but the servants would not believe him, and only laughed at his pretensions. "Then go and tell my brothers," said he, "that they may come to me, for I should like to see them once again." This request they also refused; but at length one went and told the King's children, but they troubled not their heads about it. Then he wrote a letter to his mother, and depicted all his misery, but said nothing about his being her son. The Queen, pitying his misfortunes, caused a place to be made for him below the staircase, and there two servants daily had to bring him food. But one of them was wicked at heart and asked, "What shall the Beggar do with good food?" and so he kept it for himself, or gave it to the dogs, while he took the poor weak, half-starved Prince nothing but water. The other servant, however, was honest, and

took him daily what he received for him. It was only a little, but still enough to sustain life for a long while ; and with it he was quite content, though he grew weaker and weaker. But when his illness increased, he desired to receive the last rites of the church, and while the service was performing, all at once every bell in the city and the country round tolled. As soon as the service was over, the Priest went to the poor Beggar, and found him lying dead, holding in one hand a rose, and in the other a lily ; and near him lay a paper, whereon was written his history.

And after he was buried, there grew on one side of his grave a rose, and on the other side a lily.

THE THREE GREEN TWIGS.

ONCE upon a time there lived a Hermit at the foot of a mountain near the forest, who spent his time in prayer and good works, and each evening he carried up the hill a pail of water as an act of penitence. Many a beast refreshed himself from this pail, and many a flower also was revived, for on the height blew continually a hot wind, which dried the air and the earth. The wild fowls also, who avoided human beings, would circle down near the water and dip their long beaks into it. And because the Hermit was so pious, unseen an Angel always accompanied him up the hill, counting his steps, and bringing him, when the work was done, a meal, like

as was done to that Prophet who at God's command, was fed by the ravens. Thus the Hermit grew older and more pious every day; and once it happened that as he ascended the hill, he saw at a distance a poor sinner led to the gallows. As he looked he said, "Now is he judged rightly!" and as soon as he had so said the Angel left him and brought him no food that evening. He grew frightened, and tried in his heart to think how he had offended God; but he could remember nothing. He ceased to eat or drink, and throwing himself on the earth, prayed all day and night long. Once, as he was bitterly weeping in the forest, he heard a little Bird singing clearly and beautifully, and the sound so disturbed him that he exclaimed, "Alas! you sing merrily, because you are happy; but I would that you could tell me wherein I have offended God that I might do penance, and so my heart become glad again!" Presently the Bird spoke, "You did wrong because you condemned a poor criminal whom you saw led to the gallows, and therefore was God angry, because to Him alone belongs the right of judgment. Still, if you are penitent and confess your sins, God will yet pardon you." At the moment the Bird finished speaking, the Angel stood once more beside the Hermit, and giving a withered branch, said to him, "You shall carry this till three Green Twigs spring from it; and at night when you sleep you must

always place it beneath your head. Your bread you must beg from door to door, and you must not remain in any house more than one night. This is the penance which God imposes on you."

So the Hermit took the dry branch and went back to the world which he had not seen for so long. He ate and drank nothing but what was given to him at the door of charitable people, although at many houses his prayer was refused, and many a door was shut against him, and thus he often passed whole days without a crumb of bread. One day he had thus passed, door after door was shut against him, and nobody would give him anything, or shelter him for the night; so he went into the wood and found a tumble-down cottage, in which an old Woman was sitting. He went in and said to her, "Pray shelter me this night, my good Woman." She replied, "No I dare not, even if I would; I have three sons, wild and wicked, who, if they come home from their plundering, and find you here, will kill us both." "Let me stop, nevertheless," entreated the Hermit: "they will do nothing to either you or me." So the old Woman took compassion on him and bade him sit down. He laid himself down in a corner with the dry branch under his head, and when the old Woman observed this, she inquired the reason, and he told her that he carried it as a penance, and was forced to use it every night for his pillow. "I have offended God," he said, "because when I saw a poor

criminal led to the gallows, I said that justice was done to him." The old Woman began to weep bitterly as he finished his tale, and exclaimed, "Alas! if God so punishes for a single word, how will he judge my sons when they appear before him!"

At midnight the Robbers came home shouting and laughing. They lighted a fire, and as the blaze lit up the cottage they saw the old Man lying in one corner. In a rage they started up, and asked their Mother, "Who is this Man? Have we not forbidden you ever to allow any one to enter our house?"

"Let him be, he is only a poor sinner doing penance for his sins," pleaded the Mother. "What has he done?" asked the Robbers; and, turning to the old Man they said, "Tell us your crimes." So the Hermit lifted himself up, and related how he had sinned by saying a few words, for which God was very angry with him, and had made him do penance. As he finished his tale the hearts of the Three Brothers were powerfully affected, and they were so frightened with the remembrance of their daily lives that they began to repent with heartfelt sorrow. Meanwhile, the old Hermit having thus turned the three sinners from their evil ways, laid down to sleep. In the morning he was found dead, and from the dry branch which formed his pillow Three Green Twigs had burst forth.

And by this it was known that God had fully pardoned him.

THE OLD WIDOW.

IN a certain large town there once lived an Old Widow, who sat every evening alone in her room, thinking how, one by one, she had lost and buried her husband, her two sons, and all her relations and friends, so that now she was quite alone in the world. Her heart grew very sorrowful with these thoughts; but the loss of her two sons troubled her the most, and she wept for them very bitterly. She sat quite still, lost in thought, and all at once she heard the bell ringing, for early prayers in the church. She wondered how she could have passed all the night in sorrowing; but lighting her lantern she went to the church. As she entered she saw it

was already lit up, but not as usual with tapers, but a glimmering light shone through the whole building. It was already filled with worshippers, and every seat was occupied, so that when the Poor Widow went to her accustomed place, she found it already filled. As she looked round at the people, she perceived that they were her deceased relations, who sat there in their old every-day dresses; but with pale countenances. They neither spoke nor sang, but a gentle whisper and hum floated through the church. Presently an Aunt of the Poor Widow got up and said to her, "Look towards the altar, and you will see your two sons." She looked and saw her two children, the one hanging on the gallows, and the other broken on the wheel. "See," continued the Aunt, "thus would it have happened to them, had life been given to them, instead of their being mercifully taken by God when they were innocent children." With trembling steps the Old Widow went home, and on her knees thanked God that He had dealt so much better with her than her heart had imagined. But on the third day she laid down on her bed and died.

THE ROSE.

THERE was once a poor Woman who had two Children, and the youngest went every day into the forest to fetch wood. Once, when it had strayed far away looking for branches, a little, but strong and healthy, Child came to it and helped it to pick up wood, and carried the bundles up to the house; but then in less than a moment he was gone. The Child told its mother of this; but she would not believe it. At last the Child brought home a Rose, and told its mother that the beautiful Child had given it, and had said that when the Rose was in full bloom then he would come again. The

Mother put the Rose into water. One morning the Child did not get out of bed, and the mother went to it and found it dead; but it lay looking quite happy and pleased, and the Rose that morning was in full bloom.

THE END.

Woodfall & Kinder, Printers, Milford Lane, Strand, London, W.C.