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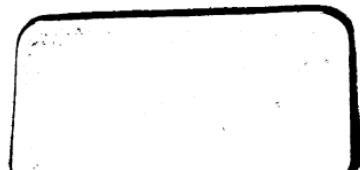
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GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES AND POPULAR STORIES







The Three Spinning Women.

GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES AND OTHER POPULAR STORIES.

WITH
NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.



LONDON:
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE labours of the Brothers Grimm, by whose erudite industry, and patient and praiseworthy perseverance, the "folk lore" of Germany has been made to enliven many English households, are already too well-known and appreciated to need any lengthened comment here.

The fruits of these labours have already appeared, so far as England is concerned, in a number of translations of the Tales and Traditionary Stories which have been long familiar as Household Words around the hearths of the German peasantry, and which will continue to please as long as there are young imaginations to be excited, and young hearts to be moved. Of the charm of such Stories, our own memories are the best witnesses ; of their adaptability and even usefulness, we have the testimony of no less a man than Sir Walter Scott, the great wizard of fiction, whose works have been the delight of tens of thousands throughout the present century. Speaking of these collected Tales, he says : "There is a sort of wild fairy interest in them, which makes me think them

fully better adapted to awaken the imagination and soften the heart of children, than the "good boy" Stories which have been in later years composed for them. In the latter cases their minds are, as it were, put into the stocks, like their feet at the dancing school, and the moral always consists in good moral conduct being crowned with temporal success. Truth is, I would not give one tear, shed over little Red Riding Hood, for all the benefit to be derived from a hundred histories of Jemmy Goodchild."*

With such an authority to quote, no apology is considered necessary for the present selection of Grimm's Tales. Some graceful little legends not included in former English collections have been added; as have also some of the Stories rather undeservedly omitted from most of our English versions, such as the Tale of "Freddy and Catherine Liz," in many respects one of the best in the whole Grimm collection.

The numerous illustrations are from the talented and practised pencil of the Parisian artist, Bertall.

* Sir Walter Scott, in a letter to Mr. Edgar Taylor, the ingenious translator of "Gammer Grethel's Fairy Tales."



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THE TOWN MUSICIANS OF BREMEN.

A MAN had an ass, which had for many years faithfully carried the sacks to the mill; but his strength began to fail, and he became more and more unfit for work. So the master thought of making an end of him; the ass, however, perceiving that an ill wind was blowing, ran away, and

took the road towards Bremen; for there, he thought, he might become one of the town musicians.

He had travelled some distance, when he found a dog lying in the road, and yelping as if tired by a long run. "What are you yelping in that way for, Jowler?" asked the ass.

"Alas," replied the dog, "because I am old, and am growing weaker every day, and cannot go out hunting any more, my master wanted to kill me; so I took myself off; but what shall I do to earn my living?"

"I tell you what," said the ass, "I'm going to Bremen, to turn town musician; do you come with me, and turn your music to account. I'll play the lute, and you can beat the drum."

The dog had no objection, so they went on together. When they had journeyed a little distance, they saw a cat sitting by the wayside, and looking as melancholy as three rainy days put together. "What's amiss with you, old lick-my-whiskers?" asked the ass.

"Who can be in good spirits when he's afraid for his head?" answered the cat; "because I'm getting on in years, and my teeth are not so sharp as they used to be, and I prefer sitting behind the stove and purring, to running after mice, my mistress wanted to drown me. I certainly managed to get clear off, but now I'm in a dilemma; where am I to go?"

"Come with us to Bremen; you understand serenading, and so you might become one of the town musicians."

"The cat thought the advice good, and went with them. Our three runaways soon afterwards passed by a farm-yard. A cock was sitting in front of the gate screaming with all his might. "You're crying loud enough to split any one's years," said the ass. "What's the matter with you?"

"Because there are guests coming to-morrow for the Sunday's dinner, the housewife has no pity, and has told the cook that I'm to be eaten in the soup; and I'm to have my neck wrung this evening. So I'm screaming with all my might, so long as I have breath to scream with."

" I tell you what, old red-comb," said the ass ; " better go with us to Bremen ; you're sure to find something better than death, at any rate—you've a good voice of your own, and if we give a concert together, it's sure to be a good one." The cock approved of the suggestion, and they all four went away together.

They could not get so far as to reach the town of Bremen in one day ; and in the evening they came to a wood, where they decided to pass the night. The ass and the dog lay down under a great tree, the cat and the cock climbed up into its branches, and the cock even flew up to the very top, where it was safest for him. Before he went to sleep he looked round once more in every direction ; and he thought he saw a little spark glimmering in the distance ; so he called out to his companions, that there was a house not far off, for he saw a light shining. " Then," said the ass, " we must break up our camp, and betake ourselves thither, for the accommodation here is bad. The dog assented, adding, that a few bones with a little meat on them would do him no harm.

So they set off in the direction from whence the light shone, and soon saw it glimmering more clearly ; and it grew larger and larger, till they found themselves in front of a house belonging to some robbers, and which was brilliantly illuminated inside. The ass, as the tallest of the companions, walked up to the window, and looked in. " What do you see, old grey-coat ?" asked the cock.

" What do I see ?" cried the ass ; " I see a table covered with good meat and drink, and some robbers are sitting round it, and enjoying themselves."

" That would be just the thing for us," cried the cock.

" Yes, certainly," said the ass. " Ah, if we were only there ! "

So they held a council, to decide how they should set about driving the robbers out ; and at last they hit upon a plan. First of all the ass stood up, with his forefeet upon the window-sill ; then the dog jumped upon his back, the cat got on the dog's back, and last of all the cock flew up and perched upon the cat. When they had thus arranged

themselves, they began, at a given signal, to let their music be heard. The ass brayed, the dog barked, the cat mewed, and the cock crowed; then they made a rush through the window, into the room, so that the panes fell crashing down. When the robbers heard the hideous din, they thought a ghost was coming among them, jumped up in the greatest terror, and fled away into the wood. Then the four musicians sat down to table, and made the best of what remained—insomch that they ate as if they were going to fast for a month.

When the four musicians had finished their repast, they put out the lights, and looked out for a resting-place for the night, each according to his nature, and his idea of comfort. The ass went to recline on the dung-hill—the dog coiled himself behind the door—the cat lay down on the hearth, among the warm embers—and the cock perched himself on one of the rafters; and as they were tired with their long journey, they soon went to sleep. When midnight was past, and the robbers saw from afar that there was no light burning in the house, and that everything seemed quiet, the captain said: “We should not have let ourselves be frightened so soon;” and he sent one of his men to examine the house. The scout found everything silent. He went into the kitchen, and wanted to light a candle; and mistaking the glowing fiery eyes of the cat for live coals, he held a lucifer to them, thinking it would catch fire. The cat, however, did not understand the joke, but flew at his face, spitting and scratching. That frightened him very much; so he ran, and wanted to get out by the back-door; but the dog, who lay there, jumped up, and bit him in the leg; and as he ran across the farm-yard, past the dung-hill, the ass gave him a capital kick with his hind-leg; and the cock, waking up at the noise, began to cry “Cock-a-doodle-do-o-o-o,” from his beam!

As for the robber, he ran, as hard as he could run, to his captain, and cried: “Oh dear! there's a frightful witch sitting in our house; and she snarled at me, and scratched my face all to pieces with her long finger-nails; and before the door there's a man with a knife, who stabbed me in the leg; and in the yard there lay a great

black monster, that struck at me with a club ; and among the beams of the roof there sat the judge, who kept crying, ‘ Bring that rascal before me ; ’ so I made the best of my way off.”

From that day the robbers never dared to come back to the house ; but the four musicians of Bremen found it so comfortable, that they did not care to turn out again.





THE HEDGEHOG AND THE HARE.

THIS story, children, will at first look like a hoax; but still it is true; for my grandfather, from whom I have it, used always to say when he told the tale: "It must be true, boys, or else one couldn't tell it." Here is the story just as it happened.

It was on a fine morning in harvest time, just when the poppies were in flower. The sun was shining in the sky, the morning wind blew freshly over the stubble, the larks were singing in the air, the bees hummed in the hedges, and people were going to church in their Sunday clothes. Everything that had life seemed to rejoice; and the hedgehog was glad too.

The hedgehog stood before his door with his arms folded, and was looking up into the morning air, and humming a tune, as well or as ill as a hedgehog can hum on a fine Sunday morning. While he was thus singing softly to himself, it occurred to him that while his wife was washing and dressing the children, he might as well walk out into the fields and look about him, and see how his turnips were growing. These turnips grew near his house, and he and his family were in the habit of stealing them to eat, and so he looked upon them as his own. The hedgehog shut his

door behind him, and betook himself to the fields. He had not got far from home, and was just turning round by a sloe-bush, hard by the turnip-field, when he was met by the hare, who had gone out for a similar purpose—in fact, to look at his cabbages. When the hedgehog saw the hare coming, he bade him a friendly good day. But the hare, who was a very grand gentleman in his way, and very arrogant into the bargain, did not return the hedgehog's salute, but said to him, with a look of the most supercilious contempt : " How come you to be running about the fields so early in the morning ? "

" I'm out for a walk," answered the hedgehog.

" Out for a walk ! " repeated the hare, with a laugh. " I think you might use your legs to better purpose."

Now this speech annoyed the hedgehog beyond all endurance. He can bear anything, but he allows nothing to be said against his legs, because they happen to be crooked by nature. So he answered : " I suppose you imagine you could do a good deal more with your legs than I could with mine ? "

" I flatter myself I could," replied the hare.

" That remains to be proved," cried the hedgehog. " I bet that if we run a race, I manage to pass you."

" That's a good idea, you with your crooked legs," laughed the hare ; " but I don't care, let it be so, if you wish it so very much. What is to be the bet ? "

" A golden guinea, and a bottle of wine," said the hedgehog.

" Accepted," cried the hare ; " shake hands upon it, and let us decide it at once."

" No ; there's no such great hurry," said the hedgehog. " I've had nothing to eat yet this morning ; I'll go home and have a bit of breakfast, and in half an hour I shall be at your service."

The hare consented to this, and the hedgehog went away. On the road, he said to himself : " The hare trusts in his long legs ; but I'll play him a trick. He thinks himself a great man, but he is only a stupid fellow, and I'll make him pay."

So when the hedgehog reached his home, he said to his

wife: "Wife, make haste and dress yourself, you must go into the fields with me."

"What's the matter?" asked the wife.

"I've laid a wager with the hare—a golden guinea and a bottle of wine—and I'm going to run him a race, and want you to help me."

"Oh, my goodness, husband!" cried the hedgehog's wife; "are you in your senses, or have you gone mad? How can you ever think of running a race with the hare?"

"Hold your tongue, wife," replied the hedgehog; "that's my affair. Don't you put your nose into men's business. Be quick, dress yourself, and we'll go off together."

What could the hedgehog's wife do? She was obliged to obey him, whether she liked it or not.

As they walked along the road together, the hedgehog said to his wife: "Now, listen to what I'm going to say to you. Look, we'll run our race in the long field, yonder. The hare will run in one furrow, and I'll run in the other; and we begin to run from the other end of the field. Now, you've nothing more to do but to crouch down here in the furrow, and when the hare arrives near you, do you jump up and cry, 'Here I am already!'"

As he said this they came to the field. The hedgehog showed his wife where she was to place herself, and then went away up the field. When he came to the other end, he found the hare waiting there; and the hare said: "Shall we begin?"

"Certainly"—answered the hedgehog.

"Go on then." And each took his place in his separate furrow. The hare counted: "One—two—THREE!" and away he went down the field, like the wind. As for the hedgehog he only ran two or three steps, and then crouched down in his furrow, and sat there quietly.

When the hare came running at full speed to the other end of the field, the hedgehog's wife called out to him: "Here I am already!" The hare started, and was not a little astonished. He made sure it was the hedgehog himself who spoke; for it is well known that a hedgehog's wife exactly resembles her husband.

The hare thought: "There must be witchcraft at work here." He cried out: "Back again—we'll run once more;" and away he started again, like a whirlwind, so that his ears were blown straight out behind his head. But the hedgehog's wife stayed quietly where she was. When the hare arrived at the upper end of the field, the hedgehog called out to him: "Here I am already!" And the hare, quite beside himself with wonder, replied: "Back again—we'll run once more."

"I don't object," answered the hedgehog; "so far as I'm concerned, we'll run as often as you like."

So the hare ran seventy-three times, and the hedgehog managed to keep pace with him. Every time when the hare arrived at the upper or the lower end of the field, the hedgehog or his wife was waiting, to say: "Here I am already!"

The seventy-fourth time, the hare could not get to the end of his run. In the middle of the field he fell down on the ground, the blood ran from his mouth, and he lay dead upon the course. The hedgehog took the guinea and the bottle of wine he had won, and called his wife out of the furrow, and they went home in very good spirits; and if they're not dead, they're alive still.

Thus it was, that on Buxtehude* Heath, the hedgehog ran the hare to death; and since that time no hare has ever taken it into his head to run a race with a Buxtehude hedgehog.

What you have to learn from this history, is—firstly, that no man, if he think himself ever so grand, should take upon himself to make fun of his inferior, or even of a hedgehog; and, secondly, that when a man marries, it is a good thing to take a wife out of his own rank, and one that resembles her husband; so, whoever is a hedgehog, let him see that his wife is a hedgehog too.

* Buxtehude is a German village which has become proverbial for the funny tales told of its inhabitants, just as in France all the funny tricks are said to be played by "Gascons."



FAITHFUL JOHN.

THERE was once an old king who fell sick—and he thought: "This bed on which I am lying, will most likely be my death-bed;"—so he said, "send faithful John to me." Faithful John was his favourite servant; and had earned his name from being faithful all his life.

When he came to the bedside, the king said: "My faithful John, I feel that my end is drawing near. My only care is about my son; he is still young in years, and will not always be able to judge for himself; and I shall not be able to close my eyes in peace, unless you will promise me to teach him everything he ought to know, and to be like a second father to him." Then faithful John answered: "I will not forsake him, but will serve him faithfully, even if it should cost me my life."

"Then I can die in peace," said the old king; "and after my death," he continued, "you must show him the whole castle—all the chambers, and halls, and vaults, and all the treasures that are in them; but the last chamber in the long gallery, you shall not show him, in which is hidden the portrait of the Princess of the Golden Roof. If he sees her, he will fall violently in love with her, and will fall down fainting, and will be brought into great danger on her account; and that is what I wish you to protect him from." And after faithful John had once more promised to do this, the old king became quiet, and laid his head on the pillow, and died.

When they had carried the old king to his grave, faithful John told the young king what he had promised to his father, as he lay dying; and added,—"I will certainly keep it, and will be faithful to you as I have been to him, even if it should cost me my life."

When the mourning for the king was over, faithful John said to the king: "It is time that you should look at what you have inherited; I will show you over your father's castle."

He led him up and down, and about everywhere, and showed him all the riches, and the splendid rooms; but he did not open the one room in which the dangerous picture stood. The picture had been placed in such a position, that one saw it directly the door was opened; and it was so wonderfully painted, that it seemed as if it lived and breathed; and it looked the most lovely and most beautiful thing in the world. The young king noticed that faithful John always passed by a certain door; and at last he asked, "Why do you never unlock it?"

"Because there is something terrible inside," answered John, "which you would be frightened to look upon."

"I have seen the whole palace," answered the king, "and I will know what is within;" and he went on, and would have opened the door by force. Then faithful John held him back, and said : "I promised your father, on his death-bed, that I would not let you go in that room ; for it might bring great misfortunes upon both of us."

"It will be the greatest of all misfortunes," answered the young king, "if I do not enter the room ; for I shall have no peace day and night, till I have seen with my own eyes, what is inside it. I shall not stir from this place, till you have unlocked the door."

Faithful John saw that he could do nothing in the matter ; so he proceeded with a heavy heart, to look out the key of the room, from the bunch he held. When he had unlocked the door, he went in first, thinking the king would not see the picture if he stood before him ; but it was in vain ; for the king stood on tiptoe, and looked over his shoulder ; and when he saw the picture of the maiden, looking all lovely, and sparkling with gold and jewels, he fell to the ground in a swoon. Faithful John raised him up, and carried him away to bed, and thought sorrowfully—"The misfortune has happened now ; what will be the end of it ! And he gave him some wine, which brought him to himself.

The first word that the king spoke, was to ask for whom that beautiful picture was meant. "It is the Princess of the Golden Roof," answered faithful John.

Then the king continued : "My love for her is so great, that if every leaf in the forest were a tongue, they could not express it. I will risk my life to win her. You are my faithful John, and you must help me."

The faithful servant pondered for a long time how he should set about it ; for it was a difficult thing even to get a sight of the princess. At last he contrived a plan, and he said to the king : "Every thing around her is of gold ; tables, chairs, dishes, cups, goblets, and all kinds of furniture. You have five tons of gold in your treasury ; let one be given to the goldsmiths, to be manufactured into

all sorts of articles, in the shape of birds, deer, and all kinds of wonderful animals, that will please her ; and we will go and try our fortune."

The king sent for all the goldsmiths of the country. They worked day and night, till they had produced the most beautiful pieces of workmanship. Then faithful John had all the valuables put on board a ship ; and he disguised himself, and the king too, as merchants, so that no one could recognise them. Then they set sail, and crossed the sea, till they came to the city where dwelt the Princess of the Golden Roof.

Faithful John went on shore alone, leaving the king on board the ship. "Perhaps," he said, "I may bring back the princess with me ; so take care that everything is in order, and let the golden articles be displayed, and the whole ship decorated." Then he selected some of the golden ornaments to carry with him, stepped on shore, and went straight towards the king's palace.

When he came into the court-yard, he saw a young girl, drawing water at a fountain with two golden buckets. As she turned to carry away the sparkling water, she perceived the strange man, and asked him who he was. He answered : "I am a merchant ;" and opening his garment, he showed her what he carried.

"What beautiful things!" cried she ; and she put down her pails, and examined the articles one after another. "The princess must see these," she continued, "she is so fond of golden things, that she will buy all from you." And she took him by the hand, and led him into the palace ; for she was a waiting-woman.

When the princess saw his wares, she was very much pleased, and said: "These things are so beautifully worked, that I will buy them all." But faithful John answered: "I am only the servant of a rich merchant ; what I have brought is nothing, compared to the things my master has in his ship ; the most beautiful and precious things ever worked in gold."

The princess would have had everything brought up from the ship ; but he said: "Days upon days would be required, because there are so many things ; and the halls

in your palace would not afford room enough to display them all."

This excited her curiosity all the more; and, at last, she said: "Take me to the ship; I will go myself and inspect your master's treasures."

Faithful John gladly conducted her to the vessel; and the king, his master, thought her more beautiful, when he saw her, than the picture itself; and he felt as if his heart would burst. When she stepped on board the ship, he offered her his hand, and led her away; faithful John, meanwhile, stayed behind, and ordered the captain to get under weigh,—“and hoist every sail,” he said, “that the ship may skim like a bird that flies through the air.” But the king had taken the princess down into the cabin; and he showed her separately every golden dish, cup, and plate, and the birds, the deer, and the wonderful animals. Hour after hour passed, while she was inspecting all these things; and in her glee, she never noticed that the ship was sailing rapidly along. When she had looked at the last piece in the collection, she thanked the merchant, and turned to go on shore; but when she came to the side of the ship, she perceived that it was far from the land, rushing rapidly on under a press of sail. Then she cried, in great terror, “Alas! I have been betrayed and carried off! I have fallen into the power of a merchant. I wish I had died!”

Then the king took her by the hand, and said: “I am not a merchant, but a king, equal to yourself in birth; that I have thus carried you off by stratagem, is the result of my vehement love. The first time I saw your picture, I fell fainting to the earth.” And when the Princess of the Golden Roof heard that, she was comforted; and her heart turned towards him, so that she willingly consented to become his wife.

It happened, as they were sailing along on the high sea, that faithful John, as he sat playing the flute on the forecastle, saw three ravens flying through the air. Then he stopped playing, and listened to hear what they were saying to one another; for he understood their language.

The first said: “Look, there he’s carrying home the

Princess of the Golden Roof." "Yes," said the second, "but he has not got her yet." "Yes, he has," said the third, "for there she is sitting in the ship beside him."

Then the first raven began again, and said : "That will do him no good ! When they come on shore, a roan horse will run towards him. He will mount on its back ; and if he does that, the horse will soar away with him into the air, and he will never see his princess again."

"But is there no remedy ?" asked the second raven.

"Oh yes!" replied the first. "If some one else jumps up quickly behind him, seizes the pistol that he will find in one of the holsters, and shoots the horse dead, the young king will be saved. But who knows that ? And whoever knows it, and tells the king, will be turned to stone from the toes of his feet to his knees."

Then the second raven said : "I know something more. Even if the horse is killed, the king will not be able to keep his bride ; for, when they come into the palace, a bridal garment will be lying in a dish, all ready made, and looking as if it were woven of gold and silver thread ; but it is nothing but brimstone and pitch ; and whoever puts it on, will be burnt through bone and marrow."

"Is there no remedy ?" asked the third raven.

"Oh yes!" replied the second. "If any one with gloves on his hands, were to seize the garment and fling it into the fire, so that it burned, the young king would be saved. But what would be the use ? Whoever knows it, and tells him, will be turned into stone, from his knees to his heart."

The third raven said : "I know something more. Even if the garment were burnt, the young king would not be able to keep his bride ; for, when the dance comes, after the marriage, and the young queen begins to dance, she will suddenly turn pale, and fall down as if she were dead ; and unless somebody picks her up, and sucks three drops of blood out of the fore-finger of her right hand, and spits them out again, she will die. But if any one who knows that secret, betrays it, he will be turned into stone, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot."

When the ravens had said this, they flew away. Faithful

John had heard it all; and from that time he was very silent and depressed; for he thought, if he kept what he had heard away from his master, the young king would be unhappy; and if he told it, he should have to forfeit his own life. At last, he said to himself: "I will save my master, even if I perish in the attempt."

When they came to land, it happened just as the ravens had predicted, that a splendid roan horse came prancing up to them. "Well," said the king, "that horse shall carry me as far as my palace;" and he was going to mount. But faithful John got before him, leaped quickly on his back, drew the pistol from the holster, and shot it dead.

Then the other servants, who did not like faithful John, cried out: "What a scandalous thing, to kill the beautiful creature that was to have carried the king into his palace!" But the king said: "Be silent, and let him alone; he is my most faithful servant John; who knows what reasons he may have had for doing it?"

When they went into the palace, there was a dish in the hall; and the bridal garment, lying on the dish, looked as if it had been made of gold and silver. The young king stepped forward to take it up; but faithful John put him aside, took the garment, with gloves on his hands, ran with it to the fire, and burnt it. The other servants began to grumble again, and said: "See, now, he's burning the king's bridal garment." But the young king said again: "Let him alone; who knows what reasons he may have; he is my faithful servant John."

The wedding was celebrated. The dance began, and the bride came forward to take part in it. Faithful John kept his eyes upon her, and looked up into her face; suddenly she turned pale, and sank upon the ground like a dead person. Then he ran up quickly, lifted her from the floor, and carried her into her room; then he laid her down, bit her finger, and sucked three drops of blood from it, whereupon she began to breathe again, and recovered herself; but the young king had seen what John did, and not being able to imagine why he bit the queen, he grew angry, and cried: "Throw him into prison."

Next morning, faithful John was condemned to death,

and led away to the gibbet. When he had already mounted the ladder, he turned round, and said : " Every man who has to die, is allowed to speak before his death ; and I have that right too ! " " Yes," replied the king ; " it is granted you."

Then faithful John said : " I have been unjustly condemned, and have always been faithful to you." And he told how he had overheard the conversation of the ravens, while they were at sea, and how he had been obliged to do all he had done to save his master's life. Then the king cried : " Oh my most faithful John, you are pardoned, you are pardoned—lead him down." But with the last word he had spoken, faithful John had fallen down lifeless ; and he was turned into stone.

The king and queen grieved very greatly about this ; and the king said : " Alas, how badly have I rewarded so much faithfulness ! " and he caused the stone statue to be raised up, and deposited in his own chamber, by his bedside. Whenever he looked at it, he would cry, and repeat : " Oh that I could recall you to life, my faithful John ! "

Time passed by, and the queen became the mother of twins ; two little sons, who grew and became the joy of her heart. One day, when the queen was at church, and the two children were sitting by their father playing, the king looked again with grief upon the statue, and sighed and exclaimed : " Oh, that I could restore you to life, my faithful John ! "

Then the statue began to speak, and said : " Yes, you can restore me to life, by giving up what you prize most."

" Everything I possess in the world," cried the king, " I would sacrifice for you."

" Well," said the statue, " if you will cut off the heads of your two children, and anoint me with their blood, I shall be restored to life."

The king turned pale, when he thought of having to kill his dear children ; but he thought of his servant's great fidelity, and how John had died for him ; and then he drew his sword, and cut off the children's heads. And when he had touched the stone with their blood, life returned to

the statue ; and faithful John stood alive and well before him. But John said to the king : " Your affection for me shall not go unrewarded ; " and he took the children's heads, put them in their places, and rubbed the cuts with their blood ; then they returned to life, and began playing and jumping about, as if nothing had happened to them. As for the king, he was overjoyed ; and when he saw the queen coming, he hid faithful John and his two children in a large closet. And when she came in, he asked : " Have you been at church ? "

" Yes," she replied ; " but I could not help thinking of faithful John, and of what befell him, through our means."

" Dear wife," said the king, " we can restore him to life ; but it will be by sacrificing our two sons."

The queen turned pale, and her heart sank within her ; but she replied, " We owe him even this sacrifice, for his great faithfulness."

Then the king was glad that she thought as he did ; and he went and opened the closet, and brought out faithful John, and the two children. " Heaven be praised," he said, " he is restored, and we have our sons too ! " And he told the queen all that had occurred ; and they lived happily from that day forward to the end of their lives.



THE RAGAMUFFINS.

SAID little Cocky to little Henny: "It's the season for nuts, just now; suppose we go up on the hill, and have a good feast of them, before the squirrel carries them all away?"

"Very well," answered little Henny, "come along—we'll go and enjoy ourselves together."

So they went together to the mountain; and because it was a sun-shiny day they stayed there till the evening. Now I don't know whether it was because they had eaten so much or that they had grown proud, but they would not go home on foot. So Cocky had to make a little carriage of nut-shells; and when it was ready, Henny took her seat in it, and said to Cocky: "Now, you may harness yourself to it."

"That's a good joke," cried Cocky. "I'd rather walk home at once than harness myself to your coach; I didn't mean to do it that way. I don't mind being the coachman, and sitting on the box, but as to pulling myself, I couldn't think of it."

They were still disputing the point, when a duck came running up, and quacked out: "You thieves, you, who gave you leave to come among my nut-trees? Wait, it shall be the worse for you;" and so saying she began

to attack Cocky. But Cocky was not idle in the matter—he ran at the duck, in his turn, and gave her such a dose of kicks with his spurs, that she cried out for mercy, and was glad enough to allow herself to be harnessed to the carriage, as a punishment. So now Cocky took his seat on the box as coachman, and they went off at full speed, he crying to the duck to run as fast as ever she could.

They had gone some distance when they met two foot-passengers—a pin and a needle. These two began crying out to them to stop, urging that it would be so dark directly, that they would not be able to go a step further. They also complained of its being dreadfully dirty on the road, and begged for a lift in the carriage, as they had been in the tailors' house-of-call, and had remained sitting latter than usual over their beer. Cocky, considering that they were slender people, who would not take up much room, let them both get in; but made them promise that they would not tread on Henny's toes.

Late in the evening they came to an inn; and as they did not care to go any further that night, and the duck, moreover, was not strong on her legs, but kept waddling from side to side, they put up there. The host at first made many objections, and declared that his house was full—the truth was, he thought his guests were not people of very high quality; but as they were very smooth-spoken, and promised him he should keep the egg Henny had laid on the way, and have the duck into the bargain, who laid one every day, he consented to let them stay there for the night. So they ordered the best cheer he had in the house, and made quite a merry night of it.

Next morning, when it was only just day-break, and every one was fast asleep, Cocky woke up Henny, brought out the egg, and pecked it open. Then they ate it up together, and threw the shell on the hearth. Then they went to the needle, who was still asleep, and took him by the head, and stuck him into the cushion of the host's chair; and the pin they stuck into his towel; and then they ran off across the heath, as fast as they could go. The duck, who preferred sleeping in the open air, and had, therefore, remained in the yard all night, when she heard them

scuttering off, roused herself, and soon found a brook, on which she swam away, a good deal more quickly than she had run before the carriage.

A couple of hours later, the host got out of bed, and having washed his face, went to dry it with the towel ; and the pin scratched his face right across, and made a red line from his right ear to his left. Then he went into the kitchen, and set about lighting his pipe ; and when he came to the hearth, the egg-shell flew up in his eyes. " Every thing seems to fly at my head this morning," he grumbled, and sat down, in a bad humour, in his arm-chair ; but he jumped up in a great hurry, and cried out : " Oh, dear ! " for the needle had pricked him worse than the pin ; and this time the pain was not in his head. Now, he was completely angry, and suspected the guests who had arrived late the evening before ; and when he went to see after them they were gone. Then he swore that in future he would have no ragamuffins in his house, who eat much, and pay nothing ; and play you tricks into the bargain.



THE CLEVER LITTLE TAILOR.

ONCE there lived a princess who was terribly proud! when a suitor came she gave him a riddle to guess, and if he could not guess it he was sent away in shame and disgrace. She also had it proclaimed that whoever could answer her question should marry her; and any one who wished might come and try.

Now it happened at last that three tailors dwelt to-

gether—the two elder had stiched many a neat piece of work, and thought they could not fail of success, but would be sure to hit the answer; the third was a little useless vagabond who did not even understand his trade, but thought he would have luck, for he had nothing else to depend upon. The two others, indeed, said to him: "Stay at home, you won't get far with your little bit of wit." But the little tailor took it very coolly, and said he had made up his mind, and would contrive to get on in some way or other; and so he went out as grand as if all the world belonged to him.

Then all three announced themselves to the princess, and invited her to lay her riddle before them, for they were the right people; and their wit was so fine that it could be threaded through a needle's eye.

Then the princess said: "I have two kinds of hair on my head—of what colour are these?"

"If that's all," answered the first, "it must be black and white mixed—like the cloth they call pepper and salt."

"Your guess is wrong," replied the princess; "let the second man try."

"Then," said the second, "if it is not black and white, it must be brown and red—like my father's Sunday coat."

"Your guess is wrong," cried the princess; "let the third man try. I can see it in his face that he certainly knows it."

Then the little tailor stepped forward and said: "The princess has a silver and a golden hair in her head, and those are the two colours."

When the princess heard that she turned pale and almost sank down from fright, for the little tailor had guessed her riddle, and she had believed that no one on earth would puzzle it out. When she had recovered herself, she said: "You have not won me yet; there is one thing more that you must do. Down in the stable there's a bear, and you must pass the night in his company; if you are still alive when I get up in the morning, you shall marry me."

She thought to get rid of the little tailor in this way, for the bear had never let any man escape alive who had once come within reach of his paws. But the little tailor was not in the least frightened, and said merrily: "A good heart is half the battle."

When the evening came, our little tailor was taken down to where the bear lay. The bear wanted to run at the little chap at once, to give him a warm welcome with his great paws. But the little tailor cried: "Softly, softly; I'll very soon quiet you."

And quite deliberately, as if he had not a care in the world, he brought some walnuts out of his pockets, cracked them with his teeth, and ate the kernels. When the bear saw it, he wanted to have some walnuts too. The little tailor put his hand in his pocket and gave him a handful, but instead of walnuts they were pebble-stones.

The bear put them into his great mouth, but could not crack one of them, though he gnawed with all his might. "Why, what a stupid fellow I must be," he thought to himself, "that I can't even crack a walnut;" and he said to the little tailor: "I say, do you crack the nuts for me!"

The tailor took the stones, and cleverly changing one of them for a nut, put the nut in his mouth, and crack! it was crushed. "I must try the matter once more," said the bear, "when I see it done, it seems as if I could do it too."

Then the little tailor gave him some more pebbles, and the bear worked away and bit at them with all his might; but he did not succeed in cracking them, as you may very well imagine. When this was over, the little tailor brought out a violin from under his coat, and played a piece on it. When the bear heard the music he could not rest till he began to dance; and when he had been dancing for some time, the thing took his fancy so much that he cried out to the little tailor: "Hark ye, is it difficult to play the fiddle?"

"It's child's play—look, I put the fingers of my left hand on the finger-board, and with my right I pass the

bow across the strings, and so it goes merrily, tra la la—tra la la!"

"I should like to play the fiddle," said the bear; "for then I could dance whenever I felt inclined. What do you think? Will you give me a lesson to teach me?"

"With all my heart," replied the little tailor, "if you've a taste for it. But first show me your paws—you see they're of the longest. I must begin by cutting your nails a little for you."

Then he brought a vice, and the bear put his fore-paws in it, and the tailor screwed them in tightly, and said: "Wait till I come with the scissors;" and he let the bear grumble as much as ever he would; and throwing himself down in a corner, on a heap of straw, fell fast asleep.

The princess, who heard the bear growling in the night, made up her mind that he was growling for joy at having demolished the little tailor. In the morning she rose quite in the best spirits; but when she looked towards the stable, lo and behold there stood the little tailor at the door, merry and well as a fish in the water. Then, as she had openly promised to marry him, she could not make any more objections; and the king ordered a golden carriage to be brought round, in which she was to go to church with the little tailor to be married.

When they had stepped into the coach, the two other tailors, who had bad hearts, and were jealous of their comrade's good fortune, went into the stable and unscrewed the bear. The brute ran after the carriage in a great rage. The princess, who heard him snorting and growling behind them, was afraid, and exclaimed: "Oh, the bear, the bear; he's behind us, and wants to eat us up."

But the little tailor was a quick-witted fellow. He stood on his head in the carriage, and stuck his two feet, close together, out at the window: "Do you see the vice?" he cried out to the bear. "If you're not off this instant, you shall be screwed up again."

Directly the bear saw that, he turned about and made off; and the little tailor drove quietly on to the church, and the princess was married to him off-hand, and he lived with her as merry as a lark. And whoever does not believe this story, is to pay a fine of half a crown.

THE THREE LAZY FELLOWS.

A KING had three sons whom he loved, all three alike, and he did not know which of them he should choose to be King after him. When the time came for him to die, he called them all to his bedside and said, "Dear children, I have often thought of something, and I will tell you what it is. He who is the laziest among you shall be King after me."

Then the eldest son said, "Father, then the kingdom must belong to me, for I am so lazy that when I am lying down to sleep and a drop falls into my eye, I don't care to rub 't out, so that I may sleep."

"The second son said, "Father, the kingdom ought to be mine, for I am so lazy that when I sit by the fire to warm myself, I'd rather burn my heels than draw back my legs."

The third said, "Father, the kingdom is mine, for I am so lazy that if I were going to be hanged and had the rope already round my neck, and any one were to put a sharp knife in my hand to cut the rope in two, I'd rather submit to be hanged than raise my hand up to the rope."

When the King heard that, he said. "You are the laziest fellow of the three ; you shall be King after me."



CLEVER ELSIE.

THERE was a man, who had a daughter, and she was called "Clever Elsie;" and when she was grown up, her father said: "We will get her married."

"Yes;" replied her mother, "if some one would only come who would have her."

At last a man, named Jack, came from a long distance, and wanted to make her his wife; but he made one condition, namely, that Clever Elsie should really be very wise indeed.

"Oh," cried the father, "she's a whole lot in her head;" and her mother said: "She is so sharp, she can see the wind running along the street, and hear the flies cough."

"You see," said Jack, "if she is not very clever, I'll not have her."

When they sat at table, and had begun their dinner, the mother said: "Elsie, go into the cellar and bring us some beer."

The Clever Elsie took the can from the wall, and went into the cellar; and she clattered the cover against the can, all the way along, for amusement, that the time might not hang heavy on her hands. When she came into the cellar, she brought a stool, and put it in front of the cask, lest she should have to stoop, and hurt her back, and thus injure herself unawares. Then she pushed the can before her with her foot, and turned the tap on; and while the beer was running into the can, she did not let her eyes rest idly, but looked up at the walls; and after looking in all directions, she descried a hatchet on the ceiling just above her, which the builders had left sticking there by accident. Then Clever Elsie began to cry, and said: "When I have Jack for my husband, and we have a child, and it grows big, and we send it into the cellar here, to draw beer, the hatchet will fall upon its head and kill it."

So she sat there crying and weeping with all her might, about the impending misfortune. And the people upstairs sat and waited for their beer, but Clever Elsie did not come back. Then the mistres said to the maid: "Just go down into the cellar and see what is keeping Elsie so long."

The maid went and found her sitting before the tub, lamenting loudly. "What makes you cry so, Elsie?" she asked.

"Oh!" replied Elsie, "is there not enough to make me cry? When I have Jack, and we have a child, and it grows big, and we send it to draw beer, perhaps the hatchet will fall on its head and kill it."

Then the maid exclaimed: "What a clever Elsie our's is!" and sat down beside her and began crying too, about the misfortune. After a while, when the maid stayed away, the peasant said to his labouring man: "Go down into the cellar, and see what makes Elsie and the maid stay away so long?"

The man went; and there sat Clever Elsie and the

maid both crying together. He asked: "What are you crying about?"

"Oh!" replied Elsie, "have not I enough to make me cry? When I have Jack, and we have a child, and it grows big, and is sent to draw beer here, the hatchet will fall on its head and kill it."

Then the man cried out: "What a clever Elsie ours is!" and sat down with them and began to howl aloud. Upstairs they were waiting for the labouring man; and when he did not come, the peasant said to his wife: "Go down into the cellar and see what Elsie is about?"

The wife went down, found them all three lamenting, and asked the reason. Then Elsie told her how her future child would probably be killed by the hatchet, when it should have grown big, and have been sent for beer, and the hatchet should have fallen down. Then the mother exclaimed: "What a clever Elsie ours is!" and sat down and wept with the rest of them.

The man upstairs waited a little longer; but when his wife did not come, and his thirst grew greater and greater, he said: "I must go down myself into the cellar and see what is keeping Elsie." And when he came into the cellar, and found them all sitting crying together, and heard that their grief was about the child that Elsie might perhaps have, and that might be killed by the hatchet which might fall down just at the time when the child, who might be sent to draw beer, might be sitting beneath it; he cried out: "What a clever Elsie it is!" and began weeping with the rest.

The wooer remained a long time upstairs alone; but when no one came back, he said to himself: "They must all be waiting for me downstairs; I'll go down and see what they are about."

When he came downstairs, five people were sitting there, groaning and lamenting in a doleful way, each trying to cry louder than the rest. "What misfortune can have happened?" asked he.

"Oh, my dear Jack," answered Elsie, "when we marry one another, and have a child, and it grows big, and we perhaps send it down here to draw beer, then the hatchet,

which is sticking in the ceiling up there, may break its head and kill it, if it happens to fall down ; and is not that enough to make us cry ? ”

“ Well,” cried Jack, “ I don’t want more cleverness than that in my household ; so because you are such a clever Elsie, you shall be my wife ; ” and he took her hand and led her upstairs, and they were married.

Sometime after Jack had taken her for his wife, he said to her : “ Wife, I must go out to work and earn our living, do you go into the field and cut the corn, so that we may have bread.”—“ Yes, my dear Jack, I’ll do so.”

When Jack was gone she went and prepared a good mess of porridge, and took it out with her. When she came to the field she said to herself : “ What shall I do ? —Shall I cut first, or shall I eat first ? —I’ll eat first.”

So she finished the whole pot of porridge ; and having had quite enough, she said to herself again : “ What shall I do ? —Shall I cut first, or shall I sleep first ? —Why, I’ll sleep first.” So she lay down in the corn and went to sleep.

Jack had been home a long time, and still Elsie did not come ; which made him say : “ What a clever Elsie my Elsie is ; she is so industrious that she won’t even come to dine.” But as evening came on, and she still did not return, Jack went out to see how much she had cut ; but there was nothing cut at all, and she was lying among the corn fast asleep.

Then Jack ran home quickly and brought a bird net, with little bells, and hung it round her ; and she still slept on, while he ran home again, locked the house-door, and sat down on his working stool.

At last, when it was already quite dark, Clever Elsie awoke ; and when she got up, the bells rattled round her at every step she took. Then she was frightened, and began to doubt if she was really the Clever Elsie, and said : “ Am I myself, or am I not ? ”

She did not know what answer to make, and for a time stood hesitating ; at last she thought—“ I’ll go home and ask if it is I, or if it is not—they’re sure to know.”

She ran to the house-door; but it was locked. Then she knocked at the window, and cried out: "Jack, is Elsie within?"

"Yes," answered Jack; "she's within."

Then she started, and cried: "Dear me, then I'm not myself," and went to another house; but when the people heard the rattling of the bells, they would not open their doors, and she could not get shelter anywhere. So she ran away out of the village, and no one has ever seen her since.

HOW THE BRIDE WAS CHOSEN.

THERE was once a young shepherd who wanted to get married. He knew three sisters, but each one was as pretty as the other two, and it was difficult to choose among them; for he did not know which sister to prefer. Then he asked his mother to advise him; and her counsel was that he should ask them all three to supper, place cheese before them, and notice how they eat it; and the young man did so.

The first sister ate her cheese, rind and all. The second cut off the rind; but so hastily, that she cut off some of the cheese too, and wasted it. But the third sister pared off the rind very carefully, slicing away neither too much nor too little.

The shepherd reported all this to his mother, and she said: "Choose the youngest sister for your bride."

And he did so, and lived comfortably and happily with her all his life long.

THE GOOD BARGAIN.

A PEASANT had driven his cow to market and sold her for seven dollars. On his way home he had to pass by a pond, and when he was still some distance off he could hear the frogs crying, "Aik, aik, aik." When he came to the water he called out to them: "You stupid creatures, don't you know better than that? It was seven dollars, and not eight."

But the frogs persisted in their "Aik, aik, aik, aik."

"Well, if you don't believe me, I can count it over for you," cried he; and he brought out the money, and told it off into dollars—four and twenty groschen to each. But the frogs did not care for his reckoning, and kept on repeating, "Aik, aik, aik, aik."

"Come," cried the peasant, quite angrily, "if you fancy you know better than I, you may count it for yourselves," and he threw all the money into the water to them. He stood there for a time, and waited till the frogs should bring back his property to him; but the frogs kept to their opinion, and continued to croak, "Aik, aik, aik, aik," nor did they throw him out his money again. He waited for a long time, till evening came on, and he was obliged to go home. Then he began abusing the frogs, and roared out: "You water-splashers, you thick-heads, you goggle-eyes, you—you've great wide mouths, and can croak till one's ears ache, but you can't count seven dollars. Do you think I'm going to stand here till you've done?"

And with that he went away; and the frogs kept calling after him, "Aik, aik, aik, aik," so that he got home in a very bad humour.

After a time he bought another cow; this one he killed, and calculated that if he was fortunate in selling the meat, he should get as much as the two cows were worth, and have the skin into the bargain. When he arrived at the city with the meat, a whole crowd of dogs had gathered together before the gate, with a great greyhound in front, who kept jumping round the meat, sniffing at it, and barking, "Bowee, buy, buy."

As he persisted in this line of conduct, the peasant said: "Yes, yes, I understand. You say 'buy,' because you want to buy the meat; but I should be finely served if I gave it you."

The dog answered nothing but—"Bowee, buy, buy."

"Then you won't eat it up yourself, and you'll answer for your companions there?"

"Bowee, buy, buy," said the dog.

"Well," said the peasant, "if you insist on it, I'll let you have it, for I know you well, and know the master whom you serve. But this I can tell you, that I must have my money in three days. You may bring it home to me."

With that he unloaded the meat, and turned back; and the dogs fell upon the cargo, and barked, "Bowee, buy, buy."

The peasant, who heard it from afar, said to himself: "Now they all want to buy; but the big one must be responsible to me."

When three days were past, the peasant said: "To-day I shall have my money in my pocket," and was quite merry. But nobody would come to pay him. "There's no trusting any one now-a-days," said he; and at last he lost all patience, and went into the town to the butcher's, and demanded his money.

At first the butcher thought it was a joke; but the peasant said: "Joking aside, did not your great dog bring home the whole carcase of the cow to you, three days ago?" Then the butcher became very angry, and caught up a broomstick and drove him out.

"Wait a little!" cried the peasant, "there's such a thing as justice still in the world." And he ran to the king's palace, and begged for an audience. He was led

into the presence of the king, who sat there with his daughter, and asked what had befallen him.

"Alas!" cried he, "the frogs and the dogs have stolen my property, and the butcher has paid my bill with a cudgel." And he told them, from beginning to end, what had happened to him. The king's daughter thereupon began to laugh aloud, and the king said to the peasant:

"I can't say you are in the right here, but you shall have my daughter for your wife. She has never laughed once in all her life, excepting at you, and I have promised that the man who could make her laugh should marry her. You ought to be very grateful for your good fortune."

"Oh," answered the peasant, "I don't want her at all. I have one wife at home, and she is more than enough for me; for when I come in I always fancy there is one standing in every corner."

Then the king became very angry, and cried: "Thou art a rude fellow."

"Oh, sir king," answered the peasant, "what can you expect from an ox but beef?"

"Wait a little," said the king; "you shall have your reward. Now, begone; but come back in three days, and you shall have five hundred counted out to you."

When the peasant got outside the door, the sentry said to him: "You made the king's daughter laugh. I warrant they gave you a good reward for your trouble."

"You're right there," answered the peasant; "I'm to have five hundred counted out to me."

"Listen," said the soldier. "Give me some of them: what should you do with all that money?"

"Well," said the peasant, "because you're a good fellow, you shall have two hundred. So present yourself before the king in three days from this time and have them counted out to you."

A Jew who had been standing near them and heard the conversation, ran after the peasant, held him by the coat, and exclaimed: "My word, what a lucky fellow you are! I'll change it for you—I'll change it into small money for you. What should you do with so many hard dollars?"

"Well, Moses," answered the peasant, "I can let you

have three hundred. Give me the small coin for them at once, and they'll be paid you three days hence, in the king's palace."

The Jew was quite overjoyed at the thoughts of the profit he should make ; and he at once brought the sum in bad groschen, of which three are worth no more than two good ones.

Three days afterwards, the peasant, in obedience to his instructions, appeared before the king.

"Pull off his coat," said his majesty. "He shall have his five hundred."

"Oh," said the peasant, "they don't belong to me now. Two hundred I gave away to the sentry, and the Jew changed three hundred for me ; so that by rights I've none left of my own at all."

In the meantime the soldier and the Jew had come in and demanded to be paid what the peasant had made over to them ; and accordingly the blows were properly counted out to them. The soldier bore his share quietly enough, for he knew the taste of it already ; but the Jew kept crying lamentably : "Oh, dear ! oh, dear ! are those the hard dollars ?"

The king could not help laughing at the peasant ; and, as all his anger had vanished, he said : "As you have spent your reward before it had even been paid you, I will make you some amends. Go into my treasury, and take thence as much money as you like."

The peasant was not slow to obey this order : he crammed his great pockets with as much as they would hold. Then he went into a tavern to count his money. The Jew had crept after him, and heard him grumbling to himself : "I've been over-reached by that rogue of a king, after all ! Might he not have given me the money himself, so that I could know how much I had—whereas, now, how am I to know if it's the right kind of money that I've put in my pockets ?"

"My conscience !" muttered the Jew to himself, "he's speaking disrespectfully of our lord the king : I'll run and inform against him, then I shall get a reward, and he'll have a punishment."

When the king heard what kind of language the peasant had used, he was very angry, and told the Jew to go and summon the offender before him. The Jew ran to the peasant, and cried: " You're to come directly to his majesty the king, just as you are."

" I know my duty better," answered the peasant. " I'll have a new coat made first; do you think a man who has as much money in his pockets as I have, should go in an old worn-out coat ? "

When the Jew found that the peasant was determined not to go till he had another coat, he was afraid that he should lose his reward, and the peasant his punishment, if they waited till the king's anger had cooled; so he said: " Out of pure friendship I'll lend you a beautiful coat of mine, just for the short time; for what will not a man do out of love for his fellow-man ! "

The peasant had no objection to make. He dressed himself in the Jew's coat, and went away with him.

The king reproached the peasant for the bad language which the Jew had repeated to him.

" Oh," cried the peasant, " what the Jew says is sure to be a parcel of falsehoods; there's never a true word goes out of his lips. Why, that fellow is capable of declaring that the coat I've got on is his ! "

" What do you mean by that ? " screamed the Jew. " Isn't the coat mine, and didn't I lend it you out of pure friendship, so that you could appear before his majesty ? "

When the king heard that, he said: " The Jew must certainly have deceived one of us—either me or the peasant;" and he ordered a few more of the hard dollars the Jew did not like to be counted out to him. As for the peasant, he went home with the good money in his pocket, and said to himself: " This time I certainly hit the mark."

THE THREE WEDDING GUESTS.

THREE yard-dogs once lived in a village, in a very friendly way. In the village there was to be a great peasant's wedding, to which young and old were invited; and there was such a boiling and roasting, and stewing and baking, that the smell of the preparations scented the whole place. The three dogs were together, and smelt the delicious fragrance; and they consulted together how they might go to the wedding, and see if nothing would fall to their share. But in order to avoid attracting unnecessary attention, they decided not to go together, but each one separately; one after the other.

The first went and introduced himself into the slaughter-house, where he snapped up a great bit of meat and turned to depart with it; but the people caught him, and not only tore away the bit of meat out of his jaws, but gave him a terrible thrashing into the bargain.

So he came back hungry and sorely beaten into the yard to his friends and comrades, who were waiting there anxious to hear good tidings. They asked him: "Well, how did you fare, and how did you like it?"

Now the dog was ashamed to confess that his share of the wedding feast had been cudgel broth, well peppered; so he replied: "Oh, well enough! But it's sharp work yonder, and one must take it hard or soft, just as it comes!"

When his companions heard that, they fancied people were feasting to their heart's content at the wedding, and that there were plenty of bits to be had, meat and bone, hard and soft; so the second dog ran off at full speed to the house where the wedding was held, and went straight

into the kitchen and snapped up whatever came in his way. But before he could beat a retreat he had been observed, and a saucepan of water was poured on his back, scalding hot, so that he ran away steaming like a poodle fresh out of a bath; but though it stung him terribly, he kept his feelings to himself.

When he got back to the yard, where his two comrades were waiting for him, they asked him directly: "Well, how did you like it?" "Quite well," replied the dog; "but it's warm work over yonder, and you must take it as it comes, hot or cold."

Then the third dog thought that the wedding guests were hard at work, and that hot and cold dishes were coming on the table alternately; so, not wishing to miss anything, and at any rate to be present at the dessert, when the soft cake would be carried up, he hurried off as fast as ever he could. But scarcely had he made his way into the house, when one of the guests caught him, by jamming his tail in the door, and beat him horribly, as he stuck fast there, until the skin came off his tail, and the dog got away terribly battered and torn.

"Well, how did you like the wedding?" asked his friends, with something of malicious pleasure in their hearts. The poor ill-used wight drew his battered tail between his legs as well as he could, so that they might not see it, and answered—"Very well; there was plenty of merriment, and a good deal of soft cake, but one must not mind losing a little hair."

And the three dogs remembered for a long time how the wedding soup, the wedding broth, and the wedding cake had tasted; and as for the roast, the smell of it was quite enough for them.



THE STAR DOLLARS.

THERE was once a little girl whose father and mother had died, and the child was so poor that she had no little room to live in, and no little bed to sleep in; and at last she had nothing left but the clothes she wore, and a piece of bread that a charitable soul had given her. But she was a good, gentle child.

And being thus abandoned by all the world, she went out into the fields, thinking—"God will take care of me." On her way she met a poor man, who said: "Alas, I am so hungry; pray give me something to eat." Then she gave him the whole piece of bread, and said, "God help you!" and went on.

Then there came a child, crying, and saying : " My head is so cold ; give me something to cover it with." Then she took off her cap and gave it to the child. And when she had gone a little way further, another child came, who was cold because it had no boddice ; and she gave it the one she wore ; and a little further on she met another who begged for her skirt, which she gave away too.

At last she came to a wood ; and when the darkness had already come, another child met her and begged for her flannel petticoat. And the good child thought : " It is dark night, and no one will see me ;" and she gave away her flannel petticoat.

So she had nothing in the world left to call her own. But as she stood there, some bright stars fell from Heaven, and when she picked them up, they were bright, shining, silver dollars ; and instead of the petticoat she had given away, she had one of the very finest linen. Then the child gathered the dollars in her skirt, and was rich for her whole life long.

STORY OF THE MAN WHO WENT OUT TO LEARN TO SHUDDER.

A FATHER had two sons, of whom the eldest was clever and quick, and knew how to set about anything ; but the younger was stupid, and could not understand or learn anything ; and when people saw him, they said : " He'll be a trouble to his father yet ! "

When anything was to be done, the elder son always had to do it ; but if his father told him to go late in the evening, or perhaps at night, to bring anything, and his way lay through the churchyard, or any other grimsome place, he would answer : " Oh father, I'm shuddering ! " for he was afraid. And in the evening when they were telling stories, round the fire, that made the hearers' flesh creep, some among the audience would say : " It makes me shudder ! " On these occasions, the younger son would sit in a corner listening to their talk, and could not imagine what they meant ; and he often exclaimed : " They all say, ' I'm shuddering ! I'm shuddering ! ' I never shudder ; I suppose it must be some art that I don't understand."

One day, his father said to him : " Listen, you fellow in the corner there, you're growing a great sturdy lad ; so you must learn something by which you may earn your bread. See what pains your brother takes to learn ; but upon you good counsel seems lost."

" Indeed, father," replied the son, " I'm quite willing to learn something ; and if it could be managed, I should like to learn to shudder ; for I don't know how to do that at all."

The elder brother laughed when he heard this speech,

and thought to himself: "My patience, what a stupid fellow that brother of mine is; he'll never do any good all his life' for a bit of iron must be bent early, if it's to be a hook." The father sighed, and answered: "You'll learn to shudder in time, I'll warrant; but you will never earn your living by it."

Soon afterwards the parish clerk came to their house to visit them; then the father told him his troubles, and complained how his younger son was such an ill-disposed lad, who knew nothing and would learn nothing. "Just fancy," he said, "when I asked him how he intended to get his bread, he said he should like to learn how to shudder." "If that's all he wants," answered the clerk, "he can learn that with me; let him come with me, I'll polish him off for you."

The father had no objection; for he thought, "At any rate the boy will be improved a little." So the clerk took him home, and he was set to toll the church bell.

A few days afterwards, he woke up the lad at midnight, and told him to get up and go into the church tower to ring the bell. "I'll teach you what it is to shudder," thought he, and went secretly before; and when the boy got up into the belfry, and turned round to grasp the rope, he saw a white figure standing on the stairs, opposite the window.

"Who's there?" he cried; but the figure gave no answer, and never stirred.

"Answer me!" cried the boy, "or be off with you; you've no business to come here at night!" but the clerk remained motionless, for he wanted to make the lad believe he was a ghost.

The boy asked a second time: "What do you want here? Speak, if you're an honest fellow, or I shall fling you down stairs." The clerk thought: "he does not mean that;" so he did not utter a sound, but stood motionless, as if he had been hewn out of stone.

Then the lad called to him, a third time; and when that too was in vain, he took a run, and gave the ghost such a push, that it tumbled down ten stairs, and lay motionless in a corner. Then he rang the bell, and then returned

home and went to bed without saying a word to any one, and fell fast asleep. The clerk's wife, meanwhile, waited for her husband for a long time, but he did not return. At last she became alarmed, and woke up the boy, and asked him : " Do you know where my husband is ? He went up into the tower before you."

" No," answered the boy ; " but some fellow stood on the stairs opposite the window ; and as he would neither answer me when I called to him, nor go away, I thought he was a rogue, and flung him down stairs. If you go and look, you will see if it was your husband ; but I shall be very sorry if it is."

The woman ran off, and found her husband, who was lying in a corner, groaning and lamenting, for the fall had broken one of his legs.

She carried him home, and then ran with loud cries to the lad's father. " Your boy," she declared, " has been the cause of a great misfortune ; he has flung my husband down stairs in such a way as to make him break his leg ; pray rid our house of that good-for-nothing."

The father started when he heard this ; he came running to the clerk's house, and began scolding his son roundly. " What wicked tricks are these ? " he cried ; " the spirit of mischief must have possessed you."

" Father," pleaded the boy, " I'm quite innocent ; just listen to me. He stood there, in the night, as if he had come for some bad purpose. I did not know who it was, and called to him three times, telling him either to speak or to go away."

" Ah ! " said the father, " You only cause me sorrow and woe ; get out of my sight ; I will not look at you any more."

" Very well, father," answered the lad, " only wait till it is day, then I'll go and learn how to shudder. Then I shall at least know an art by which I may earn my living."

" Learn whatever you like," said the father, " it's all the same to me. There are fifty dollars for you, go out into the world, and don't tell anyone where you came from, or who is your father, for I am ashamed of you."

" Well father, it shall be as you wish," answered the

youth ; "if you ask no more than that, the thing's easily done."

When day came, the lad put his fifty dollars in his pocket, and went out into the highroad ; and as he walked on, he kept repeating to himself : "If I could only shudder ! if I could only shudder !"

Soon there came up a man, who heard what the boy said to himself, and when they had gone on a little way and came in sight of a gibbet, he said to him : "See, yonder is a tree where seven robbers have been hung up, all together. Sit down there, and wait till night comes, and you'll learn how to shudder."

"If that's all I have to do," replied the youngster, "it's easily done ; and if I really learn to shudder so quickly, you shall have my fifty dollars ; come again to-morrow morning."

Then the lad went to where the gibbet stood, sat down under it, and waited till evening came. And because he was cold, he lighted a fire ; but at midnight the wind blew so cold, that in spite of the fire he could not get warm. And as the wind rattled the corpses against each other, so that they swung to and fro, he thought : "If I am cold down here by the fire, what must it be for those poor fellows up there ?" And because he had a kind heart, he placed the ladder, mounted, unfastened the dead malefactors one after another, and brought all the seven down. Then he poked up the fire, blew it into a blaze, and set them all round, that they might warm themselves. But they lay there and never stirred, even when the fire caught their clothes. So he said : "Take care what you're about, or I shall hang you up again." But the dead robbers did not hear him ; they remained silent, and let their rags turn on.

Then he became angry, and said : "If you won't take care, I can't help it, but I won't be burnt with you ;" and he hung them up again, all in a row. Then he sat down again by his fire and went to sleep.

The next morning the man came again to him, and wanted his fifty dollars. "Well," he said, "you know what it is to shudder, I fancy ?" "No," replied the

young man ; "how should I know it ? Those poor fellows up there never opened their mouths, and were so stupid, that they would have let their few miserable rags of clothes burn."

Then the man saw that he would not win his fifty dollars that day ; so he went away, saying : "I never met such a fellow as that is, in my life."

The lad continued his journey, and began again to mutter to himself : "If I could only shudder ! if I could only shudder !" A carter who came striding along behind him, heard this, and asked : "Who are you ?" "I don't know," answered the lad.

The carter asked again : "Where do you come from ?" "I don't know."

"Who's your father ?" "That I may not tell you."

"And what is it you keep muttering to yourself ?" "Why," answered the boy : "I should like to learn to shudder ; but no one will teach me how."

"Leave your foolish talk," said the carter, "and go with me. I will see and get a lodging for you somewhere."

The youth went with the carter ; and in the evening they came to an inn, where they resolved to pass the night. As they came into the room, the lad said again, quite loud : "If I could only shudder ! if I could only shudder !"

The host, who overheard him, laughed, and observed : "If you want to do that, you may find a good opportunity here."

"Be quiet, do," said his wife : "many a foolhardy man has lost his life there already. It would be a pity for his handsome eyes, if they should never see the day-light again."

But the youth said : "If it were ever so difficult, I would learn it, for that's why I have come out ;" and he would not let the host rest, till he had told how there was an enchanted castle, not far off, where a man might very easily learn what it was to shudder, if he would only stay there for three nights. The king had promised his daughter in marriage to any one who would attempt it ; and she was the most beautiful young maiden on whom the sun shone. And in the castle there were concealed

great treasures, guarded by evil spirits, which treasures would then come to light, and might make a rich man of a very poor one. Many had gone into the castle, but no one had come out again.

The next morning the lad went to the king and said : "If I might be permitted, I should be glad to watch for three nights in the enchanted castle."

The king looked at him, and liking his appearance, replied : " You may do so ; and you may ask for three things, which you can take into the castle with you ; but they must be lifeless things."

" Then," answered he, " I shall ask for a fire, and a carpenter's bench, and a lathe, with the knife that belongs to it."

The king caused what he wanted to be carried into the castle the same day. And when night was coming on the lad went up and made a bright fire in one of the rooms, put the carpenter's bench and the knife beside it, and sat down by the lathe. " If I could only shudder !" he said ; " but I shall not learn it even here."

Towards midnight he wanted to make up his fire ; and as he was blowing at it, he heard voices suddenly crying from one of the corners : " Me-ow, me-ow, how cold we are ! "

" You blockheads," said he, " what are you mewing about ? If you are cold, come and sit by the fire and warm yourselves."

And when he had said that, two great black cats came bounding up with a great leap, and sat down, one on each side of him, looking at him wildly with their fiery eyes. After awhile, when they had warmed themselves, they said to him : " Comrade, will you have a game at cards with us ? "

" Willingly," replied he, " but first show me your paws ; " and they struck out their claws towards him. " Why, what long nails you have got ! " he cried ; " wait a moment, I'll cut them for you."

With that he took them by the neck, lifted them on to the carpenter's bench, and screwed their paws into it. " I don't care about playing at cards with you," he said,

"now that I've seen your fingers ;" and he killed them, and threw them out into the water.

But as soon as he had silenced these two, and was about to sit down again beside his fire, there came from every hole and corner black cats and black dogs, dragging red-hot chains ; and there came more and more, so that he could not hide himself ; and they shrieked horribly, and trod upon his fire, pulled it to pieces, and wanted to put it out. For a time he bore it quietly ; but when it became too bad, he took up his turning-knife, and crying : "Away, you rabble," began hacking at them right and left. Some of them ran away ; the rest he killed and threw into the pond outside.

When he came back, he blew the embers of his fire into a blaze and warmed himself ; and as he sat there thus, his eyes would not keep open any longer, and he felt a great desire to sleep. Looking round, he saw a great bed standing in the corner : "That's just what I want," he said, and laid himself down upon it. But just as he was going to close his eyes, the bed began to move itself, and began rolling through the whole castle.

"Go on, that's right," he cried ; "go on as fast as you please." And the bed went rolling on as if six horses were drawing it, over thresholds and staircases, up and down ; all at once, "crack, crack," it turned over topsy turvy, so that it lay upon him like a mountain. But he flung the mattrasses and pillows away got up, and said : "Whoever likes, may ride now," and lay down by his fire and slept till day.

In the morning, the king came ; and when he saw the youth lying upon the ground, he thought the ghosts had killed him, and that he was dead. And he said : "It's a pity for the handsome young fellow."

The boy heard this ; and he jumped up, and said : "It's not so far with us yet!" And the king was astonished and pleased, and asked him how he fared.

"Very well," he answered. "One night has passed, and the others will pass away too."

When he went back to the inn, the host opened his eyes in wonder. "I did not think I should see you again

alive," said he. "Have you learned what it is to shudder?"

"No," he answered, "it has been all in vain. I wish anyone could tell me what it is!"

On the second night, he went up again into the old castle, sat down by his fire, and began his old song: "If I could only shudder!" When midnight came he heard a noise and tumult, at first distant, and then louder and louder, and then there was a pause for a moment, after which, half a man came tumbling down the chimney and fell close to him. "Hallo," he cried, "there's half a one still wanting—that isn't enough!"

Then the noise began again, and there was a great tumult and uproar, and the second half came tumbling down too.

"Wait a bit," he said; "I'll blow up the fire a little."

And when he had done that, and looked round again, the two halves joined together, and a man of hideous aspect was sitting in his place.

"I didn't mean it in that way," cried the lad; "that bench is mine."

The man wanted to push him away, but he would not allow it, and thrust him aside forcibly, and sat down again in his place. Then more men came falling down, and they brought with them nine great bones and two skulls, and set up the bones to play at skittles with. The youth thought he would like to play too; and he said: "Listen, may I make one?"

"Yes," answered they, "if you have money."

"I've money enough," he rejoined, "but your skittles are not round;" and he took the skulls and put them into his lathe, and gave them a turn.

"So," he cried, "now they'll bowl much better; now we'll be merry!"

He played with them, and lost some of his money; but when twelve o'clock struck, everything vanished from his sight; and he lay down and quietly went to sleep.

When the third night came, he sat down again upon the bench, and said crossly: "If I could only shudder!"

Suddenly there entered a man, who was taller than any

he had yet seen, and had a horrible appearance; he was an old man, with a long white beard.

"Oh you wretch!" he cried, "now you shall soon learn how to shudder! for you shall die!"

"Not so fast," replied the youth; "if I'm to die, I must first give my consent."

"I'll soon make an end of you," roared the apparition.

"Softly, softly," retorted the youth, "don't be too boastful; I fancy I'm as strong as you are, and stronger too."

"We'll see that," cried the old man, "if you're stronger than I am, I will let you go; come, we will try it."

He led the youth through dark passages to a place where there was a smith's forge; the old man took an axe, and with one blow struck one of the two anvils into the earth.

"I can do more than that," said the youth, and he went to the other anvil; and the old man stood by to watch him, with his white beard hanging down. Then the young man seized the axe and not only split the anvil at a blow, but wedged the old man's beard tightly into it.

"Now I have caught you," he cried, "and it's your turn to die!"

Then he snatched up a bar of iron, and battered away at the old man, till he whimpered and begged him to leave off, promising him great riches if he would hold his hand. So the young man pulled out the axe and released the old man's beard.

The old man led him back into the castle and showed him three great chests full of gold. "One of these," he said, "is for the poor, one for the king, and the third for thee."

As he said this, the clock struck twelve, and the spirit vanished, leaving the youth standing alone in the dark.

"I shall manage to get out of this," he said; and he groped about, till he found his way to his room, and went to sleep by his fire.

Next morning the king came again, and said: "I fancy by this time you've learned what it is to shudder?"

"No indeed," replied he; "what can it be?" A

bearded old man came, and showed me a great deal of gold ; but he did not tell me what it was to shudder!"

" Well," said the king, " you've disenchanted the castle, and you shall marry my daughter."

" That's all very pleasant," answered he, " but I don't know yet what it is to shudder!"

Then the gold was brought up, and the marriage was celebrated. But though the young king was very happy, and loved his wife very much, he could not avoid saying : " If I could only shudder! if I could only shudder!" At last the young wife grew quite angry about it, and her chambermaid said : " I will find a remedy for it ; he shall learn to shudder after all."

So she went to the brook which flowed through the garden, and had a whole pailful of little gudgeon brought in. And she told her mistress to wait till her husband was fast asleep at night, and then to draw the coverlet off him, and pour the water with the gudgeon over him, so that the little fishes sprang all about.

Then the young king woke up, and cried : " I'm shuddering—hu—hu—what makes me shudder? Dear wife, now I know what it is to shudder!"



LITTLE BROTHER AND LITTLE SISTER.

LITTLE BROTHER took little sister by the hand and said : "Since our mother died we haven't had a single happy hour. Stepmother beats us every day ; and if we come near her, she sends us away with a kick. We have to eat the stale crusts that remain from meals. Even the little dog under the table is better off than we are; for she now and then throws him a scrap of something good. May heaven have pity on us ! If our mother knew of it! Come, let us go into the wide world together."

So they walked the whole day long, through meadows and fields, and over the stones ; and when it rained, Little Sister said : "The sky is weeping, like our poor hearts ! "

In the evening they came to a great forest. They were so weary, from sorrow, hunger, and their long journey, that they crept into a hollow tree, and there went to sleep.

The next day, when they awoke, the sun was already high in the heavens, and shone hotly down into the tree. Then Little Brother said : " Sister, I am thirsty ; if I knew where there was a spring I would go and drink—and I think I hear the rushing of one."

Little Brother stood up, took Little Sister by the hand, and they went to look for the spring. But their wicked stepmother was a witch ; she had seen the two children go away, and had crept after them, secretly, as witches do, and had bewitched all the springs in the forest. When they found a brook, which flowed sparkling over the stones, Little Brother wanted to drink ; but Little Sister heard how it kept saying, as it bubbled along : " Who drinks of me is changed into a tiger ; who drinks of me is changed into a tiger."

Then Little Sister cried out : " I beg of you, brother, don't drink, or you'll be changed into a wild beast, and tear me to pieces."

Little Brother did not drink of the brook, though he was so thirsty. He said : " I will wait till we come to the next."

When they came to the second spring, Little Sister heard how this spring, too, kept saying : " Whoever drinks of me will be turned into a wolf ; who drinks of me will be turned into a wolf."

Then Little Sister cried again : " Brother, I beg of you, don't drink of it, or you'll become a wolf, and eat me up."

Little Brother did not drink of this brook. He said : " I will wait till we come to the next ; but then I must drink, whatever you say, for my thirst is too great to be borne."

When they came to the third brook, Little Sister heard how it kept murmuring : " Whoever drinks of me will be changed into a deer ; whoever drinks of me will be changed into a deer."

Then Little Sister cried : " Ah, brother, I beg of you, do not drink, or you will be turned into a deer, and run away from me."

But Little Brother had already knelt down by the well-side and drunk of the water ; and no sooner had the first

drops passed his lips than he found himself lying by the side of the brook, changed into a fawn.

Little Sister cried heartily over poor bewitched Little Brother, and the fawn wept too, and sat sadly beside her. Then the girl said, at last: "Be quiet, dear little fawn; I will never forsake you." And she untied her golden garter and bound it round the fawn's neck; and she plucked some rushes and wove them into a soft cord. With this cord she tied the little fawn, and led it away, deeper and deeper into the forest. And when they had been walking a long time, they came at length to a little bower, and the girl looked in, and seeing that it stood empty, she said: "We can stay and live here."

Then she collected young leaves and moss for the fawn, to make a soft bed; and every morning she went out and collected for herself nuts, and roots, and berries; and for the fawn she brought tender grass, and the fawn ate it out of her hand, and was merry, and gambolled and frisked about her. In the evening, when Little Sister was tired, and had said her prayers, she would rest her head upon the fawn's back as upon a pillow, on which she could sleep in peace. And if Little Brother had only retained his human shape, it would have been a glorious life that they led.

For a time they continued to live thus in the forest alone. Then it happened that the king of the country held a great hunting in the wood. The horns were blown, the hounds bayed, and the merry din of the hunters sounded through the forest, and the little fawn heard it, and would gladly have been present. "Ah," it said to Little Sister, "let me go and see the hunt. I can endure it no longer." And he begged and prayed until she consented.

"But," she said to him, "do not fail to come home in the evening. I shall shut my doors against the wild hunters; and, that I may know you, you must knock, and say, 'Little Sister, let me in; ' and if you do not say that, I shall not unlock my door."

The fawn ran out, and was very happy and merry in the free open air. The king and his huntsmen saw the beau-

tiful creature, and pursued it, but they could not overtake it ; and whenever they thought themselves certain of capturing it, it sprang over the bushes and vanished. When it became dark, the fawn ran to the little house, knocked at the door, and said, " Little Sister, let me in." Then the little door was opened, and it sprang in and rested all night long on its soft couch.

The next morning the hunt began again ; and when the fawn heard the sound of the horn and the shouts of the hunters, it had no peace, and said : " Little Sister, open the door ; I must go out."

Little Sister did as he wished, but said : " In the evening you must be back again, and give the signal."

When the king and his huntsmen saw the fawn again with the golden band round its neck, they all chased it, but it was too quick and agile for them. The chase continued the whole day, and by the time evening came, the huntsmen had surrounded the fawn, and one of them wounded it slightly on one foot, so that it had to limp, and it ran slowly away. Then a huntsman stole after it, as far as the little house ; and he heard it say, " Little Sister, let me in ; " and saw how the door was opened, and locked again directly.

The huntsman kept all that in remembrance, and went to the king, and told him what he had seen and heard. Then the King said : " To-morrow we will hunt again."

Little Sister was very much frightened when she saw that her fawn was wounded. She washed the blood from its foot, put healing herbs to it, and said : " Go and rest on your couch, dear little fawn, that you may get well again."

The wound was so slight that the fawn felt nothing more of it the next morning. And when it heard the noise of the hunting in the forest, it said : " I cannot endure to stay at home ; I must be there ; I'll take care that none of them comes near me again."

Little Sister cried, and answered : " Now they will kill you, and I am alone here, and abandoned by all the world ! I shall not let you out."

" Then I shall die here of sorrow," answered the fawn ;

"when I hear the hunting-horn, I feel as if my feet were burning."

Little Sister could not resist its entreaties, but opened the door with a heavy heart; and the fawn sprang away into the wood, merry and well. When the king saw it, he said to the huntsmen: "Chase it all day long until evening, but let no man do it any hurt."

When the sun had set, the king said to the huntsman: "Come with me, and show me the house of which you spoke."

When he came to the door, he knocked, and said: "Dear Little Sister, let me in." Then the door was opened, and the king entered, and beheld before him the most beauteous maiden he had ever seen.

The girl was frightened when she saw, instead of the fawn, a king coming in with a golden crown on his head. But the king looked kindly at her, and gave her his hand, and said: "Will you go with me to my palace, and be my dear wife?"

"Oh, yes!" answered the maiden; "but the fawn must come, too, for I will never abandon it."

"It shall remain with you as long as it lives," answered the king, "and shall want for nothing."

As he said this, the fawn came bounding in; then Little Sister tied it up with the cord of rushes, took the cord in her hand, and they went away together from the little house in the wood.

The king took the beautiful maiden upon his horse, and brought her into his palace, where the wedding was celebrated with great pomp. And now Little Sister was my Lady the Queen, and for a long time they lived happily together; and the little fawn was taken care of, and cherished, and allowed to run about in the garden of the palace. But the bad stepmother, through whom the children had been compelled to go out into the wide world, felt quite certain that Little Sister had been torn to pieces by the wild beasts of the forest, and Little Brother shot dead by the hunters in the shape of a fawn. When she heard how happy they were, and how they prospered, envy and malice stirred in her heart, and allowed her no rest;

and she thought of nothing else but how she should bring misfortune upon the two. Her own daughter, who was ugly as night, and had only one eye, reproached her, too, and repeated: "To be a queen—that ought to have been my fortune!"

"Be patient," cried the old woman, trying to pacify her; "when the time comes, I shall be at hand."

Now, when time had gone on, and the queen had become the mother of a beautiful little boy, while the king was away hunting, the old witch took the form of the chamber-maid, and, entering the room where the queen lay, said to her: "Come, your bath is ready; it will give you fresh strength, and do you good. Come and use it, before it grows cold." Her daughter was with her; and they carried the weak queen into the bath-room, and laid her in the bath; then they locked the bath-room door and ran away. In the bath-room itself they had made a fire like a furnace, hoping that the young queen would soon be suffocated.

When that was done, the old crone took her daughter, put a night-cap on her, and made her go to bed in the queen's place. She also managed, by her magic art, to give her the form and appearance of the queen; but she could not replace the eye her daughter had lost. To prevent the king from noticing this, she made the girl lie with the side of her face where the eye was wanting next to the pillow.

In the evening, when the king came home and heard that a little son had been born, he was heartily glad, and would have gone to the bedside of his dear wife, to see how she did. But the old woman cried out, quickly: "For your life, don't open the curtains! the queen must be kept in the dark as yet, and must have perfect quiet." So the king went away, never suspecting that a false queen was lying in the bed.

When midnight had come, and they were asleep, the nurse, who alone was sitting up watching in the child's room, by the cradle, saw how the door opened, and the true queen glided in. She took the child out of the cradle, pressed it in her arms, and nursed it. Then she

shook up its little pillows, laid it in the cradle, and covered it with the coverlet. Nor did she forget the little fawn. She went into the corner where it lay, and stroked its back gently. Then she went silently out at the door ; and the next morning the nurse asked the guards "if any one had entered the palace during the night ?" but they answered, "No ; we have not seen any one." Thus she came for many nights, without ever having spoken a word ; and each time the nurse saw her, but did not dare to tell any one.

After some time the queen began to talk in the night, and said :

" How does my child, and how does my fawn ?
I come but once more, then for ever am gone."

The nurse did not answer her ; but when the queen had disappeared, she went to the king, and told him all.

The king said : " Good heavens ! what can this be ? I will myself watch by the child to-morrow night."

And, in the evening, he went into the nursery ; and at midnight the queen appeared, and said :

" How does my child, and how does my fawn ?
I come but once more, then for ever am gone,"

and then took the child and kissed it, as was her custom, before she disappeared. The king did not dare to accost her, but the following night found him again watching. He heard her say :

" How does my child, and how does my fawn ?
I come this last time, then for ever am gone."

Then the king could no longer contain himself, but sprang forward to her, and said : " You can be no one but my dear wife."

" Yes," she replied, " I am your dear wife."

And, by his recognizing her, the witch's spell was broken, and she stood there alive, and fresh, and well. Then she told the king of the crime the bad witch and her daughter had perpetrated towards herself.

The king caused them to be brought to justice, and they were condemned to death. The daughter was led out into a forest, where the wild beasts tore her in pieces as soon as they saw her. As for the witch, she was cast into a furnace, where she perished miserably. As soon as she was burnt to ashes, the spell upon the little fawn was at an end, and Little Brother was restored to his human shape; and he and Little Sister lived happily together till their lives' end.





THUMBKIN.

A POOR peasant sat one evening by the hearth, poking the fire, while his wife sat by him spinning. Then he said, "What a sad thing it is that we have no children. It is so quiet here in our cottage, and in other people's houses there's so much life and gladness."

"Yes," answered his wife, with a sigh, "if we had only a single one, and if it were ever so small a child, no bigger than my thumb, I'd be quite contented, and we would love it heartily."

Soon afterwards, the peasant's wife became the mother of a child, which, though perfectly formed as to all its members, was no bigger than a thumb. Then both she and her husband said : " It is just as we wished it to be, and this shall be our dear child ; " and because of his size they called the boy Thumbkin. They did not let him want for food, but the child never grew taller, but remained exactly as big as when it was born ; still it looked at them out of its eyes, in a quiet, sensible way ; and soon showed itself a clever, agile little being, succeeding in everything that it undertook.

One day the peasant was preparing to go into the forest to fell wood, and he said to himself : " I do wish there were some one who could bring the waggon after me."

" Oh father ! " cried Thumbkin, " I'll bring you the waggon. Depend on me, and you will see it shall be in the forest at the proper time."

The peasant burst out laughing : " That can't be," he cried, " you are much too small to guide the horse by the reins."

" That does not matter, father," answered Thumbkin, " if my mother will only harness the horse and put him to, I will sit in his ear, and cry to him how he is to go."

" Well," said his father, " for once in a way, let us try it."

The mother harnessed the horse, and put Thumbkin in his ear, and the little man cried out, " Gee," and " Woa," and told the horse which way to go, and it went as steadily as if a real carter had been there ; and the waggon went straight by the right road towards the wood.

It happened just as the waggon was turning a corner, and the little man crying, " Gee woa," with all his might, that two strangers came along. " What in the world does this mean," exclaimed the first of them, " here is a cart coming along, and I hear a carter calling to the horse, but I cannot see him."

" There's something wrong about it," replied the other, " we will follow the cart, and see where it stops."

The waggon rolled on, into the forest, and directly to

the place where the wood was being cut. When Thumbkin perceived his father, he cried out to him : " Do you see, father, here I am with the waggon, so now help me down."

The father held the horse's bridle in his left hand, and took his little son out of the animal's ear with his right ; and Thumbkin sat down merrily on a wisp of straw.

When the strange men saw Thumbkin, they were almost struck speechless with wonder. Then one took the other aside, and said : " Listen,—that little chap might make our fortunes, if we were to exhibit him for money in some large town ;—let us buy him." So they went to the peasant, and said : " Sell us that little man, we will use him well."

" No," answered the father, " he is my darling. I would not sell him for all the money in the world."

But when Thumbkin heard the offer, he clambered up the skirts of his father's coat, stood on his shoulder, and whispered in his ear : " Father, let them have me. I'll be sure to come back to you again." Then his father gave him up to the two men, for a fine piece of gold.

" Where would you like to sit ? " said they to him.

" Oh, put me on the brim of your hat, then I can walk up and down and look at the prospect, without falling off."

They did as he wished, and when Thumbkin had said good bye to his father, they took him away with them. So they walked on till evening ; then the little man cried out to them, " Stop, I want to get down."

" Stay where you are," replied the man, " I don't care to stop just now."

But Thumbkin persisted, " No, no, I want to stretch my legs ; so put me down directly."

The man took off his hat, and set the little fellow down on the margin of a field, by the roadside. Thumbkin began running to and fro among the clods of earth, and slipped into a mouse hole he had looked out for himself. " Good night, gentlemen," he cried, laughing at them ; " you may go home without me," They came running up, and thrust sticks into the moushole to drive him out ;

but it was labour in vain. Thumbkin crept deeper and deeper into the hole; and as it soon became quite dark, they were obliged to go home angry, with empty pockets.

When Thumbkin had made sure that they were some distance off, he crept forth from his concealment. "It's dangerous walking here in the ploughed field by night," he observed, "one might easily break one's leg or one's neck." Luckily he stumbled upon an empty snailshell. "Thank goodness," he said, "here I may pass the night in safety;" and he seated himself inside the shell.

Not long afterwards, just as he was going to sleep, he heard two men pass by, and one of these said to the other, "How shall we manage to rob the rich parson of his gold and silver?"

"I could tell you how to manage that," cried Thumbkin.

"What's that?" exclaimed one of the thieves, in a fright. "I heard some one speak!"

They stopped and listened; and Thumbkin called out again, "Take me with you; I'll help you."

"Why, where are you?"

"Look, here on the ground, and notice where the voice comes from," answered he; and at last the thieves discovered him.

"Why, you little bit of a man," they cried, "how can you be useful to us?"

"Look you," he replied. "I will creep between the iron window bars into the parson's bedroom, and hand out to you what you want."

"Very well," said they, "we'll see what you can do."

When they came to the parsonage, Thumbkin crept into the bedroom, but as soon as he was fairly inside, he began crying at the top of his voice, "Will you have anything that's in here?" The robbers in a fright, whispered, "Speak lower, or you'll alarm the house." Thumbkin, however, pretended not to hear them, and cried out louder than ever, "What do you want? Do you want everything that's here?" The cook-maid, who slept in the adjoining room, heard that, and set up in bed to listen. The thieves had run back some distance, in a great fright. Then they thought "the little fellow only wants to laugh

at us ; " and came back and whispered to him, " now leave off joking, and pass us out something." Then Thumbkin began calling again as loud as he could, " I'll give you everything, only hold out your hands."

This time the cook-maid heard quite distinctly ; and she jumped out of bed, and came stumbling into the room. The thieves ran off, as if the wild huntsman had been at their heels ; but the maid, when she could see nothing, went to light a candle. When she came back with it, Thumbkin slipped out into the barn without being discovered ; but the maid, after searching every corner and finding nothing, went back to bed at last, convinced that she had been dreaming with her eyes and ears open, after all.

Thumbkin had been climbing about among the hay, and had found a good sleeping-place ; here he decided to rest till day came, and then he would go back to his parents. But there were other experiences in store for him ! Yes, in the world there is a good deal of care and trouble ! The maid rose, as usual, directly daylight came, and was going to feed the cattle. Her first errand was to the barn, to get an armful of fodder, and she took exactly the bit of hay in which poor Thumbkin was lying asleep. But he was sleeping so soundly that he did not know what was going on, and only woke to find himself in the mouth of the cow who had taken him up in a mouthful of hay. " Oh, dear me !" he cried, " I must have tumbled into the hand-mill ; " but he soon perceived where he was. He had enough to do to keep clear of the cow's teeth, and escape being crushed ; but he could not avoid slipping down the cow's throat with the food. " They've forgotten to build windows in this house," said Thumbkin, " and the sun doesn't shine in, and I suppose a candle is not to be had for money."

Altogether he disliked his new quarters very much ; and the worst was, that more and more new hay kept slipping in at the door, so that the place grew narrower and narrower. At last he cried out, in a fright, as loud as he could : " Don't bring me any more fresh food ! don't bring me any more fresh food ! "

The maid was just milking the cow; and when she heard a voice talking, without seeing any one, and recognized it for the same voice she had heard during the night, she was so much frightened that she fell from her stool and spilt all the milk. Then she ran in all haste to her master, and cried, "Heaven bless us, your reverence, the cow has been speaking!"

"You must be mad!" answered the priest; but he went to the stable, for all that, to see for himself what it was.

Scarcely had he set foot in the stable, when Thumbkin roared out again: "Don't bring me any more fresh food! don't bring me any more fresh food!" Then the parson himself was frightened, and thought it must be some evil spirit; and he ordered the cow to be killed. The cow was killed accordingly, and the stomach, in which Thumbkin lay hidden, was thrown upon the dunghill.

Thumbkin tried to work his way out, which was a very difficult task; at last he managed to succeed; but just as he managed so far that he could thrust out his head, a new misfortune came. A hungry wolf came by, and throwing himself upon the cow's paunch, swallowed it at once. Thumbkin did not lose his presence of mind; "Perhaps," he thought, "the wolf can be spoken to;" and he cried out of the beast's inside: "Dear wolf, I know of a capital prize for you."

"Where is it to be got?" asked the wolf.

"In such and such a house," answered Thumbkin. "You must creep in through the drain-hole, and you'll find cake, bacon, and sausage, as much as ever you can eat," and he exactly described his own father's house.

The wolf did not wait to be told twice; but at night he squeezed himself through the drain-hole into the store-room, and ate away to his heart's content. When he had eaten enough, he wanted to go away again; but he had grown so fat that he could not push his way through. Thumbkin, who had resolved upon this, began to make a tremendous noise inside the wolf, and clamoured and screamed as loudly as ever he could.

"Will you be quiet?" cried the wolf. "You'll be waking the people up."

"Nonsense!" answered the little man; "you've eaten your fill, and now I'm going to amuse myself a little;" and he began again shouting with all his might.

At last the noise awoke his father and mother, who ran towards the store-room, and looked in through a chink in the wall. When they saw the wolf, they ran back, and the man brought his axe and his wife the scythe. "Keep behind me," said the man, "and when I've given him a blow with my axe, if it does not kill him at once, do you rush in upon him, and cut him to pieces."

Thumbkin, who heard his father's voice, began to cry out: "Dear father, I'm here—I'm inside the wolf's belly!"

Then the father cried out, joyfully: "Heaven be praised, our dear child is found again!" and he told his wife to put away the scythe for fear of hurting Thumbkin. Then he swung his axe, and hit the wolf such a blow on the head, that the savage beast fell down dead; and they brought a knife and scissors, and cut his body open, and drew the little man out. "Oh!" cried the father, "we have been very anxious about you!"

"Yes, father," answered Thumbkin, "I've been far out in the world, and I'm right glad to breathe the fresh air again."

"And where have you been?"

"Why, father, I've been in a mouse's hole, and in a cow's paunch, and in a wolf's belly; and now I'll stay at home with you."

"And we wouldn't sell you again for all the wealth in the world," cried his parents; and they hugged and kissed their dear Thumbkin, gave him food and drink, and had new clothes made for him,—for his own had been spoilt on his journey.

THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA.

THERE was once a prince, who wanted to marry a princess, but it was to be a real princess. So he travelled about through all the world to find one of the right sort; but everywhere he found something in the way. There were princesses enough, but whether they were real princesses or not, he could not make out. There was always something about them that did not appear quite correct. So he came home, and was quite sorrowful, because he so much wanted to have a real princess.

One evening there was a dreadful storm. It thundered and lightened, and the rain streamed down in a way that was frightful to behold. Then there was a knock at the town-gate, and the old king went down to open it.

There was a princess standing outside the gate. But, oh dear! how terribly wet she looked, out in the rain and the bad weather! The water was running down from her hair and clothes; it ran in at the toes of her shoes, and out again at the heels; and yet she declared that she was a real princess.

"Well, we shall soon see that," thought the old queen. She said nothing, however, but went into a bed-room, took all the mattresses off the bed, and put a pea into the bedstead; then she took twenty mattresses, and laid them upon the pea, and then twenty eider-down feather-beds on the top of the mattresses.

And on that bed the princess had to lie, all night long. In the morning they asked her how she had slept.

"Oh, very badly indeed!" said the princess. "I could

hardly close my eyes the whole night. Goodness knows what had got into the bed! I lay on something hard, that bruised and pressed me so that I am black and blue all over. It is quite horrible!"

Then they saw that this was a real princess, because she had felt the pea, through the twenty mattresses and the twenty feather-beds of eider-down; and nobody but a real princess could be so sensitive.

So the prince took her for his wife, for he knew that he should now have a real princess; and the pea was put in the museum, where it is still, unless some one has stolen it.

And this, you see, is a true story.

THE UNFORTUNATE WIGHT.

WHEN misfortune pursues a man, it will have him wherever he may hide, or how far soever he may flee.

A certain man grew so poor that he hadn't a faggot left for his fire. So he went to fell a tree, but they were all too tall and strong; but deep in the wood he found one to suit him. As he was raising his axe he saw a pack of wolves coming howling out of the thicket. The man threw away his axe and ran till he came to a bridge; but the water had made the bridge rotten; it broke, and he fell into the river. What should he do? In his fright he floundered in the stream, and not being able to swim, began to sink. It happened that two fishermen saw him. One of them swam after him and dragged him ashore. They laid him down in the sunshine by an old wall to dry and recover his strength. But just as he came to himself, and began to thank the fishermen and to tell his story, down fell the wall and crushed him,



THE WREN AND THE BEAR.

ONE day the bear and the wolf were walking together in the wood, when the bear heard a bird singing, and said: "Brother wolf, what bird is that which sings so sweetly?"

"That is a king among birds," said the wolf; "we must bow before him." It was, in fact, the wren.

"If that is the case," said the bear, "I should like to see his royal palace. Come and take me there."

"That's not so easily done as you imagine," replied the wolf; "you must wait till the queen comes."

Soon after, the queen arrived; and both she and the king had food in their mouths, and were going to feed their young ones. The bear was for following them at once; but the wolf said, "No; you must wait till their majesties, the king and queen, are gone again." So they took notice of the hole in which the nest was built, and trotted off.

But the bear could not rest until he had seen the royal palace; and after a little while he went forward again to look. Sure enough, the king and the queen had gone out; and, peering in, he saw five or six little ones lying

in the nest. "Is that the palace?" he asked; "that's a miserable place, and you're not king's children at all, you miserable little creatures."

When all the little wrens heard him talk thus, they were very angry, and cried: "We are not what you say. Our parents are honourable people, and you shall pay for insulting us, you bear." The bear and the wolf were frightened when they heard that, and ran away and went to their dens.

But the little wrens all continued their shouting and clamour, and when their parents brought their food, they said: "We will not touch so much as a fly's leg till you have settled whether we are noble children or not; the bear has been here abusing us."

"Be quiet," answered the old king; "that shall be settled;" and he flew with her majesty the queen before the bear's den, and called in: "Old Bruin! why did you abuse my children? It shall be the worse for you, for there shall be a bloody war about it."

So war was declared against the bear, and all the four-footed animals were called—ox and cow, ass, stag, and doe, and all that ran on the earth; and the wren, on his part, summoned all that flew through the air—not only the birds, great and small, but even the gnats, hornets, bees, and flies, were obliged to come.

When the time had come for the war to begin, the wren sent out spies to learn who was the commanding general of the hostile party. The gnat was the most cunning of his followers. She flew through the woods where the forces of the enemy were assembling, and at length sat down under a leaf on the tree, beneath which the council was being held. The bear stood up and called the fox before him, and said: "Fox, you are the most cunning of all the animals; you shall be general, and lead us on."

"With all my heart!" answered the fox, "but what shall be our signal?" The beasts could not tell; so he continued: "I have a fine long bushy tail, which looks almost like a red plume; when I keep it cocked up in the air, it's a sign that things are going well, and you must

march forward briskly ; but when I let it hang down, then you may run as hard as you can."

When the gnat had heard this, she flew home again, and told the wren about it, word for word.

When the day broke, on the morning when the battle was to be fought, the four-footed beasts came running on with such a noise that the earth trembled ; and the wren with his army came flying through the air, whirring, screaming, and swarming in most dizzying fashion ; and the two sides began to attack one another. But the wren sent the hornet forward, with orders to attack the fox in the rear, and sting him with all her might. When the fox felt the first sting, he started, and kicked out his hind leg ; but he bore the sting, and still kept his tail in the air. At the second attack, he was obliged to lower his ensign for a moment ; and at the third, he could hold out no longer, but gave a shriek, and stuck his tail between his legs. When the beasts saw that, they imagined all was lost, and began to run, each one to his own den ; and thus the birds won the battle.

Then their majesties, the king and queen, flew home to their children, and cried : "Children, be merry, eat and drink to your hearts' content ; we have won the battle!"

But all the young wrens exclaimed : "We will not eat and drink until the bear comes to the nest and begs our pardon, and says that we are honourable children."

So the old wren flew to the bear's den, and cried : "Bruin, you're to go to the nest, to my children, and beg their pardon, and declare that they are noble children ; or else all the ribs in your body shall be crushed."

And the bear crept to the nest, in a great fright, and begged pardon. And then at last the young wrens were satisfied, and ate and drank, and kept up a merry feast till late in the night.



THE JEW IN THE THORNBUSH.

A RICH man once had a man-servant, who had served him faithfully. He was the first up in the morning, and the last in bed at night, and when there was some hard piece of work to be got through, which no one else would attempt, he was always the first to volunteer to do it. Then he never grumbled, but was contented with anything, and always cheerful. When his year of service was over, his master did not pay him any wages; for he thought: "That is the best way; I shall save something by it; and he will not go away, but will stay quietly in my service."

The servant, on his part, said nothing about it, but did his work in the second year as he had done in the first; and when, at the end of that time, he did not yet receive any wages, he bore it quietly, and remained still longer.

When the third year had expired, the master considered

again, and put his hand in his pocket, but he did not bring anything out. Then at last the servant began to speak, and said: "Master, I have served you honestly for three years; be so kind as to give me what is lawfully mine; I wish to go away, to look about me in the world."

"Yes, my dear servant," replied the miserly master, "you have served me zealously, and you shall be suitably rewarded."

Thereupon he put his hand in his pocket, brought out three farthings, and counted them out separately to his servant. "There," said he,—"there is a farthing for you for each year; that is great and liberal pay, such as you would receive from few masters."

The good servant, who knew little about the value of money, took his capital, and thought to himself: "Now, you've plenty in your pocket; why should you plague yourself any longer with cares and with heavy work?"

So he went away, up hill and down dale, singing and springing to his heart's content. Now, it happened that in passing by a bush he encountered a little man, who stepped from behind it, and addressed him with—"Where are you going, brother Lightheart? You don't seem to carry many cares, so far as I can see?"

"Why should I be sad?" answered the servant. "I've plenty of money; I have three years' wages jingling in my pocket."

"How much may there be of your treasure?" asked the little man.

"How much?—three full farthings, well told."

"Listen," said the dwarf. "I am a poor needy man: give me your three farthings. I can't work any more; but you are young, and can easily earn your living."

The servant was a good-hearted fellow; and, pitying the little man, he handed him his three farthings, and said, "Be it so; I shall be able to manage without them."

Then the dwarf said: "Because you have shown your good disposition, I will grant you three wishes—one for each of the farthings; and these three wishes shall be fulfilled."

"Aha!" said the young fellow; "I see you're a magi-

cian. Well, if it is to be so, my first wish is for a blowing tube, with which I hit everything I aim at; my second, for a fiddle, which will set every one dancing who hears it sound when I play upon it; and my third wish is, that when I make a request of any one, he may not be able to deny it me."

"You shall have all that," answered the little man; and he thrust his hand into the bush—and behold! there lay the fiddle and the blow-pipe all ready, as if they had been ordered. The dwarf gave them to the servant, and said: "Whatever you choose to ask for, no man on earth shall refuse."

"What can I desire more?" said the servant to himself; and he marched on more gaily than ever.

Soon afterwards he met a Jew with a long beard, who was standing listening to the song of a bird that sat perched high up, on the top of a tree. "My word!" the Jew was exclaiming—"that such a little creature should have such a powerful voice—if it were only mine!—if some one would only put a little salt on its tail!"

"If that's all," said the young fellow, "the bird shall soon come down;" and he aimed with his blow-pipe, blew, and the bird came fluttering down into the hedge of thorns. "Go, you rogue," said he to the Jew, "and pick up the bird out of the hedge."

"My word!" cried the Jew, "there's always help to be found when needed;" and he went down on all fours, and began to work his way into the bush. When he was just in the middle, among the thorns, the jolly servant was seized with a strange whim that made him take his fiddle and begin to play it. The Jew immediately began to lift up his legs, and to jump about; and the more the young man played, the better went the dance. But the thorns tore the Jew's shabby coat, combed out his beard, and pricked and stung him all over. "My word!" he cried out, "what's the use of fiddling? Pray, leave off, sir; I don't want to dance!"

But the servant would not leave off; for he thought, "You've pricked and stung many people in your time, and now the hedge of thorns shall do the same thing to

you." So he began again to play, and the Jew had to jump higher and higher, till the fragments of his coat remained hanging on the bushes. "Oh, dear! oh, dear!" cried the Jew, "I'll give the gentleman whatever he asks, if he'll only leave off fiddling. I'll give him a whole bagful of gold!"

"If you're so liberal," cried the servant, "I'll leave off playing my music; but I must say that for you—you're a first-rate dancer;" and he took the bag of money, and went his way.

The Jew stood looking after him, and remained silent until the servant was far away and quite out of sight, then he called out with all his might: "You miserable musician, you beershop fiddler! you just wait till I catch you alone! I'll hunt you till the shoes drop off your feet, I will! You worthless rascal, you'll have to put two halfpennies in your mouth before you can say you're worth a penny!" and so he went on, scolding and calling every bad name he could think of. And when he had thus worked off part of his rage, and eased his heart, he ran to the town, to the judge. "My lord judge," he cried, "alas, and woe is me! see how a wicked person has robbed and ill-treated me on the highroad, till a stone of the earth might have been softened and had compassion! My clothes torn! my body scratched and pricked all over! my little fortune stolen, purse and all—all my shining ducats, each one more beautiful than the last! For justice sake, have the fellow thrown into prison."

"Was he a soldier," asked the judge, "who disfigured you in that manner with his sabre?"

"No, indeed," answered the Jew, "he hasn't a naked sword, but he has a blow-pipe hanging over his shoulder, and a fiddle round his neck; the rascal may easily be known by them."

The judge sent his officers out to seek him; and they found the good servant, who had gone on quite slowly, and they found the purse of gold upon him. When he appeared before the court, he said: "I did not touch the Jew, nor did I take his money from him: he offered it to me of his own accord, to induce me to leave off fiddling, because he could not stand the music."

"Not a bit of it," cried the Jew. "He sticks to his lies as flies stick to the wall."

The Judge would not believe the accused, and said: "That's a pretty excuse! no Jew would do such a thing;" and he condemned the good servant to the gallows, for having committed a highway robbery.

As they were leading him away, the Jew exclaimed: "Ah, you rascal! you rogue of a musician! you're going to be rewarded now, according to your merits."

The servant went quietly up the ladder with the hangman; but when he got to the top step, he turned round, and said to the judge: "Grant me one request before I die?"

"Yes, I will," answered the judge, "if you do not beg for your life."

"I don't ask for my life," answered the servant. "I only ask to be allowed to play on my violin, for the last time."

The Jew began crying, in a great fright: "No, no! don't you allow it, don't you allow it!" But the judge said: "Why should I not let him enjoy that short pleasure? I have granted his request, and I will stand to my word." Besides, he could not refuse, because of the gift the young man had, of having all his requests granted.

The Jew cried out: "Oh dear me! oh dear me! tie me up, tie me tight!" Then the good servant took his violin,—arranged it,—and at the first touch of his bow on the strings, every one began to shuffle and to fidget about,—judge, writers, officers of the court, and all; and the man who was going to bind the Jew dropped the cord out of his hand; at the second note they all pointed their toes, and the hangman let the good servant go, and prepared himself for the dance; at the third note all began to jump and dance; and the judge and the Jew were in the foremost row, and jumped highest of all. Very soon, all the people who had come into the market-place from curiosity, joined in the dance—old and young, stout people and thin—all mingled together; and the dogs which had strayed there stood up on their hind legs, and hopped about with the rest. And the longer the musician played, the higher did the dancers jump, so

that they began to knock their heads together, and to cry out lamentably.

At last the judge, quite out of breath, panted : "I'll give you your life, only leave off fiddling."

The good servant let himself be persuaded, put down his violin, hung it round his neck, and came down from the ladder. Then he went up to the Jew, who was lying on the ground, gasping for breath, and said : " You rogue ! confess now where you got the money from, or I'll take my fiddle and begin to play again."

" I stole it, I stole it !" replied the Jew, " but you earned it honestly."

Then the judge ordered them to lead the Jew to the gallows, and to hang him there as a robber.

THE GOLDEN KEY.

ONE winter when the snow was lying deep on the ground, a poor boy had to go out in a sledge and bring home wood. When he had collected enough, he thought that before he went home he would make a fire to warm himself by, because his limbs were stiff with cold. So he swept away the snow and made a clear place, and in a little while he found a little gold key. Picking it up, he began to think that where there was a key there must likewise be a lock ; so he dug into the earth, and presently came to a small iron chest. " I hope the key will fit," he thought to himself, " for, certainly, there must be great treasures in this box." So he looked it over and over, but could not discover any keyhole, till at last he spied one ; but it was so small as to be almost invisible. He tried the key—and lo, it fitted exactly. Then he turned it round, and—we must wait till he has unlocked it and raised the lid, and then we shall hear what wonderful treasures were in the chest.



SNOWY-WHITE AND ROSY-RED.

A POOR widow lived alone in a little cottage, and in front of the cottage was a garden, in which stood two rose trees. One of them bore red and the other white roses, and the woman had two children, who were like the two rose trees; so one of them was called Snowy-white, and the other Rosy-red. They were as good a pair of children, as industrious and persevering, as ever two children

have been in all the world, but Snowy-white was quieter and more gentle than Rosy-red. Rosy-red was fond of roaming about in the fields and meadows, searching for flowers, and catching butterflies ; but Snowy-white would sit at home with her mother, helping her in the household, or reading to her when there was nothing else to do. The two children loved one another so that they always held each other's hands whenever they went out together ; and when little Snowy-white said, "We'll never leave one another," Rosy-red would answer, "Not all our life long ;" and the mother added, "Whatever one of you children has, it should share with the other." They often ran out alone into the woods, to gather redberries ; but no animal did them any harm. On the contrary, they would come towards the children, quite as if they were tame. The timid hare would nibble a cabbage-leaf from their hands, the does grazed beside them, the stag sprang merrily past, and the birds would quietly remain sitting on the branches of the trees, singing away with all their might. No misfortune ever befell them : if they happened to be belated in the wood, and night came upon them, they lay down side by side on the soft moss, and slept till the morning came ; and their mother knew that, and was not disquieted about them.

Once, when they had passed the night in the wood in this way, and the red dawn of morning awoke them, they saw a beautiful child, in a shining white dress, sitting near where they had slept. The child stood up, and looked smilingly at them, but it said nothing, and went away into the wood ; and when they looked round, they found they had been sleeping quite close to an abyss, into which they would certainly have fallen, if they had gone a few steps further in the darkness. Their mother told them this child must have been the angel who watches over good children.

Snowy-white and Rosy-red kept their mother's little cottage so beautifully clean, that it was quite a pleasant place to look at. In the summer Rosy-red looked to the house, and put a nosegay in front of her mother's bed every morning before she awoke, and in the nosegay there

was always a rose from each tree. In the winter Snowy-white lighted the fire, and hung the kettle on its hook over the blaze. The kettle was a brass one, but it shone like gold, it was rubbed so clean. In the evening, when the snowflakes fell, the mother used to say : " Go, Snowy-white, and bolt the door ; " and then they would sit down by the hearth, and the mother put on her spectacles, and read aloud out of a great book, and the two girls listened as they sat spinning ; a little lamb lay beside them on the floor, and behind them, on its perch, sat a white dove, with its head hidden under its wing.

One evening, as they thus sat comfortably together, somebody knocked at the door, as if desirous of being let in. " Rosy-red," said the mother, " make haste and open the door; no doubt it is some wanderer, who wants a shelter for the night."

Rosy-red went and drew back the bolt. She thought at first the visitor was some poor man, but, on the contrary, it was a bear who thrust his great black head in at the door. Rosy-red ran back, screaming loudly: the lamb began to bleat, the dove fluttered up, and Snowy-white hid herself behind her mother's bed. But the bear began to speak, and said: " Don't be afraid; I will do you no harm; I am half frozen to death, and only want to warm myself a little."

" You poor bear," cried the mother, " come and lie down by the fire, only take care you don't scorch your fur." Then she called to Snowy-white and Rosy-red to come out, " for," said she, " the bear won't do you any harm—his intentions are honourable."

So they both came forward; and, by degrees, the lamb and the dove came near, too, and were not afraid of him.

Then the bear said: " Children, please to shake the moss off my fur for me;" and they brought the broom, and swept him all over; and he stretched himself before the fire, and began growling to himself in quite a gratified way. They soon became quite familiar with their clumsy guest, and began to play him all kinds of tricks. They pulled and pinched his fur; they put their feet on his back, and pushed him to and fro, and even took a hazel

rod and beat him ; and when he grumbled, they laughed. The bear let them do as they liked ; but when they played too roughly, he said : “ Spare my life, you children ! ”

“ Snowy-white and Rosy-red,
Don’t kill your lover, or he’ll be dead.”

When it grew late, and the rest went to bed, the mother said to the bear : “ If you like, you may stay where you are, before the fire ; you’ll be sheltered there from the cold, and from the bad weather.”

As soon as it was daylight, the two children let him out, and he trotted away, over the snow, into the wood. From that time the bear came every evening, at the same hour, lay down on the hearth, and let the children pull him about and play with him to their heart’s content ; and they grew so used to him, that the door was not bolted until their black visitor had arrived.

When spring had come, and everything was green in forest and meadow, the bear said one morning to Snowy-white, “ I must go away now, and shall not be able to come again throughout the whole summer.”

“ Where are you going, dear bear ? ” asked Snowy-white.

“ I must go into the wood, and guard my treasures from the wicked dwarfs. In winter, when the ground is frozen hard, they’re obliged to stay down below, and cannot work their way out ; but now, when the sun has warmed and thawed the earth, they break through, and come up to forage about and steal ; and what they once get into their clutches, and carry off into their holes, is not easily brought to the light of day.”

Snowy-white was quite sorry that the bear was going away. She unbolted the door for him, and as the bear pushed his way out, he grazed himself against the latch of the door, and tore his skin ; and Snowy-white fancied she saw gold glittering under his fur, but she was not quite certain. As for the bear, he ran off as fast as he could, and had soon disappeared behind the trees.

Soon afterwards the mother sent the children into the forest to collect firewood. They came to a great tree,

which had been felled and was lying on the ground; and something was struggling in the grass near the trunk, but they could not distinguish what it was. When they drew nearer, they saw a dwarf, with an old wrinkled face and a snowy white beard an ell long. The end of his beard had caught in a cleft in the trunk, and the little man was jumping to and fro like a puppy pulling at a string, not knowing what to do to get loose. He glared at the girls with his red fiery eyes, and cried: "What are you standing there for? can't you come and help me?"

"What have you been about, little man?" asked Rosy-red.

"You silly inquisitive monkey!" answered the dwarf, "I wanted to split that tree, to get little bundles of wood for my kitchen. If we were to use thick logs, the little dishes that we prepare would be burnt, for we don't gobble enormous quantities, like you coarse greedy people. I'd driven my wedge in, and should have got on well enough, but the plaguey wedge was too smooth, and sprang out before I was aware of it; and the cleft in the tree closed so suddenly, that I hadn't time to draw out my beautiful white beard; so now it's caught fast, and I can't get away. Look, now, they're laughing, the stupid milk-faced things! Fie upon you! I detest you!"

The children tried with all their might, but they could not pull out the beard; it was wedged in too firmly. "I will run and bring some people to help you," said Rosy-red.

"You stupid creatures!" screamed the dwarf; "what's the use of calling people? there are too many of you already for my fancy; can't you think of anything better than that?"

"Don't be impatient," said Snowy-white. "I'll manage it for you;" and she took a little pair of scissors from her pocket and cut off the end of his beard.

As soon as the dwarf felt himself free, he seized a sack which he had hidden among the roots of the tree, and which was filled with gold, then he began grumbling to himself: "Rude, unmannly people, cutting off a great bit of my beautiful beard! Plague upon 'em both!" and

then he shouldered his sack and marched off, without so much as looking at the children.

Some time afterwards, Snowy-white and Rosy-red went out to the river, in hopes of bringing home a dish of fish. When they came near the water, they perceived something that looked like a big grasshopper jumping towards the water, as if it were going to plunge in. They ran up, and recognized the dwarf. "What are you about?" said Rosy-red. "Are you going to jump into the water?"

"I'm not such a fool!" squeaked the dwarf. "Don't you see it's this villainous fish that wants to pull me in?"

The little fellow had sat there fishing; and, unfortunately, his beard had been entangled in the line, so that when a great fish came and took the bait soon afterwards, the weak manikin had not the power to draw it out, and the fish being the stronger of the two, was pulling the dwarf into the water. In vain he clutched at the rushes and at tufts of grass—it was of no use; he was obliged to follow the movements of the fish, and was in imminent danger of being drawn in. The girls were just in time to hold him back, and wanted to disentangle his beard from the line; but this was impossible, for beard and line were hopelessly interwoven. There was nothing for it but to pull out the scissors and clip the beard, so that a small portion of it was sacrificed. When the dwarf saw that, he yelled out: "Is that the way, you blockheads, you disfigure people?—not content with clipping my beard the other day, you must go and cut a great bit more off, so that I shall be ashamed to show my face among my friends. I wish you had to run through the world without soles to your shoes!" and he snatched up a sack full of pearls that was lying among the rushes, and, without another word, began dragging it away, and disappeared behind a great stone.

It happened soon afterwards that their mother sent the two girls to the neighbouring town to buy needles, thread, laces, and ribbons. Their way lay across a heath, on whose surface great fragments of rock were scattered here and there. Then they saw a great bird soaring in the air, and wheeling slowly round above them in circles. At

last it came swooping down by a piece of rock not far from them. Directly afterwards they heard a lamentable piercing cry. Running up to see what was the matter, they found their old acquaintance the dwarf, whom the eagle had seized in his talons and was about to bear away. The kind-hearted children at once laid hold of the little man, and struggled with the eagle until he quitted his prey. But when the dwarf had recovered from his fright, he squeaked out, in his little thin voice : "Couldn't you have been a little more gentle with me ? you've been tugging at my little thin coat till it is hanging about me in tatters—stupid, clumsy things that you are !" Then he took up a sack of precious stones and crept into his hole among the rocks. The children were used to his ingratitude ; they continued their journey, and transacted their business in the town.

In crossing the heath on their return, they came suddenly upon the dwarf, who had poured out his sack of precious stones on a clean place on the rock, never expecting to see any one pass so late. The setting sun shone on the glittering jewels, and they glanced and sparkled so beautifully in their different hues, that the children stood still to look at them. "What do you stand there for, with your mouths open, staring ?" cried the dwarf, and his sallow face grew fiery red with anger.

He was going on scolding and abusing them, when a loud growling was heard, and a black bear came trotting out of the wood. The dwarf jumped up in a fright, but could not get back to his hiding-place, for the bear was already too close to him. Then he cried out, in great terror : "Dear Master Bear, pray spare me, and I will give you all my treasures ; look at the beautiful precious stones that are lying there ! Pray give me my life,—what use would such a little skinny fellow as I am be to you ? You would not have a mouthful of me ; but there are those two wicked girls yonder, they're capital feeding for you—fat as young quails ; eat them up, I beg of you." But the bear, instead of paying any attention to this wicked creature's words, gave him such a blow with his paw, that he fell down and never moved again.

The little girls were running away, but the bear called after them : " Snowy-white and Rosy-red, don't be afraid ; wait a moment, and I'll go with you." Then they knew his voice, and stood still ; and when the bear had overtaken them, his skin suddenly fell off, and he stood there as a handsome man, dressed in cloth of gold from head to foot. " I am a king's son," he said, " and had been condemned by the wicked dwarf, who had stolen my treasures, to run about in the woods as a wild bear, till I should be delivered by his death. Now he has received his well-merited punishment."

Snowy-white married the prince, and Rosy-red married his brother, and they divided the great treasures which the dwarf had collected in his cave. The old mother lived for many years, quietly and happily with her children. She took the two rose-trees with her, and they stood before her window, and bore the most beautiful roses, white and red, every year.

THE WASTEFUL GIRL.

THERE was once a young girl who was pretty, but careless and idle. When they made her spin, she set about her work in such a negligent manner, that rather than disentangle the little knots she met with in the flax, she used to break off long pieces and throw them down on the ground about her. Her maid, who was an industrious girl, picked up all these ends of flax, cleared them, spun them very finely, and had a pretty dress made of them.

A youth had asked this careless girl in marriage, and the wedding was about to be celebrated. The evening before the grand day, the industrious servant girl danced in her new gown, and the bride began singing :

" Look at the girl there dancing,
In the shreds I threw away.'



Her bridegroom enquired what she meant, and she told him that with the flax she had thrown away her servant had made herself a dress. When the young man heard that, and saw the industry of the one girl and the wastefulness of the other, he left his betrothed, and chose the servant for his wife.

DOCTOR KNOWALL.

THERE was once a poor peasant, named Crab. One day he carried a load of wood to town in his waggon, drawn by a pair of oxen, and sold it to a doctor for six shillings. As they were paying him the money, the doctor was sitting at his dinner, and when the peasant saw what good things he had to eat and drink, he thought in his heart that he should like to be a doctor too. So he lingered for a little while, and at last asked the doctor, if he could not become a doctor too. "Oh yes," said the doctor, "that's soon done." "What must I do?" asked the peasant.

"First buy an A B C book, one of those that have a Cock-a-doodle-doo on the first page, then turn your waggon and your oxen into money, and procure good clothes, and whatever else is necessary for doctoring. Thirdly, have a sign-board painted with the words: 'I'm Doctor Knowall,' on it, and have it nailed up over the door of your house."

The peasant went and did exactly as he had been told. When he had doctored a little, but not much, some money was stolen from a great rich nobleman. This nobleman soon heard about Doctor Knowall, who lived in such and such a village, and would be sure to know what had become of the money. So the nobleman had his horses harnessed, and drove out into the village, and asked the peasant if he was Doctor Knowall. He answered, "Yes." "Then," said the nobleman, "you must go with me, to get the money that has been stolen." "Oh yes," said the peasant; "but Margery must go too."

The nobleman had no objection. He took them both into the carriage, and they drove away.

When they came to the nobleman's castle, the table was laid for dinner, and the doctor was invited to dine. "Yes," said he, "but Margery, my wife, must come too;"—and he sat down to the table with her. When the first footman came with a dish of delicious meat, the peasant nudged his wife, and said: "Margery, that was the first one," meaning that he was the man who brought the first dish to table. But the footman thought he meant, "that was the first of the thieves;" and as he was really one of them, he was very much frightened, and said to his companions outside: "We shall be in for it. The doctor knows everything; he said I was the first." The second footman did not like to go in at all, but there was no help for it. When he came in with his dish, the peasant nudged his wife, and said: "Margery, that is the second." The footman was frightened like the first, and made haste to get out of the room. The third had no better fortune, for the peasant said again: "Margery, that is the third." The fourth servant had to carry in a covered dish; and the nobleman challenged the doctor to show his skill, and

guess what was underneath the cover. It was a dish of crabs. Now the doctor did not know how to get out of the scrape, and he bemoaned himself, and cried: "Alas! poor Crab that I am." When the nobleman heard that, he cried: "There, he knows it; and he knows too, who has got the money!"

But the servant was horribly frightened, and he kept making signs to the doctor, begging him to come out for a minute. When he came out they all four confessed that they had stolen the money, and offered to give it back, and give him a round sum into the bargain, if he would not betray them; for otherwise, it was a hanging matter. They also took him to the place where the money was hidden. The doctor was satisfied with that, went in again and said to the nobleman: "Sir, I will look in my book to see where the money is hidden."

Now the fifth servant had crept into the oven, and hidden himself, because he wished to hear if the doctor knew anything more. The doctor sat down and opened his A B C book, and kept turning the leaves to and fro, looking for the Cock-a-doodle-doo. Not being able to find it directly, he said: "I know you're in there, and you'll have to come out." Then the man in the oven thought he was meant, and he jumped out in a great fright, and cried: "The man knows everything."

Then Doctor Knowall showed the nobleman where the money was hidden, but did not tell who had stolen it. So he got a great deal of money as a reward from each party, and became a celebrated man.



THE THREE SPINNING-WOMEN.

THERE was once an idle girl who would not spin, and her mother might say what she would, she could not get her to do it. At last one day the mother became angry and

lost all her patience, so that she beat the girl, who began weeping aloud. Now the queen was just driving by, and when she heard the crying, she stopped her carriage, came into the house, and asked the mother why she beat her daughter so that the girl's cries could be heard out in the street. The woman was ashamed to expose her daughter's idleness; so she said: "I cannot get her away from the spinning-wheel, she is always wanting to spin; and I am poor, and cannot provide the flax."

The queen answered: "There is nothing I like so much as spinning, and I am never so happy as when the wheels are whirring. Let your daughter go with me into the palace, I have flax enough, and she shall spin as much as she likes." The mother consented with all her heart, and the queen took the girl with her.

When they came to the castle, she led the girl up stairs and showed her three rooms, which were filled with the finest flax from floor to ceiling. "Now spin me all this flax," said she, "and when you have spun it all you shall marry my eldest son; though you are poor, I don't care for that, your persevering industry will be a sufficient dowry."

The girl was alarmed in her secret soul, for if she had worked every day from morning till evening, till she grew to be three hundred years old, she could not have spun off all that flax. When she was left alone, she began to cry, and sat thus for three days without stirring a finger. On the third day the queen came to visit her, and when she saw that nothing had been done, she wondered; but the girl excused herself by saying she had not yet been able to begin, for grief at the separation from her mother's house. The queen was satisfied with the excuse; but she said before she went away: "To-morrow, you must begin to work."

Being thus left alone again, the girl did not know what to do, and went to the window in a very dejected way. There she saw three women approach. The first of the three had a broad splay foot; the under lip of the second woman was so big, that it hung down over her chin; and the third had an immensely broad thumb to one of

her hands. The three stopped before the window, looked up, and asked the girl what was the matter. She told them of her distress, and they offered to help her." "If," they said, "you will invite us to your wedding, and not be ashamed of us, but call us your cousins, and let us eat at your table, we will spin off the flax for you, and do it in a short time."

"With all my heart," replied the girl. "Pray come in, and begin the work directly."

She let in the three singular women, and made a clear space in the first room, where they sat down and began to spin. The first one drew out the thread and turned the wheel; the second wetted the thread; the third turned the thread and beat with her fore-finger on the table; and at each beat a skein of thread fell on the ground, spun in the first style. The girl hid the three spinning-women from the queen, and every time she came, showed her the quantity of thread that had been spun off; so that the queen could not praise her sufficiently. When the first room was emptied, they went on to the second, and then to the third, which was also cleared in a very short time.

Then the three women took their leave, saying to the girl: "Do not forget what you promised us; it will be for your happiness."

When the girl showed the queen the empty rooms, and the great heap of spun thread, the queen made arrangements for the wedding; and the bridegroom rejoiced in the prospect of having such a clever industrious wife, and praised her very much. "I have three cousins," said the girl, "and as they have done me many kindnesses, I should not like to be forgetful of them in my prosperity; permit me to invite them to our wedding, and let them sit at table with us."

The queen and the prince consented. When the marriage day came, the spinning-women arrived, most comically dressed, and the bride said to them: "Welcome, dear cousins."

"How is it," asked the prince, "that your friends are so ugly?" Then he turned to the one with the great splay

foot, and asked : " How come you to have such a broad foot ? "

" From treading the wheel," she replied, " from treading the wheel."

Again the bridegroom went to the second, and asked : " How came you by that hanging lip ? "

" From moistening the thread," she replied, " from moistening the thread."

Then he asked the third : " What made your thumb so broad ? "

" Twisting the thread," she replied, " twisting the thread."

Then the prince was alarmed, and declared : " My beautiful bride shall never touch a spinning-wheel again." So she got rid of the distasteful employment.

A PUZZLING STORY.

ONCE upon a time three women were changed into flowers, and grew in a field ; but one of them was allowed to go home at night. So once she said to her husband, just as day dawned, and as she was about going back to her companions in the field, and to be re-transformed into a flower : " Come to-day at noon, and break me off, and I shall be free and able to live with you." And thus it was done.

But now the question is : " How did the husband know his wife ? " for all the flowers were like one another, and no difference could be seen. I'll tell you how it was. During the night she spent at home with her husband, the dew fell upon her two companions in the field, and the husband knew which flower was his wife, by there being no dew upon it.



THE FISHERMAN AND HIS WIFE.

THERE was once a fisherman who lived with his wife in a dirty little hovel close by the sea ; and the fisherman went every day to fish ; and he fished and fished.

One day he sat by his line, looking down into the clear water ; and he looked and looked.

Then the line ran out to the bottom of the sea, deep down ; and when he hauled it up, there was a great carp at the end of it. And the carp said to him : " Listen fisherman, I pray you don't kill me. I'm not a carp ; I'm an enchanted prince. Of what use would it be to you to kill me ? You wouldn't find my flesh good ; put me back into the water and let me swim away."

" Well," said the man, " you needn't make so many words about it, I wouldn't think of keeping a carp that can speak." So saying, he set him down in the clear water ; and the carp swam away, leaving a long streak of blood behind him, and the fisherman went back into his hovel to his wife.

" Goodman," said the wife, " have you caught nothing to-day ? "

"No," replied he, "that is, I caught a carp, but he said he was an enchanted prince, so I let him swim away."

"Didn't you wish for anything?" asked the wife.

"No," answered the husband, "what should I wish for?"

"Oh," said the wife, "it's very uncomfortable living in a dirty hovel like ours; you ought to have wished for a pretty little cottage for us. Go back again and call him; tell him we want a little hut; he'll do that for us, I'm certain."

"But," said the man, "what should I go back there for?"

"Why," said the wife, "you caught him, and you let him swim away. He's sure to do it. Go at once."

The man did not care much to go, but he did not want to cross his wife, so he went off to the sea.

When he came there, the sea was all green and yellow, and not so calm, by a great deal, as it had been. He went and stood on the shore and said:

"Oh, fish in the sea, pray listen to me,
For my wife won't let be, as I'd have it be."

The carp came swimming up, and said: "What does she want?"

"Oh," said the man, "I caught you just now, and my wife says I ought to have wished for something. She don't like to live in our hovel any longer; she wants a hut."

"Go home," said the carp, "she has one already."

So the man went home, and his wife was no longer in the hovel; but a cottage stood in its place, and she was sitting in front of the door, on a bench. Then his wife took him by the hand and said: "Just come in and look. Is not this much better?"

They went in; and in the cottage there was a little passage, and a pretty little parlour and bed-room, in which their bed stood, and a kitchen and a larder, all of the best kind, with utensils provided in abundance, tin-ware, and brass-ware, and everything that is necessary. And there was also a little yard with chickens and ducks, and a little

garden full of vegetables and fruit. "See," said the wife: "isn't that nice?"

"Yes," answered her husband, "we'll stay here, and live very happily." "We'll consider about that," said his wife.

So they had their supper and went to bed.

Things went on well enough for a week or a fortnight. Then the wife said: "Listen, husband—this cottage is too small, and both the yard and garden are too confined; the carp might give us a larger house. I must live in a great stone castle. Go to the carp, and ask him to give us a castle."

"Ah wife," said the man, "this cottage is quite good enough; what should we want to live in a castle for?"

"Nonsense," replied the wife; "just you go to the carp, he can very well do that."

"No, wife," said the man, "the carp has just given us this cottage; I don't like to go to him again. He might be angry at it."

"Just you go," cried the woman, "he can do it, and he'll do it willingly; just you go."

The man's heart was heavy, and he objected to go; he kept whispering to himself: "It's not right;" but he went, for all that.

When he came to the sea-shore, the water was dark blue and violet in colour, and grey and thick, and no longer green and yellow; but it was still calm. So he stood by the margin, and said:

"Oh, fish in the sea, pray listen to me,
For my wife won't let be, as I'd have it be."

"Well, what does she want?" said the carp.

"Oh," said the man, half frightened, "she wants to live in a stone castle."

"Go home," said the carp, "she's standing before the door now."

So the man went away, thinking to go home. But when he came there he saw a great stone palace, and his wife stood on the steps, about to go in; and she took him by the hand and said: "Do you come in with me." So

he went in with her ; and in the palace was a vestibule all inlaid with marble, and there were a number of servants who threw open the great doors, and the walls were all shining and covered with beautiful colours ; and in the rooms were gilded chairs and tables in abundance, and chandeliers of crystal hung from the ceilings ; and there were carpets in all the halls and chambers ; and the tables were loaded with costly viands and rare things, till they looked ready to break. And behind the house there was a great court-yard, with stables, and horses, and cows, and magnificent coaches ; and there was a great and beautiful garden, with the most splendid flowers and the rarest fruit-trees ; and a park more than two miles long, in which were stags, and roes, and hares, and everything a man could wish for. "Well," said the wife, "and isn't this fine ? "

"Oh yes," answered the man, "and it shall remain so. We'll stay in the beautiful castle, and be contented."

"We'll consider of that," said his wife ; "and first we'll sleep upon it." And with that they both went to bed.

The next morning the wife awoke first. It was just day, and from her bed she could see the glorious country lying stretched out before her. Presently her husband began to stir. Then she pushed him in the side with her elbow and said : "Husband, get up, and come with me to the window. See, might we not be kings over all this country ? Go to the carp, and say we want to be kings."

"Oh wife ! " said the man, "why should we want to be kings ? I don't want to be king."

"Well," said the wife, "if you don't want to be king, I do. Go to the carp, and say I must be a king."

"Ah wife ! " cried the man, "why should you want to be king ? I can't tell him that."

"And why not ? " retorted the woman. "Just you go at once, for I must be king."

The man went away, and was quite concerned because his wife wanted to be king. "That's not right ; I'm sure it's not right," thought the man ; and he determined not to go ; but he went after all.

And when he came to the sea, it was of a dark grey colour, and turbid, and was fermenting from below, and exhaled quite a fetid odour. And he stood by the shore and said :

"Oh, fish in the sea, pray listen to me,
For my wife won't let be, as I'd have it be."

"What does she want?" asked the carp. "Oh," said the man, "she wants to be king."

"Go home with you," said the carp, "she has her wish."

Then the man went home. And when he came near the castle, he saw that it had grown very much larger; and there was a great tower to it, with beautiful sculpture; and the sentry stood before the gate, and there were a great number of soldiers, and a band, with drums and trumpets. And when he came into the palace, everything was of pure marble and gold, and velvet covers to the chairs and tables, with great gold tassels. Then the doors of the hall flew open, and showed the whole splendour of a court; and his wife was sitting on a lofty throne of gold and diamonds, and had a great golden crown on her head, and in her hand a sceptre of pure gold and precious stones; and on each side of the throne stood six maids of honour, all in a row, and each of them was a head shorter than her neighbour. Then he went up to her, and said : "Well wife, so you're king now?"

"Yes," she answerd, "I'm king now."

He stood for a time looking at her, and then said: "Ah, wife, how capital that is, that you're a king; now we won't wish for any thing more."

"Not at all husband," answered the wife, and she became quite agitated. "I'm getting tired of this, and can't bear it any longer. Go to the carp; I'm king now, and should like to be emperor."

"Oh, wife," said the man, "why do you want to be emperor?"

"Husband," said she, "go to the carp. I will be emperor."

"But, wife," cried he, "the carp can't make you an

emperor, and I don't like to speak to him about it. There's only one emperor in the empire; the carp can't make an emperor, indeed he can't."

"What!" cried the woman. "I'm a king, and you're only my husband; will you be off directly? Go at once; if he can make me a king, he can make me an emperor too; and I absolutely will be emperor. Go directly."

He was obliged to go. But as he went, he felt quite afraid, and as he walked on, he thought: "This is sure not to end well. To be an Emperor! It's too impertinent, and the carp will be tired at last."

Thinking thus, he came to the sea. But the sea was quite black and thick, and it boiled up from below, so that the bubbles burst on the surface, and the wind ruffled it, and raised large waves, and the man felt afraid. But he stood by the shore and said:

"Oh, fish in the sea, pray listen to me,
For my wife won't let be, as I'd have it be."

"What does she want?" asked the carp.

"Alas," answered the man, "my wife wants to be Emperor."

"Go home," replied the carp, "she is Emperor already."

So the man went back; and when he got home, all the palace was of polished marble, with alabaster statues and gold decorations. Before the gate the soldiers were marching to the braying of trumpets, and the beating of drums and cymbals; and inside the palace, barons and counts were walking up and down, just as servants; they opened the doors to him, which were of pure gold. And when he had gone in, he saw his wife sitting on a throne, made of one single piece of gold, thousands of feet high; and she had a great golden crown on, three yards high, and set round with brilliants and carbuncles; and in one hand she held the sceptre, and in the other the orb; and in two rows on each side of her, stood her guards, each man smaller than his neighbour, from the greatest giants, ever so many feet high, to the smallest dwarf, not bigger than my little finger. And before her stood a number of princes and dukes.

The man went and stood amongst them, and said :

" Wife, are you emperor now ? "

" Yes," said she, " I'm emperor."

So he went and looked at her well ; and when he had contemplated her for some time he said : " Ah wife, how splendid that is, that you should be emperor ! "

" Man ! " said she, " what are you standing there for ? I'm emperor now, but I also want to be pope ; so do you go to the carp."

" Oh wife," said the man, " what is it you're asking ? You can't be pope. There's only one pope in Christendom ; the carp can't do that for you."

" My good man," said she, " I will be pope. Go quickly, for I must be pope this very day."

" No, wife ;" answered the man, " I don't like to tell him that—that won't do—that's too strong ; the carp can't make you a pope."

" What nonsense, man ;" said she, " if he can make me emperor, he can make me pope. Go away at once. I'm emperor, and you are only my husband ; will you go directly ? "

Then he was frightened, and went. But he felt quite faint, and trembled and shook, and his knees knocked together. And the wind was moaning over the land, and the clouds were driving, and the horizon was overcast towards the west ; the leaves rustled in the trees, and the water rose and hissed as if it had been boiling, and splashed against his shoes ; and from afar he saw the ships firing signals of distress, as they tossed and knocked about upon the waves. But still the sky was a little blue in the middle, but at the sides it was all lurid and copper-coloured, as if at the approach of a terrible storm. So he went timidly up, and said as he stood trembling :

" Oh, fish in the sea, pray listen to me,
For my wife won't let be, as I'd have it be."

" What does she want ? " asked the carp.

" Oh ! " said the man, " she wants to be pope."

" Just go home, she's pope already," said the carp.

So he went home. And when he came there, it was

like a great church surrounded by a number of palaces. The people were crowding in ; the interior was all lit up with a thousand candles, and his wife was dressed all over in gold, and sitting on a much higher throne than the last one, and she had three golden crowns on her head. A number of the high dignitaries of the church were standing round her, and on each side of her there was a row of lights, of which the greatest was as tall and thick as the biggest tower, and the smallest no larger than a little rush-light ; and all the emperors and kings were on their knees before her, kissing her slipper.

"Wife," said the man, as he looked at her, "are you pope, now ?"

"Yes," she said, "I'm pope."

So he went and had a good look at her, and she shone so, that it was like looking at the bright sun. When he had looked at her for some time, he said :

"Wife, how capital that is, that you're pope." But she was as stiff as a post, and never moved or stirred.

Then he said : "Wife, now be content, now that you're pope, for now you can't be anything higher."

"I'll think about that," said the wife. And with that they went to bed. But she was not contented—ambition would not let her sleep, and she was always thinking of what she might yet become.

The husband slept soundly and well, for he had run about a good deal the day before ; but the wife could not go to sleep at all, and kept throwing herself from side to side the whole night long, and kept on considering what she might yet become, and could think of nothing. In due time the sun began to rise ; and when she saw the morning red, she sat up in bed and looked at the light ; and when she saw through the window the sun rising up, she thought : "Ha, could not I command the sun and the moon to rise ? "

"Husband," she said, and gave him a dig with her elbow in the ribs, "wake up—go to the carp, and tell him I want to control the sun and moon."

The man was still half asleep ; but he was so frightened that he fell out of bed. He thought that he had misunder-

stood her, so he rubbed his eyes and cried : " What was it you said, wife ? "

" Husband," said she, " if I can't order the sun and the moon to rise, and have to look on and see them rise, I can't stand it ; and I shan't have an hour's quiet, because I can't have them rise when I want."

And she looked at him in such a terrible way, that he felt a shudder run right over him.

" Go directly," she cried, " I want to be master of the sun and moon."

" Alas, wife ! " said the man, and he fell down on his knees before her ; " the carp can't do that. He can make you emperor and pope,—just reflect, I beg of you, and remain pope."

Then she fell in a passion, and her hair fluttered about her head in disorder, and she tore her clothes, and she gave him a great kick, and screamed :

" I can't bear it any longer, I can't bear it any longer. Will you be off ! "

So he hurried on his clothes, and ran off like a man demented.

Without, there was a great storm roaring and rushing, so that he could hardly stand on his feet ; houses and trees were torn down, and the hills shook, and great fragments of rock rolled down into the sea, and the sky was as black as pitch ; it thundered and lightened, and the sea rose in great black billows as high as mountains and church steeples, and each wave was capped with a wreath of white foam. Then he cried out, though he could not hear his own words for the tumult :

" Oh, fish in the sea, pray listen to me,
For my wife won't let be, as I'd have it be."

" Well, what does she want ? " asked the carp.

" Oh," said he, " my wife wants to be master of the sun and moon."

" Just go home," said the carp, " she's back in the old hovel already."

And there they have remained to this very day.



JACK IN LUCK.

JACK had served his master for seven years, when he said : " Master, my time is up ; I should like to go home to my mother. Pay me my wages."

His master answered : " You have served me truly and well, and your wages shall be in proportion to your ser-

vice." And he gave Jack a lump of gold as big as his head.

Jack pulled his handkerchief from his pocket, wrapped up the lump of gold in it, slung it on his shoulder, and set out on his way home. As he walked gaily along, putting his best leg foremost, a rider came in view, trotting merrily on a strong horse. "Oh," said Jack aloud to himself, "it's a fine thing to ride on horseback! one sits there as if on a chair, without knocking one's feet against the stones, or wearing out one's shoes, and one gets along without knowing how!"

The rider, who overheard these words, stopped his horse, and called out to him: "Why, Jack, what are you going on foot for?"

"I'm obliged to do it," answered he; "I've got to carry a great lump home. It's gold, certainly; but it's very heavy on my shoulders for all that."

"If you like," said the rider, "we can change places. I'll give you my horse, and you shall give me your lump."

"With all my heart!" cried Jack. "But I give you notice, it's a desperate weight to carry."

The rider alighted, took the gold, and helped Jack to mount into the saddle, and gave Jack the bridle. "Now," said he, "if you want to go very fast, you've only to click with your tongue, and to cry, 'Gee, Gee.'"

Jack was as delighted as possible at finding himself on horseback, riding along so grandly. After a minute or two, he thought he would like to go a little faster, so he began to click with his tongue, and to cry, "Gee, Gee." On hearing this, the horse burst into a hard trot, and before Jack knew where he was, he was thrown off, and lying in a ditch which separated the field from the high road. The horse would certainly have run away, had it not been stopped by a peasant, who came along driving a cow before him. Hans picked himself up, and stood on his feet. He was in rather an ill humour, and said to the peasant: "That's bad sport, riding, especially on a jade like this, that kicks and throws one off, so that one may break one's neck. I sha'n't get up on him again, I know

that. How much better it is to have a cow, like yours there, behind which one can walk quietly and steadily, and be sure of having milk, butter, and cheese, every day. What would I not give to have such a cow!"

"Well," said the peasant, "if you'd think it such a great favour, I'll let you have the cow for your horse." Jack, in great glee, closed with the offer, and the peasant mounted the horse and rode away as fast as he could.

Jack drove his cow quietly before him, and mused on his lucky bargain. "If I've only a morsel of bread," he thought,—"and that I can hardly help having,—I shall never be without butter and cheese to eat with it, as often as I wish; when I'm thirsty, I can milk my cow and drink the milk. What can a man's heart want more?"

At the first inn he came to he halted; ate up, in great glee, all the provisions he had with him, both for dinner and supper, and spent his last two farthings in the purchase of half a glass of beer. Then he drove his cow forward towards the village where his mother lived. The heat became more intense the nearer noon came, and Jack was crossing a heath over which he would have to march for at least another hour. He grew so hot at last that his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth for very thirst. "I can find a remedy for that," thought Hans; "now I'll milk my cow and refresh myself with the milk."

He bound the cow to a tree; and, as he had no bucket, he put down his leather cap to catch the milk; but, exert himself as he would, he could not squeeze out a drop. And as he went about the business rather clumsily, the impatient animal at last gave him such a kick on the head with her hind leg, that he tumbled down, and for a time could not at all make up his mind as to where he was.

Fortunately a butcher happened to come that way, with a young pig on a hand-cart. "What tricks are you playing there?" he cried, as he helped Jack on his legs. Jack told him what had happened. The butcher handed him his bottle, and said: "There, take a drink; it will do

you good. I suppose the cow would not give any milk ; she is an old beast—fit for nothing but the waggon or the shambles."

"Indeed," said Jack, rubbing his hands through his hair, "who would have thought of that now ! It's a good thing, certainly, to have a beast like that to kill, for you get a lot of meat. But I don't care much about cow-beef, it isn't juicy enough for me. If I had a little pig, now, like yours ! That has a different kind of taste, and one can make sausages of it, into the bargain ! "

"I tell you what, Jack," said the butcher, "as a favour to you, I'll make an exchange, and let you have my pig for your cow."

"Bless you for your friendliness," said Jack ; and he gave up his cow to the butcher, who in return untied the piggy from the hand-cart, and gave Jack the string with which it was tied by the leg.

Jack continued his journey, thinking how everything happened according to his wish ; for if any cross accident happened to him, it was sure to be put right again directly. Presently a boy overtook him, carrying a goose under his arm. They wished each other good day, and Jack began talking about his good fortune, and the lucky exchanges he had made. The boy told him that he was carrying home the goose for a christening feast. "Just you lift her," he said, taking her by the wings, "and feel how heavy she is. To be sure, they've been fattening her for the last eight weeks. I can tell you, whoever has a bit of her for dinner will have to wipe the grease from both sides of his mouth."

"Yes, indeed," said Jack, after weighing the goose, "she's heavy enough ; but the pig isn't a bad bit, either."

The boy shook his head, and looked cautiously all around. "Do you know," he began, "I don't think that everything's right about your pig. In the village through which I've come, the constable had just had one stolen from his sty ; I'm afraid it's the very one you've got there at the end of your string. They've sent people out in search of it ; and it would be a bad job if they were to catch you with the pig ; the very best that would happen

to you would be that they'd lock you up in the black hole!"

Jack began to feel quite frightened. "Do, pray," he said, "help me out of the scrape; you know how to manage better than I should; so pray take my pig, and let me have your goose."

"Its rather a hazardous business," said the boy, "but I should not like you to get into trouble through me." So he took the cord in his hand, and drove the pig quickly away, on a by path; and our good Jack, relieved of his care, trudged merrily towards home with the goose under his arm. "When I think of it," he said, "I'm a winner by this exchange. First, I get a good roast; then all the fat that will drip out, which will find us in dripping for a quarter of a year; and then the beautiful white feathers, they'll do to stuff a pillow, on which I shall sleep without rocking. How rejoiced my mother will be!"

He had already passed through the last village he had to traverse on his way home, when he encountered a knife-grinder, with his wheel; the wheel was humming merrily, and the grinder sang:—

"Grind knives, grind scissors, my wheel doth go!
I never need care how the wind may blow."

Jack stood still and watched him working. At last he addressed the knife-grinder, and said: "You seem very well and merry at your grinding?"

"Yes, yes," answered the knife-grinder, "handiwork has a golden floor. To be a good knife-grinder, is to be a man who finds money in his pocket whenever he puts in his hand. But where may you have bought that fine goose?"

"I haven't bought it at all; I got it in exchange for a pig."

"And the pig?"

"I got that in exchange for a cow."

"And the cow?"

"Was given me for a horse."

"And the horse?"

"I took it in exchange for a lump of gold as big as my head."

"And the lump of gold ?

"That was my wages, for seven years' service."

"You've always managed your business very well, I see," said the grinder; "now if you can only contrive to have some money dancing in your pocket every morning when you get up, your fortune will be made."

"But how am I to set about that ?" asked Jack.

"You must become a grinder like me ; for that you only require to have a whetstone, the rest comes by nature. I've a whetstone here ; it's a little the worse for wear, I grant you ; but then I don't want anything for it, beyond your goose ; are you content ?" "How can you ask me ?" cried Jack. "If I have money whenever I put my hand in my pocket I shall be the happiest man alive, and shall not need to care for anything." And he handed over his goose and received the whetstone in exchange.

"See here," said the grinder, picking up a common great flintstone, which was lying on the ground beside them, "here you have a famous stone into the bargain, which will do capitally for beating upon ; you can beat your old nails straight upon it. Take it and keep it carefully."

Jack took up the stone and went on with a light heart ; and his eyes sparkling with joy. "I must have been born with a silver spoon in my mouth !" he cried, "everything I try turns out well. I must have been born in a lucky hour !"

Nevertheless, as he had been on his legs since day-break, he began to feel weary ; hunger also plagued him, as he had eaten up all his stock at once, in his joy at obtaining the cow. At last he could not get on without difficulty, and had to stop every minute ; the stones also began to press him downwards most miserably. He could not help thinking how pleasant it would be if he had not to carry them just then. He came crawling like a snail to a wayside well, to rest there, and refresh himself with a draught of clear water, but for fear of damaging the two stones in sitting down, he placed them carefully beside

him on the edge of the well. Then he sat down, and was bending forward to drink, when by accident he gave the stones a slight push, so that they both went plumping down. When Jack had, with his own eyes, seen them disappear, he jumped up joyfully, and with tears in his eyes, uttered a fervent thanksgiving for having been graciously relieved of the heavy stones, the only thing which caused him any annoyance, without being obliged to reproach himself for throwing them away. "There is not," he shouted, "anyone so happy as I am, under the sun!" And with a light heart, and relieved from every burden, he ran on till he was safe at home with his mother.

THE LITTLE SHEPHERD BOY.

THERE was once a little shepherd lad, who had become famous far and wide for the clever answers he made to every question. The king of the country heard of this boy, but would not believe the report made of him, so the shepherd boy was ordered to come to court. On his arrival the king said to him: "If you can answer me each of the three questions I am going to put to you, I'll bring you up as my own child, and you shall live in the palace here with me."

"What are the three questions?" asked the boy.

"The first is: How many drops of water are there in the sea?"

"My lord king," answered the shepherd boy, "cause all the waters on the earth to be stopped that not one drop shall run into the sea till I've done counting, and then I will tell you how many drops there are in the sea."

The king said: "The second question is: "How many stars are there in the sky ? "

"Give me a large sheet of paper," said the boy ; and with a pin he made so many little holes in the paper, that no one could distinguish or count them, and whoever looked at them had his eyes dazzled by their number. When he had done this, he said: "There are as many stars in the sky, as there are holes in this paper ; count them." But nobody could do it.

Then the king said: "The third question is, How many moments are there in Eternity ? "

"In Lower Pomerania is the adamantine mountain, which is one mile high, one mile broad, and one mile deep. Once in every thousand years a bird comes to the mountain, and rubs his beak against it ; and when the whole mountain shall have been rubbed away, then the first moment of eternity will be past."

Then said the king: "You have answered the three questions like a wise man, and you shall live with me in my palace, and I will bring you up as my child."



THE UNGRATEFUL SON.

ONE day a man was sitting with his wife before their door. They had before them a roast chicken, on which they were preparing to refresh themselves. Suddenly the man saw his old father coming towards him. Then he made haste to hide the chicken, so that he might not have to give any to the old man. As for the father, he only drank a draught and went away.

Immediately the son went to look for the dish to put it back on the table, but the roast chicken had changed into a great toad, which sprang at him, and fixed itself

upon his shoulders for ever. When they tried to take it away, the horrid creature darted venomous glances at all who approached, as if it intended to throw itself upon them, so that no one dared come near it. The ungrateful son was condemned to feed it, for fear it should eat him up; and so he passed the rest of his days wandering miserably to and fro on the earth.

THE HEN ROOST.

THERE was once upon a time a magician who collected a great number of people round him to see him perform his wonderful tricks. Among other marvels, he had an old hen brought forward, and this hen raised a heavy beam for a roost, as if it had been as light as a feather. But among the spectators was a girl who had found a four-leaved shamrock, and this made her so wise that no trick could deceive her. She could see that the pretended beam was only a straw. So she called out: "Don't you see, good people, that the hen is carrying not a beam, but a straw?" and when she said this, the enchantment vanished, and the spectators, seeing the truth, chased away the magician with derision and scorn.

Some time after this the girl was to be married, and she walked in great state over the fields towards the church, decked out in a handsome dress. Suddenly she came to a large swollen stream, with no bridge or plank over it by which she could cross. The bride was now in a difficulty, but she held her dress up, and tried to wade through the water. Just as she came to the middle of the stream, a voice, which was that of the magician, called out in mockery: "Where are your eyes, that you take this for water?" At these words her eyes were opened, and she saw that she was holding up her dress in a field of corn flowers. Thereupon she got laughed at by the spectators in her turn, and so the magician had his revenge.

FREDDY AND CATHARINE-LIZ.

THERE was once a man named Freddy and a woman called Catharine-Liz. They had married one another, and lived together as young housekeepers.

One day Freddy said, "I'm going into the field, Catharine-Liz; when I come back there must be something hot on the table to eat, and a fresh draught to quench a man's thirst."

"You can go, Freddy," answered Catharine-Liz, "and, don't be afraid, I'll do it properly for you."

When the dinner hour approached, she took a sausage out of the chimney, put it into a frying-pan, added butter to it, and set it on the fire. The sausage began to crackle and to sputter. Catharine-Liz stood by it, and held the handle of the frying-pan, cogitating, and she thought, "While the sausage is frying, I might be in the cellar drawing the beer."

So she fixed the handle of the frying-pan firmly, went down into the cellar and drew the beer. The beer began running into the can, and Catharine-Liz watched it run, when suddenly the thought came into her head—"Holloa, the dog above is not fastened up, he might steal the sausage out of the pan, and that would be a fine affair;" and in a moment she had run up the cellar stairs, but Boxer had the sausage already in his mouth, and was dragging it along the ground after him. Catharine-Liz gave chase without a moment's delay, and followed him a good distance into the field, but the dog was swifter than Catharine-Liz, and would not let the sausage go, but carried it with him across the country. "No use crying for what's

gone!" said Catharine-Liz, and as she had run till she was tired, she went home slowly to get cool.

In the meantime the beer had been running out of the cask, for Catharine-Liz had not turned the tap off, and when the can was full, so that there was no room for more, it ran over into the cellar, and did not cease until the whole tub was empty. On the stairs already Catharine-Liz saw what had happened, when she cried, "What am I to do now that Freddy may not see it?" She considered for a while, and at last remembered that a sack of fine corn flour had been standing in their store-room ever since last harvest, and she determined to strew this upon the spilt beer. "Yes," she said, "those who save in due season has something for a rainy day," went into the store-room, carried down the sack, and threw it exactly upon the can of beer, so that the can toppled over, and Freddy's drink was swimming among the rest of the stock on the floor. "That's quite right, where one is the other should be too," said Catharine-Liz, and she scattered the flour all over the cellar, and rejoiced greatly in her work when it was done, and exclaimed, "How neat and clean it looks here!"

At dinner time Freddy came home. "Well, wife," he asked, "what have you prepared for me?"

"Oh, my dear Freddy," answered she, "I wanted to fry a sausage for you, but while I was drawing the beer the dog ran away with it out of the pan, and while I ran after the dog, the beer ran out, and in trying to dry up the beer with the sack of flour I knocked the can over; but make yourself easy, the cellar looks quite neat again now."

"Catharine-Liz, Catharine-Liz," said Freddy, "you should not have done so. Letting the sausage be stolen, and the beer run out, and then wasting our fine flour into the bargain. You should not have done so."

"Yes, Freddy," answered she, "but I didn't know that; you ought to have told me."

The man thought: "If your wife plays such tricks as these you must look out better." Now, he had collected a good sum of money in dollars; he changed them for gold pieces, and these he showed to Catharine-Liz, saying: "See here, these are yellow counters; I'll put them into

a pot and bury them under the cow's manger in the stable; but mind you keep away from them, or it shall go hard with you." And she said: "No, Freddy, I'll be sure not to touch them." Now, when Freddy was gone, there came pedlars, with earthen pots and jars for sale, into the village, and these asked the young wife if she would not deal for anything. "Oh, you good people," said Catharine-Liz, "I have no money, and cannot buy anything; but, if yellow counters are of any use to you, I should like to deal."

"Yellow counters!" said the men. "Why not? Let us see them."

"Then go into the stable and dig under the cow's manger, and you'll find the yellow counters. I am forbidden to touch them."

The rogues went and dug, and found a quantity of gold. Then they packed it up, and ran away, leaving their jars and pots standing in the house,

Catharine-Liz thought she must put the new crockery to some use; and as there was no lack of that kind of ware in the kitchen, she knocked the bottom out of each of the pans, and stuck them up as ornaments on the palings round about the house. When Freddy came home and saw these new decorations, he said: "Catharine-Liz, what have you been about?"

"Why, Freddy, I bought it for the yellow counters which were hidden under the cow's manger. I never touched them myself—the pedlars had to go and dig them up."

"Alas! wife," exclaimed Freddy, "what have you done? Those were not counters, they were gold pieces, and comprised all our fortune. You shouldn't have done that."

"Yes, Freddy," she replied, "but I didn't know that. You ought to have told me."

Catharine-Liz stood and considered for a while, then she said: "Listen, Freddy; we'll get the gold back again. We'll go and pursue the thieves."

"Come along, then," said Freddy, "we'll try it; but take some butter and cheese with you, that we may have something to eat on the way."

"Yes, Freddy, I'll take it with me."

They set out; and because Freddy was the better walker, Catharine-Liz marched after him. "It's all the better for me," she thought; "when we turn round, I shall have a start." Now they came to a mountain, and there were deep ruts in the road on each side of the way. "Now, just see," cried Catharine-Liz, "how they've scratched, crushed, and ill-used the poor ground. It won't be well again as long as it lives." And, in the fulness of her heart, she took her butter and smeared the ruts, right and left, so that the wheels might not hurt them so much; and, as she stooped at her merciful work, one of the cheeses rolled out of her pocket and went careering down the hill. Then said Catharine-Liz: "I've gone the journey once, and don't mean to do it twice. Another may go and call him back again." So she took another cheese and rolled it down. The cheeses did not come back again; so she rolled another down, thinking that perhaps they were waiting for company, and did not like to travel alone. When all these failed to reappear, she said: "I don't know what to make of this; but may be the third has lost his way, and can't find it again, so I'll send the fourth down too, to call them up. But the fourth did not behave any better than the third. Then Catharine-Liz became angry, and threw down the fifth and sixth; and these were the last she had. For a little while she remained watching for them, but when they did not come, she cried: "You're fine fellows to send, on my word; do you think I am going to stay here any longer, waiting for you? I shall go my way, and you can run after me; your legs are younger than mine."

So Catharine-Liz went away and rejoined Freddy, who had stopped still and waited for her, because he wanted something to eat. "Well, give me what you have brought." And she gave him the dry bread.

"Where is the butter and cheese?" asked Freddy.

"Why, Freddy, dear," replied Catharine-Liz, "I've smeared the butter into the ruts; and the cheese will soon be here: one ran away from me, and I sent the others after him to call him back."

Said Freddy: "You ought not to have done this, Catharine-Liz—smearing the butter along the road, and rolling the cheeses down the hill."

"Yes, Freddy, you ought to have told me that."

Then they ate the dry bread together, and Freddy said: "Catharine-Liz, did you secure our house before you left home?"

"No, Freddy; you ought to have told me to do it."

"Then go home and secure the house before we go any further, and bring back something more to eat. I'll wait here for you."

Catharine-Liz went home, and thought: "Freddy don't seem to like butter and cheese; I'll take a bag of hedge-nuts, and a jug of vinegar to drink." Then she bolted the upper flap of the door, but the lower flap she took off the hinges, lifted it on her shoulders, and thought, now that she had secured the door, the house must be safe. Catharine-Liz took her time in returning, and thought: "Freddy will have so much the longer to rest." When she came up with him she said: "Here, Freddy, is the door for you; you can secure the house yourself."

"My stars!" cried Freddy, "what a clever wife I've got: she takes out the lower half of the door, so that every one that chooses may run in, and bolts the upper half. It's too late now to go home again; but, as you have brought the door here, you may carry it further."

"I'll carry the door; but the hedge-nuts and the vinegar jug are too heavy for me. I'll hang those to the door, and the door may carry them."

Now they went into the wood and sought for the rogues, but could not find them. But, as it grew dark at last, they clambered up into a tree, intending to pass the night there. Scarcely were they ensconced there, when up came the fellows who carry away what won't go with them, and find things before they are lost. They sat down just beneath the tree on which Freddy and Catharine-Liz were sitting, made a fire, and set about dividing their booty. Freddy went down on the opposite side, filled his pocket with stones, and wanted to get up again and pelt the thieves to death. But none of the stones

hit them; and the thieves said: "It will soon be day-break, for the wind is shaking down the fir-cones."

Catharine-Liz still had the door on her shoulder, and when it pressed heavily upon her, she thought it must be the fault of the hedgenuts, and said: "Freddy, I must throw the nuts down."

"No, Catharine-Liz, not now," replied he, "they might betray us."

"Oh, Freddy, but I must; they press me so dreadfully!"

"Throw them down, then, in confusion's name." Then the hedgenuts came rolling down among the branches, and the fellows below said: "It's hailing." The door still pressed heavily upon her, and in a little while Catharine-Liz said: "Freddy, I must pour the vinegar away."

"No, Catharine-Liz, you mustn't do that, it might betray us."

"Oh, Freddy, I must, it presses me so dreadfully!"

"Well, then, do it, and a plague upon it." Then she poured out the vinegar, so that the fellows below were sprinkled with it, and they said: "The dew is falling heavily."

At length Catharine-Liz thought: "Can it be the door that weighs so heavily upon me?" and she said: "Freddy, I must throw the door down."

"No, Catharine-Liz, not now, it might betray us."

"Oh, Freddy, I must, it presses me so dreadfully."

"No, Catharine-Liz; be sure you hold fast."

"Oh, Freddy, I am letting it fall."

"Then," replied Freddy, angrily, "let it fall and have done with it."

Then it fell with a mighty crash, and the rogues down below cried out in terror: "It's a demon coming down from the tree!" And they scampered off, leaving everything behind them. In the morning, when the two came down, they found all their money again, and carried it home.



THE YOUNG GIANT.

A PEASANT had a son who was no bigger than his father's thumb. He did not grow; and several years had passed away and he had not increased one hair's breadth in stature.

One day when his father was going out to work in the

fields, the little fellow said to him : " Father, I want to go out with you."

" To go out with me ? " said the father. " You'd only be in our way out in the fields ; and besides, you might easily be lost."

But the little man now began to cry ; and in order to have peace, his father put him in his pocket, and carried him away as he wished. When they came to the place where the father was to work, the peasant set his little son down in a newly turned furrow.

While they were there, a great giant came stalking down from over the brow of the mountain. " Do you see that great bugaboo, yonder ? " cried the father, " he's coming to take you away." He only said it to frighten the little fellow, and make him more obedient ; but the giant had heard the words, and strode up to the furrow in two steps, and seeing the little dwarf, carried him off without saying a word. The father, mute with fear, had no strength to utter a cry. He thought his child was lost, and had no hope of ever seeing him again.

The giant took the little dwarf home and fed him on giant's food ; so the little fellow all at once began to grow and get big, after the fashion of giants. At the end of two years, the giant walked out with him into the woods, and to try him said : " Break off a switch for yourself." The youngster had already grown so strong, that he pulled up a young tree out of the ground, roots and all. But the giant said to himself that the lad had yet some lessons to learn, so he took him home again, and fed him for two years more. By the end of this time the lad's force had increased so greatly, that he could pull up an old tree out of the earth. Even this was not enough for the giant ; he fed the lad two years more, and at the end of these he went into the wood and said to him : " Get a stick for yourself of reasonable size." The young man tore up the biggest oak in the forest, which made a horrible cracking and groaning ; but the effort was mere play to him. " That will do," said the giant, " your education is complete," and he took him back to the spot of earth from whence he had carried him off.

His father was busy ploughing when the young man accosted him, and said : " Well father, your son has grown to be a man."

The peasant cried out in a fright : " No, you are not my son ; I won't have anything to say to you ; go away."

" Yes," said the young man, " I am your son, let me work instead of you. I'll plough as well as you, an better."

" No no, you're not my son, and you don't know how to plough. Be off."

But as he was afraid of the great big fellow, he left his plough, and went away a short distance. Then the young giant, seizing the plough with one hand only, pressed it down with such force, that the ploughshare became deeply imbedded in the earth. The peasant could not refrain from crying out to him : " If you must plough, don't press downward so much ; that makes bad work."

Then the young man unharnessed the horses from the plough, and yolked himself to it, saying to his father : " Go home, and tell my mother to get a plentiful dinner ready for me ; and in the meantime I'll finish ploughing this piece of ground."

The peasant went home, and gave the message to his wife. As for the young man, he finished ploughing the field all alone, and then he harrowed it, dragging two harrows at once. When he had done, he went to the wood and tore up two oak-trees, which he took on his shoulders, and hanging the two harrows to one and the two horses to the other, he carried the whole home to his parents, as if it had been a truss of straw.

When he had got to the court-yard, his mother, who did not know him again, cried out : " Who is this frightful giant ? "

" It's our son," replied the peasant.

" No," she retorted, " our son is no more. We never had one so big as that. Our child was quite small." And addressing him again, she exclaimed : " Go your ways, we will have nothing to do with you."

The young man answered not a word. He put the horses in the stables, gave them some corn and hay, and

did all that was requisite to make them comfortable. When he had done this, he went into the room, sat down upon a bench and said : " Mother, I'm hungry ; is dinner ready ? "

" Yes," she replied, and she set before him two great dishes, quite full of meat, and which would have been enough to keep her and her husband for a week.

The young man had soon eaten it all up, and asked if there was any more. " No," she replied, " that's all we have."

" That's only enough to whet my appetite. I must have something more."

She did not dare to say him nay, and so put a great iron pot full of bacon on the fire, and served it up as soon as it was done. " Ah, that will do," said he, " I see a good mouthful there." And he devoured the whole of it, and yet his hunger was not appeased.

Then he said to his father : " I see very well I shall not find enough to eat here. Only get me a bar of iron, so strong that I can't break it against my knee, and I'll go out into the world to seek my fortune."

The peasant was delighted at the offer. He harnessed his two horses to his waggon, and brought home a bar of iron so great and so thick, that the horses had much ado to drag it along. The young man took it, and—*crick!* he broke it across his knee like a lath, and threw the pieces on each side of him. The father then harnessed four horses, and brought home a bar of iron they could scarcely move. But the son broke it against his knee like the last, and said : " This one, too, is good for nothing. Go and get me a stronger one. At last the peasant harnessed eight horses, and brought home a mass that all the eight could but just drag. When the son had taken it in his hands, he broke off a little piece at the end, and said : " I see very well that you can't procure me such a bar of iron as I require. I shall go out of your house."

So he turned out into the world as a working smith. He came to a village where there was a smith, a great miser, who never gave anything away to any one, but always wanted to keep everything for himself. The young

man presented himself at this man's forge and asked for work. The smith was delighted to see such a powerful young fellow ; for he calculated that he would wield his hammer lustily, and earn his money well. "What wages do you want?" he asked.

"None," replied the workman, "only at the end of each fortnight, when you pay the other men, I am to be allowed to give you two blows with my fist, which you shall be obliged to receive."

The miser was much pleased with the bargain, by which he would save his money. The next day the new workman was to give his first hammer-stroke. When the master had brought the bar of red-hot iron, he let his hammer fall on it with such a crash that the bar was crushed and the iron flew into splinters ; and as for the anvil, it was driven into the earth in such a way that it could never be got out again. Then the master said to him, in anger : " You won't do for me ; you hit too hard. What am I to pay you for the one stroke you have struck ? "

" I only require to give you a little tap ; nothing more."

And he gave him a kick which sent him flying over four waggons of hay. Then he looked out the biggest bar of iron he could find in the forge, and taking it in his hand like a walking-stick, he set out again on his travels.

A little farther on, he came to a farm, and asked the farmer if he did not want a foreman. " Yes," said the farmer, " I want one. You seem to me a sturdy fellow, and one who knows his duty. But how much wages do you want ? " The other replied that he wanted no wages at all, but only required permission to give the farmer three blows, which the farmer agreed to receive. He was delighted with his bargain, for he, too, was a miser.

Next morning there was wood to be brought from the forest. The other farm-servants were up and stirring, but our friend was still lying in his bed. One of them called out to him : " Get up, it is time ; we are going to the forest, and you must go with us." But he answered roughly : " You go first ; I shall be back before you."

The others went to the farmer, and told him that his

foreman was still in bed, and would not accompany them to the forest. The farmer told them to go and call him again, and to order him to harness the horses. But the foreman replied again: "You go first; I shall be back before you."

He remained in bed two hours longer; at the end of that time he got up, gathered two bushels of peas, and prepared himself a mess which he ate quietly, and then harnessed the horses to go to the forest. To get there, he had to pass through a hollow way. He drove his cart through first, and then stopping the horses, he went behind them and blocked up the road with felled trees and bushes, so that no one could get past. As he entered the forest, the others were coming away with their loaded waggons. "Go on, go on," said he; "I shall be home before you." And without going further, he contented himself with pulling up two enormous trees, which he flung on his waggon, and then took the road towards home. When he came to the barrier he had made, he found the other waggons stopping there, unable to get past. "Well," said he, "if you had stayed at home this morning, as I did, you would have had an hour's sleep the more, and would have got home none the later this evening." And as his horses could not get forward, he unharnessed them, put them in the waggon, and taking hold of the pole, dragged it all through like a handful of feathers. When he had got to the other side, he said: "You see I can get out of the scrape quicker than you." And he went on his way without waiting for them. When he got to the yard, he took a tree in his hand, and showed it to the farmer. "Is that not a handsome log?" said he. The farmer said to his wife: "He's a good servant; if he starts later than the rest, he gets back before them."

He served the farmer for a year. When the year was out, and the other servants received their wages, he asked to be allowed to pay himself. But the farmer, horribly frightened at the prospect of the blows he should receive, begged hard to be let off, declaring that he would rather become a servant to his own foreman, and let the latter be farmer in his place. "No," replied he, "I won't be a

farmer; I'm a foreman, and I mean to remain as I am. But what has been arranged must be carried out."

The farmer offered to give him anything he should ask ; but it was all in vain ; he always answered " No." The farmer, not knowing what in the world to do, asked a respite of a fortnight, to find some way out of the difficulty, and the young man granted his request. Then the farmer called together all his servants and asked their advice. After mature consideration, they answered that with such a foreman no one was certain of his life, for that he could kill a man as he would a fly. They were therefore of opinion that he should be let down into the well, under pretext of cleaning it ; and while he was at the bottom, certain millstones which were kept near that place should be thrown down upon his head, so as to kill him on the spot.

This advice pleased the farmer, and the foreman made ready to go down into the well. When he was at the bottom they threw down enormous mill-stones upon him, and thought they had crushed his head ; but he called from below : " Drive away your fowls from up there. They're scratching up the sand, and are throwing grains of it into my eyes ; I'm half blinded with it." The farmer cried : " Hitch, hitch," as if he were scaring fowls away. When the foreman had finished his work and come to the surface, he cried : " Look at my fine collar !" It was the largest of the mill-stones which he was wearing round his neck.

The foreman continued asking for his wages, but the farmer stood out for another fortnight's grace. His counsellors advised him to send the young man to the enchanted mill, to grind his meal during the night ; for no one had got away alive the next morning. This advice pleased the farmer, and he immediately ordered his servant to take eight bushels of corn to the mill, and to grind it during the night, because it was required at once. The foreman put two bushels of corn into his right-hand pocket, and two into his left, and packed the other four in a wallet, two behind and two before ; and thus loaded he set off for the mill. The miller told him that one could grind

there in the daytime, but not at night ; and that those who had ventured to do so had all been found dead the next morning. "I shall not die of it," said he ; "go you to bed, and sleep as soundly as you like." And going into the mill, he began to grind his corn as if nothing were amiss.

Towards eleven o'clock at night he went into the miller's counting-house, and sat down on the bench. An instant afterwards the door opened of itself, and a table came rolling in all by itself, and on it bottles and dishes ranged themselves, filled with good things, without any one appearing to bring them. The stools also posted themselves round the table, and still no one appeared. But at last the young man saw a number of fingers, and nothing else, filling the plates and moving to and fro about over them with knives and forks. As he was hungry, and saw the dishes smoking, he took his seat at the table, and ate to his heart's content.

When he had finished his supper, and the empty plates announced that the invisible guests had done the same, he distinctly heard the noise of blowing out the candles, and indeed they were out all together. Then, in the darkness, he all at once felt something like a box on the ear. Then he said aloud : "If there's any more of this, I'll play at it too." He however received a second, which he returned. This giving and receiving blows continued all night long, and the young giant did not spare his strength at the sport. At daybreak all ceased. The miller arrived, and was astonished to find him still alive. "I've enjoyed myself immensely," said the giant. "I've received some thwacks, but I've returned them."

The miller was delighted, for his mill was disenchanted ; and he wanted to give the giant a quantity of money to show his gratitude. "Money !" said he, "I won't have it—I've more than I want already." And taking his sacks of flour on his back, he went home to the farm, and told the farmer that he had fulfilled his commission and wanted his wages.

The farmer was greatly frightened. He could not remain quiet, but kept walking up and down the room,

and large drops of perspiration stood on his forehead. To get a little air he opened the window; but before he had time to suspect anything, the foreman gave him a blow which sent him flying out of the window into the air, where he continued mounting up and up till they lost sight of him. Then the foreman said to the farmer's wife: "Now it's your turn; the second blow shall be for you."

She cried: "No, no! women ought not to be struck." And she opened the other window, for she, too, was in a perspiration from fear; but she received a blow which sent her up into the air, higher than her husband, because she was much lighter. Her husband called to her: "Come with me;" and she replied: "You come with me; I cannot get to you." And they continued to mount through the air, without being able to rejoin each other; and perhaps they're mounting up still.

As for the young giant, he took his iron bar, and set out again on his journey.



GRANDFATHER AND GRANDCHILD.

THERE once lived a poor man, and he was very old. His eyes were dim, his ear had grown dull, and his knees trembled. When he was at table, he could hardly hold his spoon ; he spilt his soup on the cloth, and sometimes even let a little run from his mouth. His son's wife, and

his son himself, had taken a great disgust at the old man, and at last they banished him into a corner behind the stove, where they gave him a scanty pittance of food in an old earthern porringer. The old man had often had tears in his eyes, and looked mournfully in the direction of the table. One day, the porringer, which his trembling hand could hardly hold, fell to the ground and was broken. The young wife was angry, and broke out in reproaches; he did not dare to reply, but bent his head and sighed. Then they bought a wooden bowl for two farthings, and from that bowl he had to take his food.

Some days afterwards, the son and the daughter-in-law of the old man saw their little boy, a child of four years old, putting together little planks of wood on the ground. "What are you doing there?" asked his father.

"It's a trough," answered he, "for mother and father to eat out of when they are old."

The husband and wife looked at each other for a moment without speaking; then they began to cry, and took the old grandfather back to their table; and in future they always made him dine with them, and were never rude to him again.

THE SPINDLE, THE SHUTTLE, AND THE NEEDLE.

A YOUNG girl had lost her parents when she was very young. She had a god-mother, who lived all alone in a little cottage at the end of the village, and who lived on what she earned by her needle, her spindle, and her shuttle. This good woman had taken the orphan home, and had taught her to work, and brought her up in piety and the fear of God. When the young girl was fifteen years old, her god-mother fell sick. She called the girl to her bedside, and said : " Dear child, I feel that my end is near. I leave you my cottage ; it will protect you against the wind and rain. I also give you my spindle, my shuttle, and my needle, which will enable you to earn your living." Then placing her hand upon the girl's head she blessed her, and said : " Keep your heart pure and honest, and happiness will come to you." Then her eyes closed ; the poor girl went weeping beside her god-mother's coffin, and paid the last duties to her corpse.

After this, she lived all alone, working bravely, at weaving, spinning, and sewing ; and the blessing of the good old woman kept her from all harm. One would have thought that her stock of flax was inexhaustible ; and as soon as she had woven a piece of stuff or made a shirt, a purchaser was sure to come and pay generously for it ; so that not only was she free from want, but had even something to give to the poor.

About this time, the king's son began roaming through the country in search of a wife. He could not choose a

poor one and did not like a rich one. So he said he would choose her who was at the same time the poorest and the richest. On coming to the village where our young girl dwelt, he at once asked, according to his wont, to be shown the poorest and the richest girl in the place. The richest was quickly found; as for the poorest, they told him, it must be the young girl who lived in the lonely cottage quite at the end of the hamlet.

When the prince passed by, the rich girl was sitting dressed in her best, in front of her door; she rose, and went towards him with a profound curtsey. But he looked at her, and without saying a word passed on. He then came to the cottage of the poor girl; she was not at the door, but shut up in her room. He stopped, and looked through the window into the room, which a ray of the sun lighted up. She was sitting at her spinning-wheel, working industriously. On her part she secretly observed the prince looking at her; but she blushed scarlet, and continued spinning with her eyes cast down; only I won't warrant that her thread was quite even. She went on spinning until the prince was gone. So soon as she had lost sight of him, she ran to open the window, saying: "It's so hot here!" and she followed him with her eyes as long as she could perceive the plume on his hat.

At last she sat down again and resumed her spinning. But a rhyme she had often heard her old god-mother sing came into her mind, and she sang:—

"Run without stopping, spindle dear,
See that thou bring my truelove here!"

And what happened? The spindle sprang suddenly from her hands, and rushed out at the door. She followed it with her eyes, quite stupefied with wonder. It ran and danced across the fields, leaving a thread of gold behind it. In a little while it was too far for her to see. Having no spindle, she took her shuttle, and began to weave.

The spindle ran on and on, and by the time its thread was all unwound, it had overtaken the prince. "What do I see?" he cried. "This spindle wants to conduct me somewhere." And turning his horse he galloped

back, guided by the golden thread. The young girl continued working, singing the while:—

“Run to meet him, shuttle dear;
See thou guide my bridegroom here.”

Then the shuttle sprang from her hands, and hopped out at the door. But arrived on the threshold, it began to weave the most splendid carpet ever seen. On each side were garlands of roses and lillies, and in the centre green vines grew out of a golden ground. Hares and rabbits were represented jumping in the leaves, and stags and squirrels looked out from among them. On the branches were perched birds of a thousand hues, who only wanted voice to make them perfect. The shuttle went on running, and the carpet-weaving advanced marvellously.

As she had lost her shuttle, the young girl took her needle, and began singing:—

“He's coming, he's coming, my needle dear;
See thou that all things are ready here.”

Then the needle jumped from her fingers, and began running round the room as quick as lightning. It was as if little invisible spirits had taken up the matter; the tables and benches covered themselves with green tapestry, the chairs were dressed in velvet, and si'en hangings appeared on the walls.

Scarcely had the needle pierced its last stitch, when the girl saw the white plume of the prince's hat pass the window. He had been brought back by the golden thread. He entered the room, stepping over the carpet, and there he saw the young girl, still dressed in her poor clothes, but shining among all this sudden splendour, like a wild rose on a bush. “Thou art at once the poorest and the richest,” he cried, “Come, thou shalt be my wife.” She held out her hand to him without replying. He gave her a kiss, lifted her on his horse, and carried her off to the court, where their wedding was celebrated with great rejoicings.

As for the spindle, the shuttle, and the needle, they were carefully preserved in the royal treasury.



THE HARD-HEARTED SISTER.

THERE were once two sisters. One of them was rich and childless ; but the other was a widow with five children, and so poor, that she wanted bread for herself and her family. Pressed by want, she went to her sister and said : " My children are starving ; you are rich ; give me a morsel of bread." But the rich woman had a heart of stone. She replied : " We have nothing in the house," and harshly sent her away.

Some hours afterwards, the husband of the rich sister came home. When he began to cut the bread for the dinner, he was astonished to see drops of blood fall out, at

the first cut with the knife. His wife, in alarm, told him all that had happened. He ran hastily to the assistance of the poor widow, and carried to her all that had been prepared for his own meal. When he left her to return home, he heard a great uproar, and saw a column of flame and smoke rising towards the sky. It was his own house burning. All his wealth was lost; and his wicked wife was uttering doleful cries, and saying: "We shall die of hunger."

"God provides for the unfortunate," replied her good sister, who had hastened to her.

She who had been the rich woman, was obliged now to beg in her turn. But no one had compassion on her. Forgetting the unworthy treatment she had endured, her sister divided with her the alms she herself received.





THE PRESENTS OF THE GNOMES.

A TAILOR and a smith were once travelling together. One evening, just as the sun had gone down behind the mountains, they heard from afar the sound of music, becoming louder and louder as it approached. It was a strange sound, but so pleasant that they forgot all their fatigue, and went with rapid steps towards the direction from whence it came. The moon had already risen, when they came to a hill, on which they found a crowd of little men and little women, dancing round and round with a joyous air, holding each others hands; they were singing in most enchanting fashion, and this was the music the travellers had heard. In the midst stood an old man, a little taller than the rest, clad in a striped garment of various colours, and wearing a white beard that fell down over

his breast. The two companions stood rooted to the ground with astonishment, watching the dance. The old man made a sign that they should enter the circle, which the little dancers opened for them. The smith stepped in without hesitation; he had somewhat a round back, and, like all humpbacked men, was bold. The tailor was a little frightened at first, and kept in the background; but when he saw that all went merrily, he took courage, and entered the circle likewise. The ring closed immediately, and the little people began dancing and singing, and taking prodigious leaps. But the old man seized a great knife which he wore at his girdle, and began to sharpen it; and when he had made the edge keen, he turned towards the strangers. They were frozen with horror; but they were not kept long in suspense. The old man seized the blacksmith, and in a moment had shaved off his hair and beard; then he did the same for the tailor. When he had done, he clapped them on the shoulder in a friendly manner, as if to tell them they had done well in submitting quietly to be shaved; and then their fears were quieted. Then he showed them a heap of charcoal not far off, and made signs to them to fill their pockets with it. Both obeyed, without knowing exactly what to do with these pieces of charcoal, and continued their journey, in order to find a shelter for the night. When they reached the valley, the bell of a neighbouring convent tolled the hour of midnight. At once the song ceased, everything disappeared, and they saw only the hill lit up by the moon.

The two travellers found an inn, and went to bed on a heap of straw, in their clothes; but they were so tired that they forgot to empty their pockets of the charcoal. The weight of some unaccustomed burden that oppressed them woke them earlier than usual. They clapped their hands to their pockets, and could hardly believe their eyes when they saw them filled, not with bits of charcoal, but with ingots of pure gold. Their beards and hair had also grown again marvellously. They were now rich; only that the smith, being of a covetous nature, had stuffed his pockets better, and had double as much gold as the tailor.

But an avaricious man always wants more than he has. The smith proposed to the tailor to wait a day longer, and to return in the evening to the old man to gain new treasures. The tailor refused, saying: "I have enough, and I am content. I only want to set up for myself in my trade, and to marry the girl of my heart, and I shall be a happy man." However, to please the other, he consented to wait another day.

In the evening the smith took two sacks on his shoulder, so that he might carry away a good load, and set out towards the hill. As on the previous night, he found the little people singing and dancing, and the old man shaved him, and signed to him to take his charcoal. He did not hesitate to fill his pockets and his sacks as full as they would hold, and went gleefully back to the inn, and lay down in his clothes. "When my gold begins to weigh heavy," he said to himself, "I shall feel it," and he went to sleep at last, in the pleasant hope of waking up next morning as rich as Crœsus.

As soon as he had opened his eyes, his first care was to search his pockets; but, fumble as he might, he could find nothing in them but black bits of charcoal. "At least," he thought, "I have the gold I gained the other night." He went to see; but, alas! that gold had been changed back into charcoal. He clapped his blackened hand to his head, and felt it was as bare and shaven as his chin. But even this was not the worst of his misfortune: he soon saw that the lump he had on his back was balanced by one in front.

Then he felt himself justly punished for his cupidity, and began to sigh and groan dolefully. The good tailor, awakened by his lamentations, consoled him as well as he could, and said: "We are companions, we have gone on our travels together; stay with me, my treasure will support us both."

He kept his word; but the smith was obliged to wear his two humps all his life long, and to hide his hairless pate under a cap.



THE QUEEN OF THE BEES.

THERE were once two king's sons, who went out in quest of adventures, and they gave way to dissipation and bad company, so that they did not return to their father's roof. Their youngest brother, whom they called the little blockhead, went in search of them; but when he found them, they jeered at him, that he, in his simplicity, should

Expect to find his way through a world in which they had both lost themselves—they, who had so much more cleverness than he.

Journeying along together, they came to an ant-hill. The two elder brothers wanted to overturn it, for the pleasure of seeing the anxiety of the poor little ants, and to see them run in all directions, carrying off their eggs; but the little blockhead said to them: “Leave the poor creatures alone; I won’t have them disturbed.”

Farther on, they came to a lake, on whose surface I don’t know how many ducks were swimming. The two elder brothers wanted to carry off a couple to roast; but the youngest opposed it, saying: “Leave the creatures in peace; I won’t have them killed.”

Still further on they saw in a tree a bees’ nest, so full of honey that the sweet fluid was running all down the trunk. The two eldest brothers wanted to light a fire at the foot of the tree to smoke the bees, and seize upon the honey; but the little blockhead kept them back, saying: “Leave these insects in peace; I won’t have them burned.”

At last the three brothers came into a castle whose stables were full of horses changed into stone; but no one was to be seen there. They went through all the rooms, and came at last to a door fastened with three bolts. In the middle of the door was a little wicket, through which they could look into the chamber beyond. There they saw a little grey-haired man sitting before a table. They called him once—twice—and he did not seem to hear them; at the third call he arose, opened the door, and came out to meet them; then, without saying a word, he led them to a table sumptuously prepared; and when they had eaten and drunk, he conducted each of them to a separate sleeping-room.

Next morning, the little old man came to the eldest of the brothers, and beckoning him to follow, led him to a table of stone, on which were written three tasks to be accomplished, to disenchant the castle. The first was, to search, among the moss, in the middle of the forest, for the thousand pearls of the princess, which had been sown

there; and if the seeker had not found them every one before sunset, without missing a single one, he was to be changed into stone. The eldest brother spent the whole day searching for the pearls; but when the evening came he had not found more than a hundred, and was changed into stone, according to the writing on the table. Next day, the second brother undertook the task, but with no better success than his elder brother had met with; he could find only two hundred pearls, and was changed into stone.

At last came the little blockhead's turn. He began searching for the pearls among the moss; but, finding the task a long and difficult one, he sat down upon a stone and began to weep. He was in this condition, when the king of the ants, whose life he had saved, arrived with five thousand of his subjects; and in a moment the little creatures had found all the pearls, and collected them into a single heap.

The second task consisted in fishing up the key of the princess's bed-chamber, which was lying at the bottom of the lake. When the young man approached the water, the ducks he had saved came to meet him, plunged to the bottom of the water, and brought up the key.

But the third trial was the most difficult. It was to point out the youngest and the most charming of the three princesses who lay asleep. They were exactly like one another; and the only thing that distinguished them was, that before going to sleep, the eldest had eaten a piece of sugar, while the second had taken a mouthful of syrup, and the third a spoonful of honey.

But the queen of the bees, whom the young man had saved from the fire, came to his assistance. She flew and hovered over the mouths of the three princesses, and at last alighted on the lips of the one who had eaten the honey; and thus the prince was able to point her out. So, the spell being broken, all in the castle awoke from their magic sleep, and those who had been changed into stone regained their human shape. The supposed blockhead married the youngest and most charming of the three princesses, and was king after his father's death. As for his brothers, they married the two other sisters.



THE MAN WITH THE BEARSKIN.

THERE was a young man who had entered the army; he behaved himself bravely, and was always the first to face the bullets. All went well so long as the war lasted; but when peace was made he received his discharge, and his captain told him to go about his business. His parents were dead, and he had no home of his own; so he asked his brothers to take him in till the war should begin again.

But they had hard hearts, and answered that they could do nothing for him ; that he was fit for nothing, and must shift for himself as he best could. The poor fellow had nothing in the world but his gun ; so he shouldered it, and went out to do as best he could.

He came into a great open region, where nothing was to be seen but a circle of trees. There he sat down in the shade, and thought gloomily of his fate. "I have no money ; I have never learned any trade but that of war, and now that peace is made, I am not fit for anything. I see that I shall have to die of hunger."

Just then he heard a noise ; and lifting his eyes, saw before him a stranger, dressed all in green, handsomely attired enough, but with a frightful horse's hoof.

"I know what you want," said the stranger, "it's money. You shall have as much as you can carry : but first I want to convince myself that you're not afraid ; for I give nothing to cowards."

" Soldier and coward," said the other, "are two words that do not go together. You may put me to the proof."

" Well then," replied the stranger, "look behind you."

The soldier turning round, saw a huge bear coming towards him and growling.

" Oh, oh," said he, "I'll tickle your nose for you, and oure you of growling." And he levelled his musket and shot the bear dead on the spot.

" I see," said the stranger, "that you don't want for courage ; but there are other conditions you will have to fulfil."

" Nothing shall stop me," said the soldier, who saw that he had to do with an evil spirit ; "so long as my soul is not imperilled."

" You shall judge for yourself," replied the man. " For seven years you are not to wash yourself, nor to comb your beard or hair, nor to cut your nails. I will give you a coat and a cloak which you must wear during the whole time. If you die in the interval, you'll belong to me ; if you live longer than seven years, you shall be free and rich all your life."

The soldier thought of the poverty to which he was re-

duced ; and as he had so often defied death, he resolved to face it once more, and accepted the proposal. The man in green took off his own coat, and gave it to the soldier, saying : " So long as you wear this coat, whenever you put your hand in your pocket, you will bring it out full of gold." Then, having stripped the bear of its skin, he added : " This will serve you for a cloak, and also for a bed, for you may not have any other ; and by reason of this clothing, you will be called ' Bearskin.' " Hereupon the apparition vanished.

The soldier put on the coat, and putting his hand in his pocket, found that his visitor had not deceived him. He at once put the bearskin on his back, and began to roam through the world, making holiday, and denying himself none of those good things which make people fat, and their purses lean. For the first year, his appearance was passable enough, but in the second he already looked frightful. His hair almost completely hid his face, his beard was matted like a piece of felt, and his face so entirely covered with dirt, that if grass seed had been sown in it, the seed would have come up. He made everyone flee away in terror ; but as he gave to all the poor, begging them in return to pray that he might not die within the seven years, and as he appeared an honest man, he always found a resting-place.

In the fourth year he once came to an inn, where the host refused to receive him even in the stable, for fear he should frighten the horses. But Bearskin drew from his pocket a handful of ducats ; and the host was mollified at sight of them, and gave him a room in the back-yard, on condition that he should not let himself be seen, so that the reputation of the establishment might not be destroyed.

One evening Bearskin was sitting in his room, wishing with all his heart that the seven years were over, when he heard some one weeping in the next chamber. Being a good-natured fellow, he opened the door, and saw an old man, who was sobbing, with his head resting on his hands. When he saw Bearskin come in, the man was frightened and wanted to run away. But at last he grew calmer

when he heard himself addressed by a human voice, and Bearskin succeeded at last, by means of friendly words, in inducing him to tell the cause of his sorrow. He had lost all his fortune, and was reduced, with his daughters, to such poverty, that he could not pay the host, and was going to be sent to prison.

"If that's the only cause of your grief," quoth Bearskin, "I've money enough to get you out of the scrape." And he summoned the host, paid him his demand, and gave the poor debtor a large sum into the bargain for his necessities.

The old man thus relieved from his woes, did not know how sufficiently to testify his gratitude. "Come with me," said he, "my daughters are marvels of beauty, you shall choose one of them for your wife. She will not refuse when she hears what you have just done for me. In truth you have rather a comical appearance, but a wife will soon alter that."

Bearskin agreed to accompany the old man. But when the eldest daughter caught sight of the horrible countenance, she was so frightened, that she fled away with loud outcries. The second stood her ground, and looked at her suitor from head to foot; but then she said: "How am I to accept a husband who has not a human face? I'd rather have the shaven bear I saw one day at the fair, dressed up like a man, with an hussar's pelisse and white gloves. At any rate, he was only ugly, and one might in time get used to that."

But the youngest daughter said: "Dear father, he must be a good man, because he helped us; you have promised him a wife, and you must keep your word."

Unfortunately, Bearskin's face was covered with hair and dirt, or it would have shown the flush of joy which overspread it and swelled his heart when he heard these words. He took a ring from his finger, broke it in two, and gave one half to his betrothed, begging her to keep it carefully, while he kept the other half. On the piece he gave her he wrote his own name, and inscribed the young girl's on the piece he kept for himself. Then he took leave of her, saying: "I must quit you for three years.

If I come back, we will be married ; but if I do not come, you will know that I am dead, and you will be free. Pray that my life may be spared."

The poor betrothed maiden was sorry, and the tears came into her eyes when she thought of her intended. Her sisters overwhelmed her with unkind jests. "Take care," said the eldest, "or, when you give him your hand, he'll scratch you with his paw."

"Have a care," said the second; "bears are fond of delicacies. If he takes a fancy to you, he will eat you up."

"You'll always have to do as he pleases," resumed the eldest, "or else he'll be growling."

"But," struck in the second, "the wedding ball will be pleasant: bears can dance gaily."

The poor girl let her sisters have their say, without growing angry.

As for the man with the bearskin, he was always wandering through the world, doing good whenever he could, and giving generously to the poor, so that they might pray for him.

At last, when the last day of the seven years had come, he returned to the plain, and entered the circle of trees. A great wind sprang up, and the demon soon appeared with an angry face; he threw the soldier his old clothes, and asked to have his own green coat back again. "Wait a minute," said Bearskin; "you must first clean me." The evil spirit was obliged, very much against his wish, to bring some water, to wash Bearskin, comb his hair, and cut his nails. The man now resumed the appearance of a brave soldier, and looked much handsomer than he had ever seemed before.

Bearskin felt a great weight taken off his heart when the evil spirit departed without further tormenting him. He returned to the town, put on a magnificent velvet coat, and, stepping into a carriage drawn by four white horses, drove to the house of his intended. No one recognized him. The father took him for an officer of high rank, and made him go into the room where his daughters were seated. The two eldest made him sit

down between them. They put before him a delicious repast, and declared they had never seen so handsome a cavalier. As to his betrothed, she sat opposite to him in her black dress, with her eyes cast down, and said not a word. At length the father asked him if he would marry one of his daughters. Then the two elder girls ran into their room to adorn themselves, for each thought she would be the one chosen.

The stranger, thus left alone with his betrothed, took from his pocket his half of the ring, and threw it into a glass of wine which he offered to her. When she had drunk, and saw this fragment at the bottom of the glass, her heart beat quick. She seized the other half, which hung from her neck, applied it to the first, and the two pieces fitted exactly. Then he said to her : "I am your beloved bridegroom, whom you saw under a bear's skin ; now, by Heaven's mercy, I have recovered my human shape, and am purified from my stains." Then he took her in his arms and kissed her over and over again. At this moment the two sisters came back in grand costume ; but when they found that the handsome young man was for their sister, and that he was the bearskin man, they ran off, full of anger and spite : the first went and drowned herself in a well, and the second hanged herself on a tree.

That evening there was a knock at the door ; and, the bridegroom going to open it, found the green-coated apparition with the cloven foot standing outside. And the green coat said : " Well, you've escaped me ; but I've got two to-day instead of you."



THE THREE LUCKY HEIRS.

A FATHER sent for his three sons, and gave to the first a cock, to the second a scythe, and to the third a cat.

"I am old," he said, "and my end draws near; I'll provide for your future before it comes. I have no money to leave you, and the things I give you to-day no doubt seem to you of trifling value; but everything depends on the way in which you use them. Go, each of you, and seek a country where the thing I give you is a novelty, and your fortune is made."

At the father's death, the eldest of the sons set out with his cock; but, wherever he came, the cock was already known; in the cities he saw it at the top of the steeples, turning with every wind; in country places he heard him always crowing; and no one admired the bird he carried; so that he did not seem to be exactly on the high road to fortune.

At last he came to an island where nobody knew what a cock was; and all the people were in a dilemma to know

how to reckon time. They could perceive well enough when it was morning or evening; but at night, those who lay awake did not know what time it was. "Look," said he to them, "at this brilliant creature; it has a crown of rubies on its head, and it wears spurs on its heels, like a knight. In the night it sings three times at regular hours—the last time is just before the sun rises. When it sings in the day time, it announces that the weather is going to change."

This speech was received with great favour by the inhabitants of the island. The next night nobody went to sleep, and all listened with the greatest interest as the cock successively announced two o'clock, four o'clock, six o'clock in the morning. They asked if this handsome bird was for sale, and how much the owner wanted for it.

"I must have an ass's load of gold," replied he.

They all agreed that this was a trifle for such a wonderful bird, and hastened to pay the price.

When they saw their elder brother come back rich, the two younger ones were filled with astonishment; the second resolved to set out too, to see if his scythe would bring him anything. But, wherever he came, he met peasants provided with scythes as good as his own. At last, by good fortune, he landed on an island where nobody knew what a scythe was. When the corn was ripe in that country, pieces of cannon were pointed at the fields, and fired off in every direction. But this was a very irregular way of going to work. Sometimes the balls passed over the harvest altogether, at others they struck the seed instead of the straw, so that a great quantity was wasted; and, moreover, the din of harvesting was unbearable. When our friend stepped before the people, and began to mow down the corn deftly and rapidly, all the people looked at him open-eyed and open-mouthed. His implement was bought at the price he chose to ask; he had a horse laden with as much gold as it could carry.

The youngest brother wished in his turn to make use of his cat. Like his two brothers, he found no opportunity to turn it to account, so long as he remained on the main

land ; there were cats everywhere, and in such abundance that numbers were drowned as soon as they were born. At last he caused himself to be taken to an island, where, fortunately no cats had ever been seen ; but, to make up for this, mice swarmed there to such an extent that they danced on benches and on tables, in the very presence of the masters of the houses. Every one suffered from the scourge. The king himself was not safe from it in his palace ; in every corner the mice were heard piping, and nothing was spared that their teeth could reach. The cat was introduced, and soon cleared two halls, so cleverly, that the people petitioned the king to secure so valuable an animal for the state. The king paid for it without bargaining ; the price was a mule laden with gold. And so the third soon came home, richer even than his brothers.





MASTER SHARPAWL.

MASTER Sharpawl was a little thin, active man, who never allowed himself a moment's rest. A turn-up nose stood out boldly from his pale face, which was pitted with the small pox. His hair was grey and stubly, and his little eyes were always shooting out lightning glances right and left. He took notice of everything, criticized everything, knew everything better than everybody else, and was always in the right. When he walked through the streets, he used to swing his arms so hastily, that one day he struck a bucket of water which a young girl was carrying, and swung it up in the air to such good purpose, that he

was splashed all over. "Stupid little creature," cried he, as he shook himself, "could you not see that I was coming behind you?"

He was a shoemaker by trade, and when he drew out his threads, he used to throw his arms about in such a way that all who did not keep at a respectful distance received great fisticuffs in the sides. No workman could remain longer than a month with him, for he always found fault with the best work that could be done. Either he declared the stitches were uneven, or he protested that one shoe was longer, or one heel higher than the other; or he would cry out that the leather had not been beaten enough. "Wait a minute," he would say to the apprentice, "I'll show you how leather ought to be softened," and he would give him two bangs on the back with the bootjack.

He used to rate all his people for idleness, though he did no great things himself; for he never remained for two minutes in the same place. If his wife got up early and lighted the fire, he'd jump out of bed, and rush barefoot into the kitchen: "Do you want to burn the house down?" he would shout. "There's a fire big enough to roast an ox, one would think that wood was to be had for nothing."

If the maids, standing at the washtub, gossiped together and laughed, and told one another the news, he set them down finely. "There they're off, the stupid geese! they only care that their beaks keep moving, and over their chatter they forget their work. And the soap, pray what becomes of that, when it's left in the water? Waste and idleness! They spare their hands, and save themselves the trouble of rubbing the linen!" and in his anger he stumbled against a pail full of dirty water, so that all the kitchen was inundated.

They were building a new house opposite his shop; and from his window he watched the work. "They're using red sand which will never dry," said he. "No one will ever be well in that house. Look at the masons, how they're fixing the stones all awry. The mortar's worth nothing; it's gravel, not sand they want. I shall live to

see that house tumble down on the heads of the inhabitants!" Then he would take a couple of hours at his work. But on a sudden he jumped up and pulled off his apron saying: "I must positively go out and tell them what to do." Then he fell foul of the carpenters: "What's the meaning of this? Fine carpentry, upon my word! do you think those beams will hold? They may all split to pieces at a moment."

He had just caught up an axe out of the hands of a carpenter, to show him how to do his work, when a loaded waggon came creaking past, and down he threw the axe to run after the waggoner. "Are you mad?" he exclaimed. "Is there any sense in harnessing young horses to a waggon overloaded like this? The poor beasts are ready to fall down in the road." The waggoner gave him no answer, and Master Sharpawl retired into his shop in dudgeon.

Just as he was going to sit down, his apprentice brought him a shoe. "Now, what's the meaning of this again?" he exclaimed. "Haven't I forbidden you to cut out the shoes so low? Who'll buy a thing like that? It's nothing but a mere sole. I expect my orders to be obeyed to the letter."

"Master," replied the apprentice, "I've no doubt you're right. The shoe is no good; but it's the one you cut out and sewed yourself. You dropped it when you got up just now, and I never touched it except to pick it up; but an angel from heaven could not satisfy you."

One night, Master Sharpawl dreamed that he was dead, and on the road to Paradise. When he came to the gate, he knocked, and an angel opened to see who was there. "Ah, it's you, Master Sharpawl, is it?" said he, "I will let you in. But I give you notice, that you must not criticize anything you see here, or it will be the worse for you."

"You might have saved the warning," replied Master Cobblersawl; "I know what is right, and, fortunately, everything is perfect here; it is not like on earth."

He entered, and began to roam through the vast glades of Paradise. He looked round on all sides, to the right

and to the left; but at times he could not help throwing up his head and muttering between his teeth. At last he saw two angels carrying a large beam. But the angels, instead of carrying it lengthways, held it crosswise. "Whoever saw such awkwardness?" thought Master Sharpawl to himself. But he kept silence, and reasoned with himself. "After all, it does not signify whether the beam be carried lengthways or crosswise, so long as it reaches its destination; and truly, I notice that they don't strike against anything."

Farther on, he saw two angels drawing water in a bucket which was pierced with holes, through which the water ran. They were thus watering the earth with rain. "What, in the name of wonder!" exclaimed he; but fortunately he stopped himself, thinking it must be a sport. "As a pastime," he said to himself, "one may do stupid things, especially here, where, as I see, idleness reigns unquestioned."

Farther on, he saw a carriage stuck fast in a deep hole. "It's not to be wondered at," he said to a man who stood by, "it was so badly loaded. What are you carrying there?"

"Good thoughts. I have not been able to carry them out; but fortunately I've been able to bring my waggon up here, and shall not be left in distress."

And, in truth, he presently saw an angel harnessing two horses to the waggons.

"Very good," said Master Sharpawl; "but two horses are not enough. Four at least will be required."

Another angel came with two more horses; but instead of harnessing them in front like the others, he yoked them to the back of the waggon. This was too much for Master Sharpawl. "Whatever are you doing there?" he shouted. "Did ever any one see horses harnessed in that fashion since the world began? But, in their blind vanity, they think they can do better than anybody else." He was going to say more, but one of the inhabitants of the celestial regions seized him by the collar and hurled him through the air with irresistible force. Still he had

time to see the waggon borne aloft into the air by the four horses, which were winged.

At that moment Master Sharpawl awoke. "Paradise is not like the earth," said he; "and many things appear foolish which may be good at bottom. But, after all, who could keep cool, and see horses harnessed to the front and back of a carriage. They certainly had wings; but I did not see them at first. And then, it certainly was great nonsense to give wings to horses who have four legs already. But I must get up, or else all will be going wrong here. It's lucky, though, that I was not really dead."

KNOIST AND HIS THREE SONS.

BETWEEN Werrel and Gorst there lived a man, and his name was Knoist. He had three sons. The first was lame, and the second was blind, and the third was naked. They once went out into the fields, and there they saw a hare; and the blind one shot it, and the lame one caught it, and the naked one put it in his pocket. Then they came to a mighty big piece of water, on which there was three ships; the first floated, and the second sank, and the third had no bottom to it. And they all embarked in the one that had no bottom, and then they came to a great big forest, where there was a great big tree, and in the tree there was a great big chapel, and in the chapel there was a withered old clerk, and a savage old priest, who were dealing out blessings with cudgels.

And may we all have peace and repose,
And be delivered from blessings like those.



THE PEASANT IN PARADISE.

A poor honest peasant died, and came to the gate of Paradise. At the same time there died a rich, very rich lord, who came there also. Saint Peter appeared with his

keys, and opened the gate and let the lord in ; but he cannot have seen the peasant, for he left him standing without, and shut the gate. The peasant, waiting there, heard the joyous welcome accorded to the rich man, with music and song. When the noise had ceased, Saint Peter came back and let the poor man in. Now he expected that at his entrance the music and song would recommence ; but everything remained quiet. He was kindly received, and the angels came forward to welcome him ; but nobody sang. Then he asked Saint Peter why the music did not sound for him as for the rich man, and if partiality reigned in Paradise as on earth ?

"No," answered the Saint ; " thou art as dear to us as any other, and like him who hast just come, thou shalt taste the joys of Paradise ; but poor peasants like thou come here every day, while rich men arrive only once in a century."

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THE ROSE.

THERE was once a poor woman, who had two children, and every day the youngest went out into the forest to collect wood. Once when it had wandered far away, searching for branches, a small but healthy and sturdy child came and helped to carry the wood they collected up to the cottage ; but then in an instant he disappeared. The child told his mother about the stranger, but she did not believe it. At last the child brought home a rose, and told the mother it was a gift from the beautiful child, who had promised to come back when the rose was in bloom. The mother put the rose into water. One morning the child did not rise from its bed. The mother went to look for it, and it was dead. But it seemed quite calm and happy, and the rose was in full bloom.



THE GOBLINS.

ONE day the Goblins stole a woman's child out of its cradle, and put in its place a little monster with a big head and staring eyes ; and it was always craving for food and drink. The poor woman went to her neighbour to ask counsel. The latter told her to carry the little monster into the kitchen, to put it on the hearth, to light a fire beside it, and boil water in two egg-shells ; this would make the monster laugh, and if once it laughed, it would be compelled to go away.

The woman did as her neighbour had recommended. As soon as he saw the egg-shells full of water on the fire, the monster cried out :

I've lived very long, I'm old and hoar,
But water boiled in egg-shells I never saw before.

And he burst out into a roar of laughter.

Immediately there came a crowd of Goblins, who brought back the real child, and put it in the chimney corner, and carried away their monster with them.



THE THREE GREEN TWIGS.

THERE was once a hermit who lived in a wood at the foot of a mountain. He divided his time between prayer and good works, and every evening, for the love of heaven, he carried two pails of water from the foot of the mountain to the top, to water the plants and refresh the animals, for at that height there prevailed a violent wind which dried

up everything, and the wild birds flying to this desert from the presence of man, searched in vain with their piercing eyes for water to refresh them. To reward his piety, a good spirit used to appear to the hermit, and bring him food when his work was done.

Thus the hermit, occupied with good works, had attained a very old age, when one day he perceived at some distance a poor fisherman, whom they were taking to the gibbet. Then he said : "There goes one who is being paid according to his merits." But in the evening, when he carried the water up the mountain, the angel did not appear as usual to bring him his supper. He was alarmed at this, and sought in his heart how he could have sinned against Heaven, but could discover no reason. Then he fell on his knees on the earth, and remained in prayer day and night without taking food.

One day when he was weeping bitterly in the wood, he heard a little bird singing with such a marvellous voice that he could not refrain from saying to it : "Ah, little creature, how gaily thou singest ! The Lord is not angry with thee. Alas ! if thou couldst tell me wherein I have offended, I would repent of my fault, and joy would come back into my heart."

The bird replied : "Thou hast done wickedly in condemning a poor sinner whom men were dragging to the gibbet ; therefore the Lord is offended with thee, for to Him alone belongs judgment. But if thou repentest of thy sin, thou shalt be pardoned."

Then the hermit saw the angel standing before him with a dry stick in his hand. The angel said to him : "Thou shalt carry this dry wood until three green twigs have sprouted from it ; and at night when thou liest down to sleep, thou shalt put it under thy head. Thou shalt beg thy bread at men's doors, and shall not remain longer than one night under the same roof. That is the punishment upon thee."

The hermit took the stick and returned into the world, which he had long forgotten. He lived entirely on the alms given him at men's doors ; but often his petitions were unheeded ; more than one door remained closed

against him, so that he frequently passed whole days without eating a crumb of bread.

One day when he had been wandering from morning till evening from door to door, and no one would feed him, or grant him a shelter for the night, he went into a wood and found at length a dwelling cut out in the rock, and in this house sat an old woman. "Good woman," said he, "give me shelter for to-night."

"No," she replied, "I should not dare, even if I were willing. I have three sons who are robbers; if they saw you here when they come back from their wanderings, they would kill you and me also."

"Let me come in," said the hermit; "they will not hurt either me or you."

The old woman had compassion, and allowed herself to be persuaded. The man lay down on the steps, with his stick under his head. The old woman asked him why he did this, and he told her he was undergoing his punishment, and that this stick must be his pillow; that he had offended the Lord by saying of a poor sinner who was being taken to the gibbet that he was paid according to his merits. Then the woman wept, and said: "Alas! if a mere word is thus punished, what will become of my sons when they appear at the Day of Judgment."

At midnight the robbers came in with a great noise. They lighted a great fire, which illumined the whole place, and showed them the man sleeping under the stairs; then they went into a great rage, and cried out to their mother: "Who is this man? Have we not forbidden thee to receive any one?"

The mother replied: "Let him alone; he is a poor sinner receiving the punishment of his sins."

"What has he done?" asked the robbers. "Come, old man; tell us your sins."

He rose up and told them how he was suffering this punishment for having spoken a word that offended God. The robbers' hearts were so touched by the recital that they were seized with fear when they looked back on their past lives, so they thought within themselves and repented with sincere conviction.

After converting these three sinners, the hermit went back to sleep under the stairs. But the next day he was found dead, and the stick under his head had sent forth three green twigs. Thus his offence had been pardoned.

THE SWEET SOUP.

THERE was once a little girl, poor but good; she lived alone with her mother, and a time came when they had nothing to eat. But the child went into the forest, and there she saw an old woman, who gave her a pot, which had the gift, that when any one said to it: "Boil, little pot," it boiled sweet soup; and at the words, "Stop, little pot," it would cease boiling. The little girl took home the pot to her mother, and there was an end of their poverty and want, for they could have sweet soup whenever they liked. But one day the little maid went out, and while she was away her mother said: "Boil, little pot." So it began to simmer, and she soon ate as much as she wanted; but when she wished the pot to stop, she could not remember the word. So the pot boiled away, and soon the soup came bubbling over the edge; and as it kept boiling on, the kitchen was soon full, and it filled the house, and the next house, and the whole street. And there seemed soup enough to feed all the world, for though it was high time the pot was stopped, nobody knew how to do it. At last, when there was only one more cottage in the village not full of soup, the child came home, and said: "Stop, little pot!" And it left off boiling; but, now, whoever wants to visit that village, must eat his way through the soup.



THE HEAVENLY FEAST.

A poor little peasant boy one day heard the priest say at church that if any one wished to enter paradise he must go straight forward. He set out, always keeping straight on, over hills and through valleys, without ever turning to the right or to the left. At last his road led him into a great city, and into a beautiful church where service was being performed. On seeing all this magnificence, he imagined that he must be in paradise, and full of joy he stopped there.

When the service was over, the sacristan told him to go out. But he replied: "No, I will not go; I am at last in paradise, and I will remain there." The sacristan went to the priest, and told him that there was a child in the

church, who would not go out, and who imagined himself in paradise. "If he thinks that," said the priest, "we must leave him there." Thereupon he went to the child, and asked him if he would work. The little one answered yes, and that he was used to work, but that he would not go out of paradise.

So he stayed in the church, and when he was there he seemed to hear a voice saying: "Give of thy substance to the hungry." And when he saw at the church door a poor child, or an old woman holding out her trembling hand to the passers by, he would give away half his bread, and he was very happy.

Some time afterwards he was ill, and he seemed to hear the same voice saying: "I have seen thy striving after what is good. Next Sunday thou shalt sit at my table and feast with me."

And when next Sunday came, the child was dead. For he had been called to sit down at the heavenly feast.

THE OLD BEGGAR-WOMAN.

THERE was once on a time an old woman, who begged, as many other old women have done; and when any one gave her anything, she would say, "God bless you!" Now, this old woman went to a door, and before the fire stood a good little boy warming himself; and when he saw how the old woman stood shivering outside, he said to her, "Come in and warm yourself." So she came in; but as she went too near the fire, her old rags began to smoke and burn before she knew anything about it. Now, should not the boy have put out the fire?—Yes. And suppose he had no water?—Why, he should have wept with sympathy; and there would have been water, for sympathy goes a great way.



THE THREE GOLDEN HAIRS.

THERE was once a poor woman who had a son, and as he had a caul on when he was born, it was foretold him that in his fourteenth year he should marry the king's daughter. Just at the time of his birth, it happened that the king

passed through the village unknown to any one, and as he asked the news, he was told that a child with a caul had just been born ; that everything this child undertook would be sure to succeed ; and that it had been foretold he would marry the king's daughter when he was fourteen years old.

The king had a bad heart, and this prediction made him angry. He went to see the parents of the child, and said to them in a very friendly way : " You are poor people, give me your child, I will take care of it." They refused at first ; but the stranger offered them gold, and they said to each other : " As the child is born lucky, whatever happens will turn out well for him." So at last they consented to part with their son.

The king put the child into a box, and went down with his burden to the bank of a steep river, into which he threw it, thinking thus to rid his daughter of a suitor whom she hardly expected. But the box, instead of sinking, floated like a little boat, and not a drop of water found its way in. It floated thus down the stream till within two miles of the capital, and was stopped by the flood-gate of a mill. A miller's boy who happened to be there saw it, and pulled it towards him with a crook. He opened it, expecting to find great treasures ; but it was only a pretty little boy, brisk and handsome. He carried him to the mill ; the miller and his wife, who had no children of their own, received this one as if Heaven had sent him. They treated the little orphan in the best possible way, and he stayed with them, and grew up hearty and strong and clever.

One day the king, surprised by the rain, entered the mill, and asked the miller if this tall youth was his son. " No, your Majesty," replied the miller ; " he is a foundling who came to our mill-dam in a box, fourteen years ago ; our mill boy took him out of the water."

Then the king knew it was the child he had thrown into the river.

" Good people," said he, " could this youngster carry a letter from me to the queen ? I would give him two pieces of gold for his pains."

" As your Majesty pleases," replied they ; and they told the young man to be ready.

The king wrote a letter to the queen, in which he told

her to have the messenger taken prisoner, put to death, and buried, so that he might find the thing done when he came home.

The youth set out with the letter; but he lost his way, and at night found himself in the midst of a great forest. Through the darkness he descried in the distance a feeble light, and making his way in the direction where it shone, he came to a little hut, where he saw an old woman sitting before the fire. She seemed quite surprised to see the young man, and asked: "Whence come you, and what do you want?"

"I come from the mill," he replied. "I am carrying a letter to the queen. I've lost my way, and should be glad to pass the night here."

"Unhappy youth," replied the woman, "you've fallen into a den of robbers, and if they find you your doom is sealed."

"With Heaven's protection I am not afraid," said the youth. "Moreover, I am so tired that I could not possibly travel further."

He laid himself down on a bench, and went to sleep. The robbers came in soon afterwards, and angrily asked why that stranger was there. "Oh," said the old woman, "he is a poor boy who has lost his way in the wood, and I took him in out of compassion. He is carrying a letter to the queen."

The robbers took the letter to read it, and saw that it directed the queen to have the messenger put to death. In spite of the hardness of their hearts, they felt compassion towards the poor young fellow; and their captain tore the letter up, and substituted another for it, directing that as soon as the youth arrived, he should immediately marry the king's daughter. Then the robbers let him sleep on his bench till the morning; and when he awoke they gave him the letter, and showed him his way.

The queen, when she received the letter, fulfilled the behests contained therein. A splendid wedding was held. The king's daughter married the lucky youth; and as he was a handsome, good-natured young fellow, she was glad to live with him.

Some time afterwards the king came home to his palace, and found the prediction accomplished, and the lucky youth married to his daughter.

"How has this happened?" said he. "I had given very different injunctions in my letter."

The queen showed him the letter that he might see the contents. He read it, and saw that his own had been abstracted. He asked the young man what had become of the letter entrusted to him, and why he had delivered another instead of it.

"I know nothing about it," said the youth. "It must have been changed during the night while I was asleep in the forest."

The king said to him in anger: "This shall not pass over thus. He who aspires to my daughter's hand must bring me from the underground cave three golden hairs from the Great Ogre's head. Bring me these, and my daughter shall be yours."

The king said this in hopes that he would never return from such a mission.

The young man replied: "I'm not afraid of the Ogre. I'll go seek the three golden hairs." And he took leave of the king and set out on his journey.

He came to a great town. At the gate the sentinel asked him what was his trade and what he knew.

"Everything," he replied.

"Then," said the sentinel, "do us the favour to tell us why the fountain of our market-place, which used to run with wine, does not even give us water, but is dried up?"

"Wait," said he; "I'll tell you on my return."

Farther on he came to another town. The sentinel at the gate asked who he was and what he knew.

"Everything," he replied.

"Then do us the favour to inform us why the great tree of our town, which used to bear golden apples, has now not even leaves?"

"Wait," said he; "I'll tell you on my return."

Farther on he came to a great river, which he had to cross. The ferryman asked him who he was and what he knew.

"Everything," replied he.

"Then," said the ferryman, "do me the kindness to inform me whether I am always to stay at this post, and never be relieved?"

"Stop," he replied; "I'll tell you on my return."

On the further side of the water he found the entrance to the Ogre's cave. It was very black and smoky. The Ogre was not at home; there was only his housekeeper, sitting in a large arm chair.

"What do you want?" she asked, in a sufficiently friendly voice.

"I want three golden hairs from the Ogre's head, for without them I can't have my wife."

"That's asking a great deal," she replied; "and if the Ogre were to see you when he comes in, you'd have a bad time of it. But I like your looks, and will see what is to be done."

She changed him into an ant, and said; "Hide yourself in the folds of my dress; you'll be in safety there."

"Thank you," he said, "that will do famously. But I also want to know three things. Why does a fountain which used to run with wine, not even yield water now? Why does a tree which used to give golden apples, not even bear leaves? And is a certain ferryman always to remain at his post without ever being relieved?"

"Those are three difficult questions," she observed. "But be very quiet, and pay attention to what the Ogre says, when I pull out his three golden hairs."

When evening came, the Ogre came home. As soon as he entered, he noticed an extraordinary smell: "There's something strange here," he said, "I smell man's flesh." And he began grubbing about in all the corners without finding anything.

The housekeeper began finding fault with him. "I've just been sweeping and arranging the place," said she, "and you put everything in disorder. You're always fancying you smell human flesh, sit down and eat your supper."

When he had supped, he was tired; he laid his head on his housekeeper's knees, and told her to scratch his head for him; and he soon began to sleep and snore. Then the old woman seized a golden hair, pulled it out, and put it aside. "Ha!" cried the Ogre, "what are you about?"

"I had a bad dream," she replied, "and that made me catch you by the hair."

"What did you dream?" he asked.

"I dreamt that the fountain in a market-place, which

used to pour forth wine, had stopped, and would not even give water; what can be the reason?"

"Ah! if they knew that!" replied the Ogre, "there's a toad under a stone in the fountain; if they would only kill that, the wine would begin to flow again."

The housekeeper began to rub his head again; and he went to sleep and snored in such a manner that all the windows shook. Then she tore a second hair from his head. "Ho! what are you about?" cried the Ogre, angrily.

"Don't put yourself out," she replied, "it's only a dream I had."

"What have you been dreaming about?" he asked.

"I dreamed that in a country there was a tree which always bore golden apples; and that now it has not even leaves. What can be the reason of this?"

"Ah! if they only knew!" cried the Ogre. "There's a mouse gnawing the root. If they only killed it, the tree would bear apples again; but if the mouse goes on gnawing it, the tree will die altogether. Now leave me in peace with your dreams, and if you disturb me again, I'll give you a box on the ear."

The housekeeper quieted him and began to rub his head again, till he was asleep and snoring. Then she seized the third golden hair and pulled it out. The Ogre rose with a shout, and was going to beat her, but she softened him again, by saying: "Who can help having a bad dream?"

"And what have you been dreaming now?" he asked, curiously.

"I dreamt that a ferryman was complaining that he was always keeping the ferry with his boat, and that no one ever came to relieve him."

"Ho, the foolish fellow," exclaimed the Ogre, "he's only to put his oar into the hands of the first man who comes to pass the river and then he'll be free, and the other will be obliged to act as ferryman in his turn."

As the housekeeper had now pulled out the three golden hairs, and extracted the three answers from the Ogre, she left him in peace, and he slept till the morning.

When the Ogre had left the house, the old lady took them out from among the folds of her gown, and restored the young man to his own shape. "There are three

hairs," said she, "but did you hear the answers the Ogre gave to your questions?"

"Very well," replied he, "and I shall remember them."

"Then your turn is served," said she, "and you can set out on your journey."

He thanked the old lady who had given him such kind help, and went out of the smoky cave, very glad at having succeeded so well.

When he came to the ferry, he caused the man to put him across before he told him the answer the Ogre had taught him. Then he said: "You have only to put your oar into the hand of the first man who comes to pass the river."

Further on, he came to the town of the sterile tree. The sentinel was also waiting for his answer. "Kill the mouse that is gnawing the root," said he, "and the golden apples will grow again. The sentinel to reward him, gave him two asses laden with gold.

At last he came to the city where the fountain was dry. He said to the sentinel: "There's a toad, under a stone in the fountain; look for it and kill it, and the wine will begin to flow out again abundantly." The sentinel thanked him, and also gave him two asses laden with gold.

At last the lucky youth came to his wife, who rejoiced heartily to see him return, and to hear that all had turned out well. He gave the Ogre's three golden hairs to the king. The king was highly satisfied when he saw the four asses laden with gold, and said to him: "Now all the conditions are fulfilled, and my daughter is yours. But tell me, my dear son-in-law, how do you come by so much gold? For that's an immense treasure you bring back."

"I found it," said he, "on the banks of a certain river I crossed. It's the sand of the shore there."

"Could I get as much for myself?" asked the king, who was a miser.

"As much as you like," he replied, "you'll find a ferryman, apply to him to pass the river, and you may fill your sacks."

The covetous monarch immediately set out, and when he came to the river, made signs to the ferryman to bring over his boat. The ferryman took him across, and when they were at the other side, put his oar into the king's

hand and jumped out. Thus the king became a ferryman as a punishment for his sins.

"And is he there still?"

"Certainly; for nobody has taken the oar from him."

THE SOLE.

ONCE upon a time the fishes became discontented, because there was no order kept in their dominions. No one would turn aside for the others, but each one swam on just as he chose, separating those who were in conversation together, and pushing them on one side; and the stronger ones hit out at the weaker with their tails, and made them get out of the way at a fine rate, or else eat them up. Then the fishes thought: "How capital it would be, if we had a King, who could be judge over us;" and so at last they assembled to choose a ruler, and it was to be he who could swim quickest, so as to come and help the weaker fishes.

So they all drew up in a row by the shore, and the pike started them with a flap of his tail, and away they all went. Off darted the pike like an arrow, closely followed by the herring, the gudgeon, the carp, the perch, and the rest of them. Even the sole swam among them, hoping to get the prize.

All at once there arose a cry: "The herring is first! the herring is first!" "Who is first?" asked the flat envious sole—"who is first?"

"The herring! the herring!" was the answer.

"Yah! the naked herring; yah, bah, the naked herring!" cried the sole, disdainfully. And ever since, the sole's mouth has been all on one side, as a punishment for his ill-nature.



THE IRON STOVE.

IN the days when people used to get what they wished for, a king's son met an old witch in a wood, and she enchanted the young prince with her herbs and potions, and made him sit in a great iron stove! There he stopped for many years, for no one could set him free; but one

day a princess, who had lost her way, and could not get back to her father's land, came to the stove, and heard a voice from within calling : " Who art thou, and whence dost thou come ? " And she answered : " I have lost my way, and can't get back to my father's land."

" I'll soon help you," rejoined the voice from the stove, " if you will do as I tell you. My father is a greater king than yours, and I am willing to marry you."

This frightened the princess, who cried out : " What am I to do with an iron stove ? " But she consented all the same. Then the prince told her to come back, when she had been home, with a knife to cut open the stove ; and he told her how to go, so that she got to her father's palace in two hours. Then the old king and all around him were very glad ; but the princess was sorrowful, and told her father how she had promised to marry the iron stove.

The king was so alarmed on hearing this, that he fell down fainting. When he came to himself, they determined that the miller's daughter, a very pretty maiden, should go instead of the princess. So she was sent to the place ; a knife was given to her ; and she was told to scrape a hole in the stove. She scraped and scraped in vain ; and at last the voice from the stove said :

" I think it is daylight."

" Yes," she replied, " and I think so too ; and I think I hear the clapping of my father's mill."

" Then you are the miller's daughter ? " said the voice : " So you may go home, and send the princess to me."

The girl returned, and told the king what the stove said ; and they were more frightened than ever. Now, in the king's service was a swineherd's daughter, prettier than the miller's daughter ; and to her the king gave a piece of gold to go to the stove instead of the princess. So she went ; but this girl, too, scraped and scraped without producing any impression on the stove ; and at last the voice came from the stove saying :

" I think it is daylight."

" Yes," said she ; " for I hear my father's horn."

" Then you are the swineherd's daughter," said the

voice. "Go and tell the princess that if she does not come to me, all her father's kingdom shall fall into ruin."

When the princess heard this, she began to weep; but the promise must be kept. So she bade her father farewell, took a knife, and set out for the wood. She came to the stove, and began scraping the iron; and in two hours' time she had made a small hole. Through this she looked; and inside the stove sat a handsome prince, richly dressed; and she fell in love with him at first sight. When she had scraped a hole large enough for the prince to get through, he stepped out, and said:

"You are mine, and I am yours; you are my bride because you set me free."

Then he wanted to take her away with him at once; but at her request consented that she should first take leave of her father, on condition that she spoke only three words to him.

So the princess went home; but unfortunately she spoke far more than three words; and the iron stove vanished, being carried off over many icy mountains and snowy valleys; but the prince was no longer shut up in it. In time the princess said farewell to her father, and went back into the wood; but could find the iron stove nowhere. For nine days she wandered about seeking for it; and at last became so hungry that she thought she should die. When evening came, she climbed up a tree; and when midnight was near, she saw a light a little way off, and went towards it, in hopes to find help. Soon she came to a little hut, with much grass growing round it, and a little heap of wood before the door. Peeping through the window, she saw a number of fat toads inside, and a table spread out with meat and wine; and the plates and dishes were of silver. She ventured to knock, and one of the creatures croaked out:

"Hearken little crook-legged toad,
Ope the door of our abode,
And see who stands there knocking."

And a little toad came running to open the door; and the princess went in.

They all welcomed her, and bade her be seated, and asked her whence she came, and whither she was bound. She told them how the stove and the prince had disappeared because she spoke more than three words, and how she was seeking him through the world. Then the toad cried out :

“ Little crook-legged toad appear,
See the basket hanging near,
Take it down and bring it here.”

So the little toad brought the basket, and the old toad gave the princess her supper, and showed her a comfortable bed, on which she slept soundly. And at day-break, when she rose, the old toad gave her three sharp needles, and a plough-wheel, and three nuts, which would be useful to her on her journey : for she would travel past the Glass Mountain, and three sharp swords, and a big lake, before she could see her lover again. So the princess set out ; and when she came to the glass mountain, she set the three needles in the heel of her shoe, and so passed over. Then she put the needles in a safe place ; and when she came to the sharp swords, she rolled over them on the plough-wheel. At last she came to the lake ; and when she had passed that, she saw a large handsome castle. Here it was that the prince dwelt, but he thought she was dead, and so he was going to marry another lady. She offered herself as a servant in the castle ; and one evening feeling in her pocket, she found three nuts the old toad had given her. She cracked one of them, and found inside a beautiful dress,—and when the new bride heard of this, she declared she must have the dress for herself, for that it was not fit for a servant. The princess refused to sell it, unless on condition that she was allowed to pass a night in the antechamber of the prince. This was granted ; but before the prince retired to rest the bride gave him a glass of wine, in which was a sleeping draught. So he could not hear, when the poor princess said : “ I saved you out of the wild forest, and out of the stove ; and I have come over a glass mountain, and three sharp swords, and a wide lake to see you,—and you will not hear me.”

The servants, however, heard her complaint, and told the prince. The next evening, she cracked the second nut, and found a handsomer dress than the first ; and the bride insisted on having it. The same condition was demanded and granted ; but the bride gave the prince another sleeping draught, so that he could not here the princess's complaints. But the servants heard her crying, and told the prince.

That same evening she cracked the third nut, and found a dress all spangled with golden stars ; and the bride desired she must have it, and granted the former conditions. But this time the prince poured away the sleeping draught, and when the princess began to remind him how she rescued him out of the wood and the stove, he heard her, and starting up, exclaimed : " You are right, you are mine, and I am yours." Then he got into a carriage with the princess ; and when they came to the lake they rowed quickly across ; and they passed over the three sharp swords by means of the plough-wheel, and crossed over the glass mountain by the help of the three needles ; and so they came at last to the toad's hut, which was changed into a great castle as soon as they entered. The toads, too, were all disenchanted, and resumed their natural shapes ; for they were the sons of the king of that country. And the wedding was celebrated, and the prince and princess stayed in the castle, which was finer than her father's. But the old king pined for his daughter ; so they went and dwelt with him, uniting the government of the two countries ; and they reigned for many years in happiness and splendour.

ABOUT HENNY'S DEATH.

ONCE upon a time Cocky and Henny went out into the nut-wood, and they decided that whoever found a kernel was to divide it with the other. Now, Henny found a great big nut, but said nothing about it; for she wanted to eat up the kernel all alone. But the kernel was so big that she could not swallow it down, and it stuck in her throat, so that she was afraid she should be choked. Then Henny cried :

"Cocky, I beg you'll run as fast as you can, and bring me water, or I shall be choked."

So Cocky ran as fast as ever he could to the spring, and said :

"Spring, you're to give me water. Henny's lying in the nut-wood, and has swallowed a great kernel, and is choking."

But the spring answered :

"First run to the bride, and tell her to give you some red silk."

Then Cocky ran to the bride, and said :

"Bride, you're to give me some red silk ; for I'll give the spring red silk, and the spring will give me water, and I'll carry it to Henny, and she's lying in the nut-wood, and has swallowed a big kernel, and is going to choke."

The bride answered :

"First run and bring me my wreath that's hanging on a willow."

Then Cocky ran to the willow, and pulled the wreath from the branch, and brought it to the bride, and the bride gave him red silk for it, and he carried it to the spring, which gave him water for it. And Cocky brought the water to Henny ; but when he came there Henny had been choked, and lay there dead and did not move. Then

Cocky was so sorry that he cried out loud, and all the animals came and pitied Cocky; and six mice brought a little carriage to carry Henny to the grave in it. And when the carriage was ready they harnessed themselves to it, and Cocky was coachman. But on the way came the fox, and said:

"Where are you going, Cocky?"

"I'm going to bury my Henny."

"May I go too?"

"Yes, yes; but get up behind, d'ye see,
Or else for my horses too heavy you'll be."

So the fox got up behind the carriage, and then there came the wolf, and the bear, and the stag, and the lion, and all the beasts in the forest. So they went on till they came to a brook.

"How are we to get over?" said Cocky.

And there lay a straw by the brookside, and he said:

"I'll lay myself across, and then you may drive over me."

But when the six mice came upon the bridge, the straw slipped and fell into the water, and all the six mice fell in too, and were drowned. Then the difficulty began again; and a hot coal came and said:

"I am big enough; I'll lay myself across, and you shall drive over me."

Then the coal placed himself across the water; but unhappily he touched the water a little, and so he hissed and went out, and was dead. When a stone saw that, he was struck with pity, and wanted to help Cocky, and laid himself across the water. Then Cocky drew the carriage himself; but when he had nearly got to the other side, and was going to drag dead Henny ashore, and the others who sat at the back too, there were too many of them, and the carriage fell back, and all of them tumbled into the water together and were drowned. Now Cocky was left alone with dead Henny, and dug a grave for her, and laid her in it, and made a hillock over it; and on this hillock he sat and grieved and fretted until he died too. And so they were all dead together.

THE CARAVAN.

**TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN
OF
W. HAUFF.**



Benezar giving Said the Silver Whistle.

The Adventures of Said. P. 276

THE CARAVAN:

A Series of Oriental Tales.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF
W. HAUFF.

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED BY BERTALL.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE gifted author of the following little series of Tales, Wilhelm Hauff, was born at Stuttgart, on the 29th of November, 1802, and died in his native city on the 18th of the same month, in the year 1827.

When he died he had not reached the age of twenty-five years; and his literary career commencing in 1825, had barely extended over two. Yet his short passage through the world of letters had not been without lasting tokens of the ability of the young aspirant, thus early torn from the career which opened upon him with fair prospect of fame and fortune. His literary activity had been remarkable; and he left behind him a number of Tales, Sketches, Romances, and Poems, which were afterwards published in a collected edition by his friend Gustave Schwab.

The little book here offered, in a translated form, to our good English friends, is, we can assure them, no entirely new candidate for favour. The strange transformation and subsequent adventures of Caliph Stork, and his sapient Grand Vizier—the discomfiture of

ADVERTISEMENT.

poor Labukan, the ambitious tailor, and the subsequent consolation afforded him by the wonderful self-working needle (which we shrewdly suspect to have been an allegorical type of the sewing machine)—the trials and triumphs of Little Mouck the philosopher—the terrible episode of the Haunted Ship—and the marvellous adventures and perils of Said, have become as well-known and appreciated among the juvenile population of Germany, as Bluebeard, Goody-Two-Shoes, Hop o' my Thumb, or even the redoubtable Jack the Giant Killer, among ourselves.

The chief merit of these little Stories seems to be in the graceful and humourous style of the narration. Our readers will, doubtless, form their own judgment upon each of the Tales; for one thing, however, we can vouch, that no single word, expression, or sentiment in any one of them, can call a blush to the cheek, or a remonstrance to the lips of the most rigid of moralists.

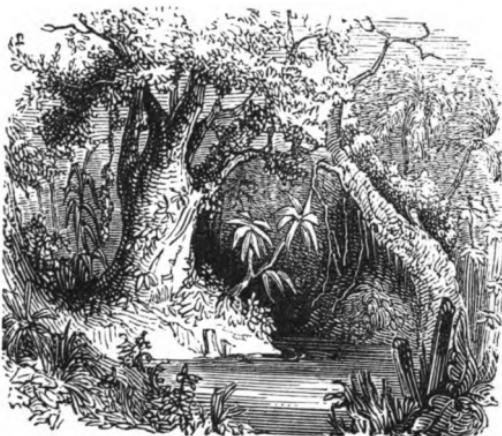
The work has been enriched with illustrations, which will, it is hoped, be considered an addition to its attractions.



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THE CARAVAN.

ONE day a great caravan was crossing the desert. Nothing was visible on the immense plain but the sand and the sky, but already might be vaguely heard in the distance the silver bells of camels and horses. A thick cloud of dust raised by the steps of the travellers announced their approach, as well as a kind of luminous reflection from the light on their arms.

Thus appeared the caravan to the eyes of a person who was advancing towards them on a magnificent horse. The flanks of the animal were covered with a large tiger-skin, and to the trappings were suspended tinkling bells and ivory crescents.

The costume of the cavalier corresponded with the splendid trappings of his horse. A white turban, embroidered with gold, contrasted well with his red pelisse, and in the cashmere shawl round his waist he wore a rich yataghan with an ornamented sheath and an agate handle. As to the

rider himself, there was something in his appearance both strange and wild ; the fire of his eyes, the long and thick beard flowing over his breast, and his eagle nose, contributed to give him a commanding aspect.

When he was about fifty paces from the caravan, he gave the reins to his horse, and advanced swiftly towards it. It was so extraordinary to see a man riding alone in the desert, that the outriders, fearing a surprise, lowered the points of their lances.

"What is the matter ?" cried he, seeing himself received in such a hostile manner. "Do you think that a single man can stop your caravan ?"

The others, ashamed of their precipitation, raised their lances, while their captain approached the stranger.

"Who is the master of this caravan ?" asked the cavalier.

"It does not belong to one person," replied one, "but to several merchants returning from Mecca, whom we are escorting across the desert, to protect them against any marauders."

"Conduct me to them," said the stranger.

"I cannot at this moment," replied the guide ; "we must go on without stopping, and these merchants are at least a quarter of an hour behind time. But if you will accompany me, until it is time for the mid-day rest, I shall be able to gratify you."

The stranger made no reply, but rode along by the side of the guide, smoking his large pipe. Much surprised by the appearance of the unknown, but not liking to question him directly, the guide, after a few minutes, said to him, with a gracious smile : "It is very good tobacco that you are smoking."

"Yes," replied the unknown, briefly, and continuing to send out puffs of smoke.

This was rather disconcerting, and the guide proceeded for a quarter of an hour without speaking, when he again ventured on an observation :—

"Yours is a splendid horse, signor," said he.

"Yes," replied the unknown, with a slight smile, and shaking the ashes out of his pipe.

Twice repulsed in his attempts, the guide made no further effort, and before long they reached their halting-place. After posting certain sentinels, the guide awaited, with the stranger, the arrival of the caravan.



Thirty camels, heavily laden and accompanied by their drivers, came first, and then the five merchants of whom the guide had spoken. All were grave and elderly men, except one, who appeared much younger and more gay and lively.

The camp was soon established; the merchants in the middle, their servants around them; a little further off, the camels and the horses, and, outside of all, the escort,

The merchants were seated on cushions, and about to begin their repast, when the captain came forward to introduce the stranger.

"What is it?" said one of the merchants.

Without waiting for the other to answer, the stranger advanced. "I am called Selim Baruch," said he; "I belong to Bagdad. I was returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca, with several of my countrymen, when, at a little distance from here, a band of robbers attacked us and made me prisoner. I succeeded in eluding the vigilance of my captors and escaping; but lost in the midst of the desert, alone, without resources, without water and without a guide, I wandered blindly, and must have perished had not the Prophet kindly permitted me to hear in the distance the bells of your caravan. Permit me then to travel in your company, and you will not find me ungrateful, I promise you. And if ever you come to Bagdad, I may perhaps, in my turn, be able to oblige you. I am the nephew of the Grand Vizier."

"Selim Baruch," said the oldest of the merchants in a cordial tone, "you are welcome to our tent; we are delighted to be able to be of assistance to you. Sit down and eat and drink with us."

Selim Baruch did as he was desired. After the repast, the slaves brought pipes and sherbet, and the merchants began to smoke gravely and in silence; lying on their cushions with half-closed eyes, they seemed entirely absorbed in contemplation of the clouds of smoke they emitted. But at last the youngest of the merchants broke the silence, and said with a yawn—

"For three days already have we been travelling without amusement of any kind, and for my part I confess to being desperately tired. Can none of you suggest anything to break the monotony of our days?"

The four old merchants continued to smoke without making any answer, but the stranger said: "Permit me to make a proposal. The pleasures that we could procure here, cannot certainly be very varied; but if each of us would relate a story every time we halt—either some adventure which has happened to himself, or one of

those pleasant stories which go down from generation to generation, it would serve to amuse us."

"Selim Baruch, you have spoken well," said Achmet, the oldest of the merchants, "and we agree to the proposal. For my part, I know nothing more amusing than children's stories; the events are certainly often impossible, and even absurd, but the sentiments are real and human, and above all, virtue in those stories is always



recompensed, which is a relief to our experience in the world, where unhappily that is not always the case."

"I am glad you approve my idea," replied Selim, "and to repay you for my welcome, I will begin."

The pipes were re-filled, the glasses replenished, and then Selim, after brushing his long beard away from his lips, began as follows :

THE CALIPH STORK.

ON a fine summer evening, Chasid, the Caliph of Bagdad, was lazily extended on a sofa. After having slept for a

short time—for the heat was overpowering—the Caliph awoke in a very good humour.

He began to smoke a long rosewood pipe, and imbibed at intervals, coffee, with which he was supplied by a slave, stroking his beard with satisfaction as he did so. One might see at the first glance, that the Caliph was in a state of beatitude; and in such moments his Highness was most approachable, and deigned to be gracious to the simple mortals who had business with him.

This was the hour, therefore, that was always chosen by his grand Vizier Manzour, to pay his daily visits. This day he came as usual, but contrary to his ordinary custom, looked rather gloomy.

"What is the matter with you?" asked the Caliph, removing the amber mouth-piece from his lips.

"Sire," replied the Vizier, with a bow, "I was ignorant that my face betrayed the secret thoughts of my soul; but as I was coming here, I met a Jew, who displayed such beautiful things, that I feel quite unhappy at having no more money to spend."

The Caliph, who was much attached to his Grand Vizier, ordered one of his slaves to fetch the merchant. It was not long before he arrived; he was a little man, dark, and with a hooked nose, and a cunning mouth which displayed two hideous yellow teeth, the only two he had. As soon as he appeared before the Caliph, he bent his forehead to the ground, and in an attempt to smile contracted his face into the most frightful grimace that ever distorted a human visage. On his bent shoulders he bore a box of sandal wood, full of precious merchandise. There were pearls from Ophir, made into earings, gold rings brilliant with diamonds, richly chased pistols, cups of Onyx, and a thousand articles of jewellery, not less rare and valuable.

After looking at them all, the Caliph bought for Manzour and himself some magnificent pistols, and for the wife of the Vizier a chased silver comb, surrounded by a coronet of pearls.

As the merchant was about to close his box, the Caliph observed a little drawer, the only one which had not been

opened, and asked if there were also jewels in that. The Jew opened it, and drew from it a sort of snuff box, containing a black powder and a paper covered with singular writing, of which neither Chasid nor Manzour could read a single word.



"This box came to me," said the Jew, "from a merchant who found it on the road as he was journeying to Mecca. I am ignorant of what it is, but it is quite at your service if you wish; for I do not know what to do with it."

The Caliph, though very ignorant, was fond of collecting

all sorts of curiosities and old parchments. He, therefore, bought the box and the manuscript, and sent away the old merchant.

"Do you know anyone who could read it to me?" said he to his Vizier.

"Gracious Caliph," replied he, "there lives near the grand mosque, a man called Selim the learned; they say that he understands all languages. If you will send for him, perhaps he may be able to explain these singular characters."

Two slaves were immediately sent to bring Selim the learned.

"Selim," said the Caliph, when he entered, "they say you are well versed in languages; examine this writing and see if you can read it. If you can, you shall have a new dress; but if not, you shall have twenty-five blows on the soles of your feet, for having usurped the glorious name of 'the learned.'"

Selim bowed, and replied, "Let your will be done." Then, after looking attentively at the writing, he cried out, "It is Latin."

"Latin or Greek, tell me quickly what it means," said the impatient Caliph.

Selim hastened to translate, and read as follows:

"Whoever you may be who find this, thank Allah for the favour he deigns to grant you. He who takes a pinch of the powder which is in this box, and at the same time says 'Mutabor,' can change himself to any animal he pleases, and also understand the conversation of animals. If he wishes afterwards to regain the human form, let him bow three times towards the east, pronouncing the same word, and the charm will be broken. Only take care, you who try it, not to laugh while you are metamorphosed. If you do, the magic word will fly irrevocably from your mind, and you will be condemned to remain for ever a beast."

As Selim read, the Caliph was highly delighted; and after making the learned man swear to reveal the secret to no one, he presented him with a magnificent silk robe before sending him away, which added greatly to the consideration which Selim enjoyed in Bagdad.

As soon as he had left, the Caliph cried out joyfully, "This is what I call a famous bargain. How pleasant, my dear Mauzour, to be able to change oneself into an animal. Come to me early to-morrow morning, and we will go to-



gether into the country; we will take a pinch from this precious box, and we shall then understand all that is said or sung around us; in the air, or in the water, in the forest, or on the plain."

The night seemed very long to the impatient Caliph; and as soon as daylight appeared, to the great astonishment of his slaves, Chasid started from his bed. Scarcely had he had time to dress and breakfast, when the grand Vizier presented himself, according to his orders, to accompany his master in his excursion.

Without waiting an instant, the Caliph put the magical snuff box into his belt, and ordering his suite to remain behind, set off in quest of adventures. They went first through the vast gardens of the palace, but without encountering anything on which to make a trial. The Vizier then proposed to go to a pond a little way off, where he had noticed several animals, and particularly some storks; and the Caliph agreeing to the proposal, they went towards it.

As soon as they reached the pond, they perceived an old stork walking gravely up and down, and watching the frogs; while another one flying above their heads, appeared to be coming to make friends with him.

"I will wager anything, gracious sire," said the Vizier, "that these two birds are going to hold an entertaining conversation. What do you say, shall we change ourselves into storks?"

"Yes," replied the Caliph, "but first let us repeat the word by which we shall become men again."

"Nothing more easy," said the Vizier. "We are to bow three times towards the East, saying, 'Mutabor.'"

"And I shall again become Caliph and you Vizier," said Chasid. "But in Heaven's name do not laugh, or we shall be lost."

While the Caliph thus spoke, the stork which had been over their heads, had descended to the ground, and the Caliph, anxious to overhear, drew out the box hastily and presented it to the Vizier. They both took a large pinch, and both cried, "Mutabor." The magical word was scarcely pronounced, when their legs shrunk up and became thin and red, their yellow slippers changed into storks' feet, their arms into wings, their beards fell off, and their whole bodies became covered with feathers.

"What a fine beak you have got, Vizier," cried the Caliph, after a long stare of astonishment. "By the beard of the Prophet, I have never seen anything like it."

"I thank you humbly," replied the Vizier, bending his long neck, "but allow me to say that your Majesty looks still better as a stork than as a Caliph."

"Flatterer," said the Caliph.

—

"No, really," protested the Vizier. "I have only spoken the simple truth. But let us approach our companions, and see if we can really understand them."



The stork which had recently arrived, after having coquettishly shaken out her feathers, advanced towards the observer of the frogs. The Caliph and the Vizier drew near them, and heard with much astonishment, the following dialogue :

"Good morning, Madam Longlegs, you are out early."

"My dear Prettybeak," replied the other, "I have been fishing for my breakfast, and I shall be delighted if you will come and join me. Here is a quarter of a lizard, and a thigh of a frog."

"I thank you, but I am not hungry. I came here with quite a different object; I am this evening to dance a new figure at a ball given by my father, and I came here for a little practice."

As she spoke, the young stork began to jump and cut the strangest capers, while the Caliph and the Vizier looked on with wondering eyes. But when the young bird began to stand on one leg in the pose of a ballet dancer, flapping her wings at the same time, they both burst out into an irresistible laugh. The Caliph was the first to stop.

"Really," said he, "it was too good; the only pity is that we frightened the birds away by our laughter."

But the Vizier suddenly remembered that they had been forbidden to laugh; and losing all his gaiety, he communicated his uneasiness to the Caliph.

"Good Heavens," cried Chasid, "it would be a very bad joke if we were to remain storks for ever. But pray try to recollect what we have to do to transform ourselves. As for me I have not the least idea."

"We are to bow three times towards the east," replied the Vizier, "and pronounce at the same time the word Mu—mu—mu—. What in the world was the word? Let us try, however; perhaps we shall recollect it."

Then the two storks began to bow towards the sun,—but horror of horrors, the magical word had fled from their memory. In vain did the Caliph bow, and in vain did Manzour cry, "Mu—mu—mu—," he could go no further; and so the unlucky Chasid and his Vizier were changed into storks, and remained so much longer than they wished.

The two unfortunates wandered sadly about the country, not knowing what to do. At one time they thought of returning into the city and trying to get themselves recognised; but who would believe that a miserable stork was

the brilliant Caliph Chasid? Or even if they did, would the inhabitants of Bagdad consent to be governed by so strange a prince?

They roamed about for several days, feeding on the wild fruits, which, however, they could hardly swallow, on account of their long beaks. As for the lizards and frogs, which delighted the other storks, they did not seem to them at all tempting. The only pleasure left to them in their sad situation, was the power of flying; and they often flew over the town of Bagdad to see what was going on there.

The first time, the people seemed anxious and sad; but on the fourth day, as our two birds were perched on the top of the palace they perceived a magnificent cortege passing through the streets, accompanied by pipes and drums. On a horse with magnificent trappings, which Chasid recognised as one of his own, rode a man in a scarlet mantle embroidered with gold, followed by half the population of Bagdad, crying, "Long life to Mirza, the ruler of Bagdad."

"Now," said Chasid, "I understand from whence comes our misfortune. This Mirza is the son of my mortal enemy, the powerful enchanter Kaschnur, who once swore an undying hatred to me. But I have not yet lost all hope. Follow me, and we will go to the tomb of the Prophet; perhaps the influence of the holy place may break the charm."

The two storks then quitted the roof of the palace, and directed their flight towards Medina.

"Sire," said the Vizier, after a couple of hour's flight, "pardon me, but I can do no more. You fly too quickly for me. Besides it is getting late, let us seek a resting place for the night."

Chasid good-naturedly agreed, and they flew towards some ruins which they saw in the valley. They appeared to have once belonged to a vast palace; beautiful columns rose among heaps of ruins, and several rooms still remained in good preservation. They were wandering about, seeking for a resting place, when suddenly Manzour stopped and murmured, "Master, I am sure I heard some one sigh——"

The Caliph stopped to listen, and distinctly heard a kind of sob, which appeared to proceed from a human being, rather than from an animal. He was about to proceed at once to the place whence the sounds came, but the prudent Vizier, seizing him by his wing, begged him not to rush upon new and unknown perils. His remonstrances, however, were useless; for the Caliph, who bore a brave heart under his feathers, tore himself away, and proceeded along the sombre corridor.

He soon arrived at the half open door of a room from which the sounds evidently proceeded. Chasid pushed it open, and stood transfixed with surprise. In the dilapidated room he saw in a corner an enormous owl; tears were flowing abundantly from her great yellow eyes, and sobs were bursting from her curved beak; but no sooner did she catch sight of the storks, than she uttered a cry of joy, and wiping her eyes gracefully with her wings, to their great astonishment cried out in good Arabic:

"Welcome, dear birds, you are to me a good omen of my approaching deliverance; for it has been predicted to me that storks would bring me happiness."

When the Caliph had a little recovered from his astonishment, he bowed as gallantly as he could, and taking the most graceful attitude he could assume, he replied:

"Madam Owl, from your words I conclude that I see in you a person whose misfortunes resemble our own. But alas! the hope which you entertain of obtaining deliverance through us seems to me very vain, as you will understand, if you will deign to listen to our story."

The owl having politely begged him to proceed, the Caliph related the story which we have already heard. When he had finished the owl thanked him, and said:

"Listen now to my story, and see if my misfortunes do not at least equal yours. My father was one of the most powerful kings of India, and I, his only and unfortunate daughter, am called the princess Lusa. The same enchanter Kaschnur, who has metamorphosed you, was the cause of my misfortunes. Counting on the terror inspired everywhere by his diabolical science, he dared to present him-

self to my father and ask my hand in marriage for his son, Mirza.

"Indignant at so much audacity, my father ordered him to be thrown downstairs. Kaschnur went away swearing vengeance. A short time after, the wretch, who can change his face as he pleases, managed to glide unperceived among the people who surrounded me. One summer evening as I was walking in the garden, I asked for some refreshment. Then he came forward, disguised as a slave, and gave me a beverage which changed me in this terrible manner."

"I fainted; and when I recovered my consciousness, found myself in this ruin, and heard the horrible voice of the enchanter crying in my ears : ' You shall remain here till the end of your days, disfigured and hideous, unless you meet with some being, who, of his own free-will, and in spite of your repulsive appearance, consents to marry you. Thus do I avenge myself on you, and on your proud father.' Since that time, many months have passed, and I have lived a miserable life in these ruins. I cannot even enjoy the aspect of nature, for I am blind by day; and it is only when the moon sheds her pale light upon the earth, that my eyes lose the thick veil that covers them."

The bird again wiped her eyes with her wings, and the Caliph said :

"It seems to me that there is a link between our misfortunes ; but how to find the key of the enigma ? "

"Caliph," replied the owl, "I have already told you, that a magician predicted to me in my youth, that a stork would bring me great happiness. I believe I know the way by which we may free ourselves."

"Explain yourself," cried the Caliph.

"The enchanter who caused our ruin," replied she, "comes once a month to these ruins. Not far from here is a vast hall, where he and his friends hold their nocturnal orgies, and relate to each other all their wicked deeds. They may possibly, at one of these times, repeat the word you have forgotten."

"Oh, dear princess!" cried the Caliph, "tell us quickly when does he come—where is this hall?"

"Do not think it unkind of me, Caliph," replied she;

"but I am forced to impose a condition before I help you."

"Speak quickly," said the Caliph, "I am ready for anything."

"I can only be delivered," replied she, modestly lowering her great yellow eyes, "if one of you will offer me his hand."

This proposition much embarrassed the two storks, and the Caliph drawing the Vizier a little on one side, said: "Manzour, I count upon your devotion in this part of the affair."

"Nay, nay," replied Mauzour, "then my dear wife will scratch my eyes out when I go home again. Besides, I am but a poor old man, while you, who are young and a bachelor, are just suited for a young and handsome princess."

"But that is just the point," murmured the Caliph; "how do I know that she is young and handsome?"

They debated for some time; and at last the Caliph, seeing that his Vizier was determined not to give way, decided to fulfil the condition himself.

Transported with joy at this, the owl informed them that they could not have arrived at a better time:—for probably the enchanter and his friends would come that very night; and she then guided them to the hall, where they hoped that their fate would be decided. First they traversed a dark corridor for some minutes, then caught sight of a brilliant light, through a crevice in the wall. The owl begged them to keep perfect silence; and then all three advanced carefully towards the opening, which was large enough to permit of their looking through.

In the midst of a vast hall, rather less dilapidated than the rest of the palace, was a large round table spread with wine and various dishes. Eight men, oddly dressed, surrounded this table, lying on rich sofas; and our two friends immediately recognised among them the pretended merchant who had sold them the powder.

The feast had lasted some time; and the poor storks began to despair of hearing anything useful, when the man who sat next to the pretended merchant, said:

"Kaschnur, tell us some of your last exploits to amuse us."

Kaschnur immediately began to relate a long list of wicked tricks. And last of all, came the story of the Caliph and his Vizier.

"And what word did you give them?" demanded the other.

"A Latin word, and not very difficult to remember after all," said he, laughing—"Mutabor."

Full of joy at having recovered the word, the storks flew away so rapidly, that the owl could hardly follow them. But the Caliph, turning to her, said:

"Oh! thou who hast delivered us, receive my hand, as a testimony of my eternal gratitude."

Then he and the Vizier both turning towards the east, bowed their long necks three times, and the famous "Mutabor" at last escaped from their beaks; and from storks they once more became men. Penetrated with joy, the master and servant fell weeping into each others arms. But who can describe their astonishment, when on looking



round, they perceived at their side a young lady, magnificently dressed.

Holding out her hand to the Caliph, she said, with a smile : " Do you not recognize your poor owl ? "

The Caliph, enchanted with her grace and beauty, fell on his knees before her, and swore that he esteemed it the happiest day of his life when he became a stork, since it had led to their meeting.

The return of the Caliph to Bagdad, accompanied by his good Manzour, was hailed by the people with unanimous acclamations. They immediately proceeded to the palace, and made prisoners the magician and his son. By order of the Caliph, the old man was led to the same ruin in which he had imprisoned the owl, and there hung on the highest tower. As for the son, the Caliph left him the choice of dying, or taking some of the powder.

" Will you take a pinch ? " said the Vizier, holding out the box to him with a comical air, while a slave stood by with a drawn sword, ready to strike at the first signal.

Mirza hastened to plunge his fingers into the magic box, and a large pinch accompanied by the word " Mutabor," made a superb stork of him in a moment ; and the poor bird being shut up in a large cage, was carried to the Caliph's garden, where he long served to amuse the idlers of Bagdad.

Chasid and his wife lived together long and happily, and the Vizier often talked over their strange adventure. Sometimes when the Caliph was merry, he amused himself by imitating the Vizier as a stork, with extended neck and stiff legs, bowing uselessly towards the east, and crying desperately, " Mu—mu—mu."

This was always a fresh amusement to the princess and her children ; but when the Vizier got tired of it, he used to threaten to reveal to the princess the dispute which had taken place, as to who should marry the poor owl. This always stopped the Caliph ; but he never failed to begin his jokes again the next day, and the Vizier's menaces were never carried into effect.



THE FALSE PRINCE.

WHEN Selim had ceased to speak, he was complimented by all the merchants on his good idea and his amusing story.

"Really," said one of them, "the time has passed most pleasantly; but now the evening breeze is beginning to rise, and we must go on."

The tents were struck, and the caravan resumed its march. They travelled thus all night and part of the morning, until they reached a commodious place of encampment, where they pitched their tents and lay down to rest.

The great heat had passed away when they awoke; but as they did not propose to set out again until the moon rose, which would not be for some hours, one of the merchants, addressing his neighbour, said:

"Selim Baruch, our new friend, entertained us delightfully yesterday; cannot you, my dear Ali, imitate the example? You have seen and travelled much, and must certainly be able to remember something interesting."

"Well," replied the other, "I am ready, although I cannot promise to equal the adventures of the Caliph Stork and the grand Vizier. I will, however, do my best; therefore listen, my dear friends, to the story of the Tailor Prince."

"There was once upon a time a worthy tailor's apprentice, called Labukan, who was learning his trade from one of the cleverest masters in Alexandria. No one could say that he was not handy with his needle, or that he was idle or unpunctual ; on the contrary he was a good workman and very clever, but still his peculiar character made him not always to be relied upon.

Sometimes he would sew for hours together with so much ardour, that the needle seemed to fly through his fingers ; but at other times, and not unfrequently, he would fall into reveries in which he would remain motionless for hours, with fixed eyes and so singular an appearance, that his companions used to say : "Look at Labukan giving himself the airs of a prince."

On a certain Friday, at the time when other workmen were returning quietly to their work after having been at prayers, Labukan came out of the mosque in a handsome dress, which he had purchased with his savings, and walked up and down the streets with a grave step and haughty look. If any of his companions spoke to him in passing, he merely replied with a wave of the hand ; and when his master said to him, laughing : "You look like a lost prince, Labukan," he replied : "Have you also noticed it ? I have long thought so."

From that day the folly of the poor lad increased ; and had he not been a very good workman, he would certainly have been dismissed. Soon after, Selim, the brother of the Sultan, passing through Alexandria, sent to the tailor a dress, in the embroidery of which he wished some change made ; and this work was given to Labukan. When evening came, and all the other workmen went home, Labukan lingered in the work-room, admiring the dress, and in ecstacies over the embroidery and the beautiful colours of the velvet. At last he determined to try it on to see how he would look in it ; and strange to say, it fitted him exactly.

He walked up and down the room admiring his own appearance. "What is a prince ?" said he to himself. "A man more richly dressed than anyone else, that is all. If the Sultan were to put on the dress of a beggar, or the

Kadi to be deprived of his grand costume, who would say as they passed—‘that is the Sultan,’ or ‘that is the



judge.’ Do we not recognize an Emir by his green turban? Yes, the costume is all; and if I could have a dress like this no one would any longer deny that I was a prince; and perhaps I might even find my noble parents. But to do this it would be necessary to leave Alexandria; the stupid people here would never believe in my illustrious origin.”

It seemed to Labukan, that this beautiful dress had been sent to him expressly by some good fairy, to show him what to do. Quite exalted by this idea, he collected the little money that belonged to him, and hurriedly left the city. The next day he was rather annoyed by the curious looks of the passers by, who were amazed to see a

person so splendidly dressed going about on foot. To one or two who spoke to him, he pretended that he had particular reasons for doing so; but finding that his explanations were generally received with laughter, he resolved to complete his grandeur by the purchase of a horse. For a small price, therefore, he procured an old horse, whose quiet pace would not cause him much uneasiness, as he had never been on horse-back before.

As he was going along on his Murva (that was the name he gave his horse), he was joined by another young man also on horse-back, who asked permission to ride with him and shorten the way by conversation. He was a handsome young man, with fiery black eyes, and Labukan would have been quite pleased with him had he been better dressed. However, before the day had passed, Omar, his new companion, had related his history to Labukan, a confidence which was only half reciprocated, Labukan passing over in silence the tailor's shop, and insinuating that he was of high birth and travelling for amusement; for to his great astonishment, the man whose dress he had despised, turned out to be the son of a king. This was Omar's story :

"From my earliest childhood," said he, "I have lived at the court of Elfi Bey, the Pasha of Cairo. I always believed him to be my uncle, but a short time ago he called me to him and told me that I was not his nephew, but the son of a great Arabian king, who had been forced to send me away immediately after my birth, to avert from me a fatal influence which the astrologers averred menaced me up to the age of twenty-two."

"Elfi Bey did not tell me the name of my family—he had been forbidden to do so, but he gave me the following instructions how to discover my father. On the fourth day of the month of Ramadan, on which we are about to enter, I shall have completed my twenty-second year, and on that day I am to go to the column of El-Serujah, about four days' journey from Alexandria, towards the east. There some men will meet me, to whom I am to present this dagger, given me by Elfi Bey, saying to them at the same time, 'I am he whom you seek.' If they answer,

'Blessed be the prophet who saved you,' I am to follow them, for they will lead me to my father."

Labukan had listened to this history with great astonishment. Often in his dreams he had been the hero of similar adventures, and now he was about to behold them realized in the person of another. This appeared to him to be extremely unjust. Why was not he also born the son of a king? All day these thoughts ran in his head, and at night they prevented him from sleeping; but when in the morning he saw the young man sleeping peacefully by his side, wicked ideas began to arise within him. If any accident was to happen to the prince, could not he, Labukan, take his place and present himself as the son of the king?

Omar still slept, and the dagger given him by Elfi Bey was easily stolen. It was a magnificent weapon, the hilt being studded with rubies. Labukan drew it from its sheath and read on the blade these words: "An cha Allah."—"If it please God."

"Yes," said he to himself: "If it please God he shall wake no more, and I will be the prince Omar."

But as he was about to strike, his heart failed him at the idea of shedding blood, and perhaps of a struggle. But if the thought of murder horrified him, it was not the same with regard to theft.

"Yes," said he, "in that way I shall attain my end just the same; and if he should follow me, he will be taken for an impostor."

Mounting the prince's horse, therefore, he rode off as quickly as he could; and before poor Omar awoke, his perfidious companion was many miles on the road.

It was the first day of the month of Ramadan that this happened, and consequently there still remained three days for Labukan to reach the appointed place, which was more than sufficient for the distance; but spurred on by the fear of being overtaken by the true prince, Labukan made all the haste possible. Towards the close of the second day he perceived in the horizon the column of El-Serujah; it stood on the top of a little eminence in the middle of a vast plain, and could be seen two or three

hours before it was reached. Labukan's heart beat violently at the sight ; his evil conscience kept tormenting him, by making him think of the punishment he would receive if the cheat were discovered.

He retreated with his horse into a little wood, to wait in this retreat for the appointed hour. The time arrived at length ; and when on the morning of the fourth day Labukan looked over the plain, he beheld with delight a group of magnificent tents at the foot of the hill on which the column was raised. Without loss of time, and in spite of the pricks of his conscience, he summoned all his courage, and rode towards the place.

At the foot of the column an old man was seated, around whom were slaves, guards, and officers in rich dresses ; and all appeared to be anxiously waiting the arrival of some one. Labukan, endeavouring to control his agitation, knelt down before the old man, and presenting to him the dagger, said, in a trembling voice : "I am he whom you seek."

" Praised be the prophet who has saved you ! " replied the old man with tears of joy. " Come to my arms, and let me embrace you, my dear son Omar."

These solemn words occasioned some remorse to the young tailor ; but he had gone too far to recede, and he threw himself into the arms of the old man. As he disengaged himself, however, he saw some one riding towards them across the plain ; and it did not require a second glance to recognise his own horse Murva and the real prince Omar.

" Stay ! " cried the prince, when he was near enough, " and do not let yourself be deceived by an infamous impostor. I am the real and only Omar."

At this unexpected interruption, astonishment was painted on the looks of all, while the eyes of the old man wandered from one to the other with the greatest anxiety. But Labukan, turning round with a perfectly calm air, said :—

" Gracious father, do not attend to that man, who is, I believe, a poor tailor, who has the madness to believe himself a prince, and merits less anger than pity."

These impudent words excited the anger of the prince to such a degree that, foaming with rage, he tried to throw himself upon Labukan; but the guards rushed between them, and by the orders of the old man, Omar was strongly bound.

On finding himself subjected to this indignity, the unhappy young man felt as if he were really going mad, and he cried out, sobbing: "Oh, my father, does not your heart tell you that I am your son? I conjure you by the memory of my mother to hear me!"

"Allah protect us!" said the old man, "there is that unfortunate, raving again;" and taking the arm of Labukan, he descended the hill, leaning upon him whom he believed to be his son. Both then mounted on magnificent horses, while the unhappy prince was tied on one of the baggage camels, so that he could not move.

The old king whose paternal love had been thus deceived was Saaud, Sultan of the Mechabites. After a long life passed without children, his ardent prayers had been granted, and a son was born to him. But the astrologers consulted as to the destinies of the young prince had said, that up to his twenty-second year he would be in danger of being supplanted by a rival. Then old Saaud, hoping to avert this, had made up his mind to confide his son to the care of his faithful friend Elfi Bey, who was to keep him in ignorance of his true rank until his twenty-second year. This once safely passed, the stars promised him a long and prosperous reign.

While the Sultan related this history to his pretended son who rode by his side, Labukan became more and more habituated to the part he had to play, and carried it off so well that no one was tempted to think him an impostor.

Wherever they came, they found triumphal arches and illuminations; flowers were strewn on the ground before them, and all the people loudly thanked Allah for the return of so handsome a prince. All this was breaking the heart of the unhappy Omar; no one thought of even turning a glance upon him; or if any one did inquire who he was, the answer always was: "It is a poor tailor who has gone out of his mind."

After eight days' travelling they reached the capital, where they were received with still greater pomp. The Sultaness Validé waited for her husband and son, surrounded by all her court. It was evening, and thousands of lamps were suspended in the gardens and on the staircases, giving the whole an aspect of fairy-land. She had, like her husband, never seen her son from the day of his birth, but his image had so often appeared to her in dreams, and always with the same features, that she had always said she should recognize her son among a thousand. Therefore, when Saaud, holding Labukan by the hand, approached the Sultaness, and said to her : "Here is the son for whom you have so long sighed," she, repulsing him violently, cried : "That my son ? No, no, those are not the features that the Prophet has revealed to me !"

Saad was about to reproach her with her foolish superstition, when the doors opened suddenly, and the prince Omar rushed in, spite of the efforts of the guards. Exhausted by the struggle he had sustained, he fell at the foot of the throne, crying out : "Let me die here ! I can no longer support this ignominy."

Several of the attendants threw themselves on the unhappy prince, and the guards had already seized and were going to re-bind him, when the Sultaness came from her throne and ordered them all to desist. They were about to obey ; but the Sultan, inflamed with anger, cried out to them in an imperious voice :—

"I alone have the right to command here. Are the dreams of a woman to weigh in the balance against infallible testimony ? This I repeat to you is my son," added he, laying his hand on the shoulder of Labukan, "for he brought me the dagger of Elfi Bey."

"He stole it from me," cried the young prince. "I met this thief on my road, and was fool enough to tell him my history, and the traitor has supplanted me."

These despairing cries did not move the Sultan. An idea once admitted into his head, it was difficult to dislodge, and he ordered the unhappy Omar to be carried away.

This scene had profoundly moved the Sultaness ; and although she had no certain proofs, a secret presentiment seemed to warn her that an adventurer had ingratiated himself with her husband. But how to unmask him was the question—how to discover the truth,—and, above all, how to convince the Sultan of his error.

She caused to be summoned to her all the people who had accompanied her husband to El-Serujah, and made them relate to her all that had passed ; and she then took counsel with her most faithful servants. Several plans were successively proposed and rejected ; but at last an old and prudent Circassian, named Melechsalali, said :—

“ If I have understood rightly, dear mistress, the bearer of the dagger said that he whom you take to be your son, is a poor half mad tailor, called Labukan. Now may he not, while he took the name of the Prince Omar, have given his own name to the prince ? I think if this be so, that I know a method which may entrap the impostor into betraying himself.”

She then whispered some words to her mistress, which appeared to please her, for she instantly rose and went to the Sultan. The Sultaness was a clever woman, and knew well the obstinacy of her husband ; but she also knew his weak points and how to profit by them.

“ Sultan,” said she to him, “ pardon me for the first impulse which I could not resist. During these long years of waiting, my thoughts have often flown towards my son, and I have pictured him to myself as I wished him to be. Well, he whom you have brought to me, did not correspond with this picture ; I feared—but do not be angry—I yield. I believe you ; and I am ready to recognize for my son the young man who brought you the dagger.”

“ That is well,” said the Sultan, pleased.

“ But on one condition,” the Sultaness hastened to add. “ It is a folly—a childish caprice—but still I wish for it. Promise me that you will grant it.”

“ What is it ? ”

“ You swear to accept my conditions.”

“ I swear it ; speak.”

“ I wish that the Prince Omar and the other should

first give me a proof of their skill. I do not ask them to ride on horseback, or to compete in arms ; such trials are sometimes dangerous, and might have fatal consequences. I wish to subject them to quite another test ; I wish that they should each make me a caftan, in order to see whose work will please me best."

The Sultan laughed and shrugged his shoulders. "Really," said he, "that is a judicious proposal ! My son to compete with a mad tailor, who, of course, can work the best."

"But Sultan, you have sworn to me."

"I did swear," growled the Sultan, "but I confess that I did not expect such a piece of absurdity."

"You have sworn, Sultan."

The Sultan would not break his word ; so he went very unwillingly to him whom he had called his son, and begged him to humour his mother, who wished him, as the price of her favour, to make her a caftan with his own hands.

Labukan was delighted at this. "If I can only secure the affection of the Sultaness," thought he, "I shall have nothing left to desire."

Two rooms were prepared, one for the supposed prince and the other for the supposed tailor ; and to each was given a piece of silk of sufficient size, scissors, needles and thread.

The Sultan was very desirous to see what his son would do, but the Sultaness was still more anxious to ascertain if her stratagem was likely to succeed. Forty-eight hours had been given to them to accomplish their tasks ; and on the third morning Labukan appeared with an air of triumph, and displayed to the astonished Sultan his caftan completed.

"Look, my dear father and my noble mother," said he, "is not this caftan a work of art ? I will wager that the best tailor at court cannot make a better."

The Sultaness smiled, and turning to Omar, said : "And what do you bring us ?"

The young prince threw far from him, the silk and the scissors, and with an indignant accent, cried : "I have been taught to manage a horse, to use my sabre, to

send my arrow straight to the mark; but never will I disgrace my fingers with a needle. That would, indeed, be



unworthy of the pupil of Elfi Bey, the valiant ruler of Cairo."

"Oh! you are really my son," cried the Sultaness, "come near and let me embrace you. I claim you for mine. Forgive me, my lord," added she, turning to the

Sultan, "for the art I have employed, but do you not now see which is the prince and which is the tailor?"

The Sultan was filled with anger; but his dignity as master and husband forbade him to give way. "This test is insufficient," said he, at length. "But if I have been deceived," and he glanced towards Labukan, who stood looking very foolish, "there remains to me, I thank Allah, a certain way of discovering it. Let my fleetest horse be brought to me; I shall soon return, but meanwhile let no one be allowed to leave this place."

Not far from this town was an old forest, in which tradition fixed the residence of a good fairy, called Goulgouli, who it was said had more than once aided the Sultans by her counsel, in their hour of need. And it was to Goulgouli that old Saaud was going. When he had reached the centre of a glade, surrounded by vast cedars, the Sultan dismounted, and said aloud: "If it be true that you have aided my ancestors in their hour of need, do not refuse, oh Goulgouli! to listen to the prayer of their descendant, and to aid me."

No sooner had he pronounced these words, than one of the cedars opened, and a small female figure, clothed in white, came out.

"I know why you come to me Sultan Saaud," said the fairy, in a clear voice; "your intentions are upright and pure, therefore I will willingly aid you. Take these two little caskets, and let each of the two young men who claim to be your son, choose one. Prince Omar, whom I know well, will find in his the confirmation of his high rank, while the contents of the other will proclaim the impostor."

Thus spoke the fairy, who thereupon handed to the Sultan, two ivory caskets inlaid with gold and precious stones, and vanished. The Sultan, left alone, felt very curious to examine the contents of the caskets, but although he could perceive no signs of a lock, he could not raise the lid of either. They were precisely alike, except that on one was inscribed in diamonds, "Honour and Glory," and on the other, "Happiness and Riches."

As soon as the Sultaness had heard from her husband

the account of his visit to Goulgouli, and the promise of the good fairy, her heart bounded with joy, for she doubted



not that all would now be set right; and orders were given immediately for the trial to take place in the presence of the whole court. The two caskets having been placed upon a porphyry table, the Emirs and Pashas arranged themselves round their sovereign, and Labukan was then introduced.

He had time to get over his terror ; and since he had not been already driven ignominiously away, he thought that all was not lost. He therefore advanced with a haughty step across the room, and bowing before the throne, said : " What does my father wish ? "

After the Sultan had explained to him, Labukan went towards the table and examined the two caskets. He hesitated long, but at length he cried : " Happiness and riches consist in being your son, I therefore choose the casket which bears that inscription."

" We shall soon know if you have chosen well," said the Sultan. " Let the other be brought in."

Omar looked sad and almost broken down with grief and emotion, as he also bowed before the Sultan and asked for his orders. These having been given, he went towards the table, and read the two inscriptions. After a moment, he said, in a firm but gentle voice :

" Brought up on the steps of a throne, I formerly believed in the excellency of fortune and the permanance of her gifts ; but I have learned how fragile is happiness, how short lived are riches. But I know," continued he, looking round him with flashing eyes, " that in the breast of the brave man, dwells an imperishable treasure—honour, and that the brilliant star of glory need not fade with that of happiness. Therefore, whether I gain or lose a throne by it, I choose honour and glory." Already his hand was extended towards the casket, but Saaud stopped him and commanded him and Labukan to approach the table, and await his orders. While the two rivals stood thus side by side, the one endeavouring to disguise his uneasiness under an affected audacity, the other awaiting his fate with a modest assurance, the Sultan sent for a silver basin filled with water, drawn from the sacred fountain of Mecca. He made the appointed ablutions, and turning his face towards the east, prostrated himself three times, saying :

" Oh, Allah, who hast for so many years preserved our race, pure and without alloy, do not permit any unworthy stranger to sully the blood of the Abassides, but let my real son be revealed to me in this trial."

At a sign from the Sultan, each of the two young men placed his hand upon the casket he had chosen, and the covers, till then immoveable, rose of themselves. In the casket of Omar reposed, on a crimson velvet cushion, a miniature crown and sceptre in gold. In that of Labukan was a tailor's long needle and a ball of thread.

At this sight the eyes of the Sultan were completely opened; and, as if still further to show that the hand of destiny, and not that of blind chance, had guided the choice, no sooner did the Sultan touch the crown than it increased in size till it attained the dimensions of a real one. Old Saaud then, with his trembling hands, placed it on the head of his real son, who kneeled before him, and then embracing him, seated him by his side. Then, turning towards Labukan, who stood trembling :

"As for you, accursed dog," said he, "you shall die under the stick!"

"I beg you to pardon him, my father," said Prince Omar. "Do not refuse me my first request, and let not the joy of my return be saddened by punishment."

"I will spare you, then, wretch, as my son wishes it," said the Sultan; "but let not the rising sun find you in my dominions, if you would not become food for crows."

Poor Labukan, quite overwhelmed, could only fall on his face and stammer out some words of thanks; and, while the nobles pressed round to offer their congratulations to the true prince, he glided out unnoticed, and was soon on his way to Alexandria; but, had he known the reception that awaited him in that city, he would have turned his steps in an opposite direction.

When he presented himself to his old master, he, not recognizing him at first, made him a low bow, and asked him what he wanted; but, no sooner did he make himself known, than the tailor called all his apprentices, who, falling together upon Labukan, overwhelmed him with blows and abuse. Some pricked him with needles and scissors, while all reproached him with his folly, and laughed at him for his extravagant pretensions.

At last he succeeded in escaping, with torn clothes, scratched face, and half killed by their blows, while many

of them pursued him with hootings down the street, until he reached a little inn, where he took refuge.

He was now completely cured of his dreams of grandeur, and his only hope was to find some shop in which he might be allowed to work and gain his living. The next morning, as he looked out upon the minarets and mosques of Alexandria, the events of the last few days seemed to him to be a strange dream, when suddenly an object struck his eyes which recalled to him their reality. This was the casket of Goulgouli which he had brought away with him in his flight.

He thought that the only use he could make of so rich an article was to sell it to some one who would give a good price for it. He therefore went towards a bazaar, with the casket under his arm, and offered it to a Jew, who bought it of him at a twentieth part of its value. This, however, was a considerable sum, with which Labukan was going joyfully away, when the man called after him and offered him the needle and thread which was in the casket.

"Here, young man," said he, "I have no use for these, and it is not to hold such things that a jewel like this was made. Besides," added he, impertinently, "they may serve to mend your caftan."

Labukan took them mechanically. He then bought himself a simple dress, and seeing a shop to let, he went in, came to terms with the owner, and was soon installed there with crossed legs. Having no other work to do, he sat down to mend his old dress, which had been torn by the apprentices.

Before long, however, he left his work to purchase some provisions; but when he returned after half an hour's absence, a marvellous spectacle presented itself: the needle had been working without any hand to guide it, and better than Labukan himself could have done it; and, to add to the wonder, the thread was inexhaustible. However long the needle worked, it was never diminished in the least.

The poor young man who had looked at the needle and thread with so much anger and rage when he found them

in the casket, now thought that they were an invaluable gift.

From that time forward he became devoted to his trade, and was never again distracted by dreams of idle vanity. He was not long without orders; and, thanks to his wonderful needle, acquired the name of the most skilful tailor in the city. He had only to cut out the clothes and tack them together—the needle did all the rest. He had hundreds of customers, for his work was done well, quickly, and cheaply; but what astonished the good people of Alexandria was, that he had no assistants or apprentices, and always worked with closed doors.

Thus was accomplished the prediction of the casket, which promised its possessor happiness and riches. And often when Labukan heard the people speak of the Sultan Omar as the pride of his people and the terror of his enemies; when he heard him praised for his warlike exploits and the dangers he had faced, he felt by the thrill of terror that ran through him that he was not born for a prince or a hero, and would have played a poor part on a field of battle. Then he rejoiced in the result of his adventure; and as he cut out his clothes, he became more and more confirmed in the opinion of all good Musselmen—that no one can change his destiny.





THE DELIVERANCE OF FATIMA.

THE journey of the caravan was continued without any obstacles, and, thanks to the pastime suggested by Selim, the travellers did not become impatient during the long halts necessitated by the burning heat.

Next day, after the slaves had cleared away the remains of the repast, the stranger said to Muley, one of the merchants :—

“ You, who are the youngest of us all, and who are always gay and cheerful, must certainly know some good stories. Think, then, of one of the best that you know, to amuse us after our siesta.”

“ I would willingly comply,” replied Muley, “ but I have always been told that modesty becomes young people ; and I think, therefore, that others had better speak before me.”

At that moment the chief of the escort appeared at the door of the tent with an anxious look. “ Excuse me, sirs,” said he, “ for interrupting you, but I think it will be imprudent to prolong our halt here. We are

precisely in that part of the desert where attacks are made on caravans ; and it is the more urgent either to move on, or to put ourselves in a posture of defence, because one of my men has just told me that he thinks he can distinguish in the distance a large troop of horsemen."

The fear which seized on the merchants at this news appeared to astonish Selim Baruch. "Are we not sufficiently numerous and well armed"—said he, "to have no fear of a handful of brigands ?"

"Doubtless, sir," replied the escort, "if it were an ordinary band ; but for some time the terrible Mebrouk has re-appeared in these parts, and that is what makes us anxious."

"And who is this Mebrouk, then, who inspires such alarm ?" asked Selim.

"There are all sorts of reports about this extraordinary man," replied the oldest of the merchants. "Some people think that he is a supernatural being, because he has often attacked a whole caravan, with only a few men, and always come off victorious. It is from this circumstance that he derives his name of Mebrouk, 'the lucky,' for his real name or country is quite unknown. Others think that he is only a brave sheik, whom revolutions or perhaps his own crimes have expelled from his country. But all we really know is that he is an atrocious thief and brigand."

"Still," observed Lezah, another of the merchants, "one must confess that, robber as he is, Mebrouk has much nobleness in his character. His conduct towards my brother is a proof of it, which I will tell you at a more opportune moment. And also he never acts like ordinary robbers, who spoil travellers without mercy ; he contents himself, they say, with levying a tribute on each caravan that he meets, and this once paid, they continue their way in safety ; for Mebrouk is really, as he loves to call himself, the King of the Desert, and no other troop but his own dares to approach when he is in the neighbourhood."

While they were conversing thus, the anxiety of the escort was on the increase, for there was now no doubt

that a numerous troop of armed men were advancing towards them. One of the sentinels now entered the tent to say that they were certain to be attacked. They held counsel as to what they should do—whether to advance to meet the foe, or await them there. Three of the merchants were in favour of the latter alternative, while Muley and Lezah advocated the former, and endeavoured to persuade the stranger to take the same view.

He, however, drew from his belt a blue handkerchief covered with red stars, and having tied it to the point of a lance, ordered a slave to fasten it up over the tent. This done, he swore solemnly that the Arabs would depart without disquieting them. The merchants were, however, little re-assured, and stood, sword in hand, following the troop with their eyes.

As soon as they caught sight of the mysterious flag above the tent, they seemed to consult together for some seconds; then turning round suddenly, they rode away at full gallop.

Thunderstruck at this unexpected result, the merchants looked first at them and then at the stranger.

"Who, then, art thou, powerful stranger?" asked Muley, "thus to disperse at a simple sign, the hordes of the desert."

"Do not deceive yourself as to the extent of my power," replied Selim, smiling. "I have simply made use of a signal which chance disclosed to me during my captivity. What it signifies I am not aware. I only know that it is of great value in crossing the desert."

The merchants thanked him gratefully; for, from the number of the Arabs, it was evident that they could not have offered a long resistance. The next day, when they halted, Lezah said:—

"Now that we have no fear of robbers, let us speak of this mysterious and terrible Mebrouk. I told you yesterday that he was a man of noble character; permit me today to give you a proof of it, by relating to you the singular history of his meeting with my brother. I shall be forced, however, in order to make you understand clearly, to commence my story at some years ago."

" My father was Cadi in the village of Acara ; he had three children, of whom I was the eldest, my brother and sister being much younger than myself. When I was about twenty, one of my uncles, who had established himself in a foreign country, promised to make me heir to all his wealth, on condition that I should live with him till his death. He was an old man, and before two years had passed, I was able to return to my own country ; but during my absence a terrible blow had fallen on our house, and I was then ignorant how it had been repaired. It is the history of this event which I am about to relate to you.

" My brother Mustapha and my sister Fatima were nearly the same age. They loved each other dearly, and were devoted to our father, and rivalled each other in their cares and tenderness. When Fatima's sixteenth birthday arrived, my brother wished to give a little fête. Having invited all her young companions, they assembled in the garden, where they partook of a collation, after which my brother proposed a sail upon the sea. The young people applauded the idea, and were so delighted with their sail that they kept on begging my brother to go further and further.

" At some distance from the town was a promontory, beyond which the view is unobstructed, except where the town appears in all its beauty, with its white houses, in the form of an amphitheatre ; and my sister and her friends begged Mustapha to go at least so far. My brother hesitated, for a corsair had been seen in the neighbourhood, which made him feel rather uneasy ; but at last he yielded to their solicitations.

" Scarcely, however, had they rounded the promontory, when my brother perceived at a little distance a long vessel filled with armed men. Auguring nothing good from them, he ordered the rowers to regain the land as quickly as possible, but the suspected bark followed them, and being provided with a greater number of rowers, rapidly gained upon them.

" When the young girls saw the danger that menaced them, they stood up on the benches, uttering cries of

distress. In vain Mustapha entreated them to be calm, as by so acting they distracted his attention ; his words were of no avail, and the corsair was close upon them. Already the grappling irons were raised to seize their prey, when the young girls, frantic with terror, rushed all at once to one side of the boat, which overset.



"The strange ship, however, had been noticed from the shore, and several boats had set off to the rescue ; they arrived just in time to save the drowning girls ; but alas not all—for when we were able to count them, my poor sister and one of her companions were missing. In the confusion the corsair had escaped.

"Suddenly we remarked amongst us a man whom nobody knew ; when questioned, he confessed that he had belonged to the corsair, but that he had fallen over in trying to board us, and that in their haste to escape, his companions had abandoned him. He added also that they had succeeded in carrying away the two girls whom we had missed.

"At the news of this disaster the grief of my old father was terrible ; as for that of my brother it was impossible to depict it. He had not only lost his darling sister, but his betrothed, whom he had loved from his infancy, and had in some measure to reproach himself as the cause of the

calamity. My father was a man of severe character ; and, overcome with his grief, he said to Mustapha :

“ Your imprudence has robbed me of the consolation of my old age, and the joy of my eyes. Go, I banish you for ever from my presence ; and I curse you and all who shall be born to you, unless you succeed in restoring Fatima to me.”

“ My unhappy brother had no need of this order ; for from the first moment, he had made up his mind to devote his life, and to brave a thousand deaths, to recover his sister and his bride. He would have wished to take with him the blessing of his father,—but instead of that he was overwhelmed with his reproaches.

“ The corsair prisoner advised him to go to Balsora, where he said that his companions were in the habit of taking their prisoners. It was not easy to find in our little town a ship bound for Balsora. My brother was therefore obliged to go by land ; and mounted on a good horse, and carrying no baggage, he hoped to arrive there before the end of the sixth day. But on the evening of the fourth, as he was riding along, three men, sword in hand, rushed upon him so suddenly, that he had no time to defend himself. Thinking that they were robbers who wanted either his money or his horse, my brother cried out that he would give them all he possessed ; but they, without saying a word, bound his feet under his horse, and carried him away without paying the least attention to his prayers and entreaties.

“ Mustapha and his captors left the high road and entered a thick forest, continuing until they reached a glade surrounded by trees and rocks, like a natural fortification. Fifteen or twenty tents were pitched here, and camels and horses were grazing around. After having unbound my brother, they brought him to one of the largest of the tents, the interior of which was decorated with extreme richness. On a pile of soft cushions lay a little old man ; his face was ugly and wicked looking, and his skin black and shining ; but in spite of the airs of importance he assumed, Mustapha thought that the sumptuous tent could not be for this little monster ; and he found that he was right.

" 'Where is the master ?' said his captors to the dwarf.

" 'He is out hunting,' answered the little man, 'but he has charged me to take his place during his absence.'

" 'This is not your business,' replied the other. 'None but the master can decide whether this dog is to die or pay.'

" The dwarf replied angrily, and a great quarrel ensued ; when suddenly the curtain of the tent was raised, and a tall and proud looking man entered. He was young and handsome ; and although his dress, with the exception of his dagger which was studded with rubies, was perfectly simple, his air of natural dignity showed that he was accustomed to command.

" 'Who dares to brawl in my tent ?' cried he.

" All stood for a moment transfixed with fear ; and then one of those who had captured Mustapha related what had passed, and the master, turning angrily towards the dwarf, who was trembling in the furthest corner, said :

" 'What made you so bold as to usurp my place, Hassan ? Leave the tent instantly.'

" Without replying, the dwarf ran out as fast as his little legs would permit. The chief then turned towards my brother and with an angry look, cried :

" 'Pasha of Zuleika, your own conscience must inform you why you are brought before Mebrouk.'

" At this strange name, my brother replied :

" 'My Lord, you are in error ; I am a poor traveller, and not the Pasha you have mentioned.'

" All in the tent looked astonished.

" 'Your excuse will not aid you,' said Mebrouk, 'for I can bring forward people who know you well. Let them bring Zuleima,' continued he.

" An old woman was introduced. She was a slave, born in the Pashalic of Zuleika, and who had lately come to join the band of Mebrouk, in order to escape the bad treatment to which both she and her son had been subjected by the Pasha.

" 'Who is this man ?' asked Mebrouk, pointing to my brother.

"As soon as she cast her eyes on him, she cried, with a gesture of terror: 'It is he, the monster who had me



beaten with rods—the Pasha of Zuleika. Revenge me, Mebrouk, and with me, all the brave men whom he has tortured.'

"' You see your denial is useless, wretch,' said Mebrouk, turning to my brother. ' This slave recognised you at once. I despise you too much to sully my good sword with your blood; but to-morrow morning I will tie you to the tail of my horse, and ride thus with you from the rising of the sun to its setting.'

" My brother felt his courage fail: ' It is my father's curse that pursues me,' cried he, ' and those also art ruined, my sister, and thou, Zoraide.'

"' Your complaints are useless,' said one of the robbers, tying his hands behind his back, ' and you had better stay here no longer, if you wish to live another night, for your presence irritates the chief.'

"Just as the robbers were leading my brother away, three of their companions entered with a new prisoner; and it was impossible not to observe the wonderful likeness between him and my brother—only the last man was darker, and had a longer beard.

"'We bring you the Pasha for whom you sent,' said the robbers, pushing forward their prisoner.

"'What does this mean?' cried the chief, looking from one to the other. 'Is it sorcery, or are you brothers? Which is the Pasha, my enemy?'

"'If you seek the Pasha of Zuleika,' replied the new prisoner, haughtily, 'it is I.'

"The chief darted at him a long look, while his rising colour betrayed his anger. But he gave orders to lead away the Pasha; and then turning to my brother, he unfastened his bonds and made him sit down.

"'By the Prophet,' cried he, 'it was a strange chance that threw you into our hands just at the time when I was seeking for the Pasha. It had nearly turned out badly for you; but who could imagine such a resemblance?'

"My brother now begged to be allowed to continue his journey, adding that every moment's delay might be fatal to him. Mebrouk inquired the reason of this great haste; and when Mustapha had told him, he still begged him to pass the night under his tent.

"'Both you and your horse must be tired,' said he, 'after four days of incessant travelling; and a night's repose is indespensible to you. Besides—to-morrow morning I will show you a bye way which will lead you in a day and a half to Balsora.'

"My brother acquiesced, and passed the night peacefully in the tent. Confused sounds of disputing awoke him in the morning. He listened and recognised the voice of Hassan the dwarf. He was trying to persuade his companions to kill my brother, saying that if they were foolish enough to let him go away, he would be sure to betray their retreat.

"'If one of you dares to touch a hair of his head,' cried a terrible voice, 'I will kill him like a dog,' and Mebrouk, followed by a slave leading two horses, appeared.

" ' Peace be with you,' said he to my brother, ' and may Allah aid you in your enterprise.'

" My brother was up and dressed in a moment, and was soon on his horse, impatient to set off. After passing the tents, they soon entered a narrow road; and, as they journeyed, Mebrouk related to my brother that the Pasha, whose likeness had so nearly proved fatal to him, had been once before taken prisoner by them, and had agreed, as part of his ransom, to allow his men a free passage through his dominions; but in spite of this promise, had seized one of them a few days after and hanged him. ' He has broken his plighted word, and must die,' added Mebrouk.

" When they reached the border of the forest, Mebrouk reined in his horse, and pointing out to my brother the road he was to take, held forth his hand to him and said:

" ' Mustapha, our acquaintance began in a singular fashion, but you are none the less my guest; and that is a tie between us that nothing but death can break. Take this dagger, my friend; and if ever you find yourself placed in any situation in which you need a devoted arm and heart, send it to me and I will fly to your aid. Take also this purse; it may be useful to you in the work you have to accomplish.'

" ' Thanks, generous Mebrouk,' replied Mustapha. ' I accept the dagger, for I may be glad to claim your assistance; but I have money enough, and do not need the purse.'

" Without adding a word, Mebrouk pressed his hand, and letting the purse fall to the ground, disappeared in the forest with the rapidity of lightning. My brother was therefore forced to accept this present; and when he opened it he was astonished at the munificence of the gift, for it contained an immense quantity of gold; and my brother, thanking Allah for his deliverance, rode off rapidly in the direction of Balsora."

" I confess I shall have to modify my judgment of Mebrouk," interrupted Achmet. " His heart does not appear closed to noble sentiments. But proceed—we are anxious to know what further beset your brother."

"On the morning of the seventh day," resumed Lezah, "Mustapha arrived at the gates of Balsora, and inquired immediately whether the annual slave market was over.

"' You have arrived two days too late, sir,' was the answer; and they added that the market had been a very good one, and that on the last day two young girls of such beauty had arrived, as to cause quite a commotion among the buyers, who had literally fought to see them; and that they had been sold for enormous prices.

"Mustapha asked for more details of these two, and had little doubt that they were the unhappy girls of whom he was in search. He learned also that the man who had bought them lived about forty leagues from Balsora, and that he was called Thinlikos, and was a very singular person—very rich, old, and half mad. He lived in great splendour, and was exceedingly fond of all pleasures, being restrained only by the horrible fear of death; and he was in the habit of consulting every quack doctor whom he met.

"After thinking over various schemes, my brother's resemblance to the Pasha of Zuleika suggested to him the idea of presenting himself under his name at the house of Thinlikos, and when there endeavouring to effect the deliverance of the girls. Thanks to Mebrouk's money, he was able to hire a number of men and horses; and having dressed them and himself magnificently, he set off.

"Thinlikos had a great respect for all people with a title, and therefore received my brother very graciously, and after doing him the honours of his house, and exhausting all the skill of his cooks, he invited him to remain as long as he could. My brother accepted his invitation, and retired for the night full of hope. He had been asleep about an hour, when he was awakened by a bright light. Starting up, he opened his eyes; but believed he must be dreaming, for a few steps from him stood, with a grin upon his face, the hideous little dwarf whom he had seen in the tent of Mebrouk.

"' What do you want—what brings you here?' cried he.

"' Speak lower, speak lower,' said the dwarf, 'for your

own sake; for you will be little desirous, I believe, that the real motive of your visit here should be known. This motive I have guessed; and I come to offer you my services, if you will accept them.'



"Astonishment tied the tongue of Mustapha; and the dwarf went on:

"‘Really, if I had not helped with my own hand to hang the Pasha, perhaps your resemblance to him would have deceived me again; but time presses: let us talk seriously.’

"‘First tell me how you came here,’ cried Mustapha, full of rage at finding himself discovered.

" 'For a long time,' replied the dwarf, 'the haughty manners of Mebrouk have displeased me; and the way he spoke to me about you, completed my disgust. I determined therefore to turn spy, and I think I have not succeeded very badly, since I have discovered the object of your journey, and been beforehand with Thinlikos, in whose service I now am. I have, however, conceived a plan for raising myself higher—let us set fire to the house, and in the confusion carry off the two captives, and anything else we can lay hold off; and, as a recompence for my services, you shall give me the hand of your sister in marriage. If you refuse me, I will go straight to Thinlikos and tell him all I know about the pretended Pasha of Zuleika.'

" 'Wretch!' cried Mustapha, jumping up to seize the little dwarf. But he, springing backwards, let fall his lamp, which was immediately extinguished, and ran away, crying: 'Murder! robbers! assassins!'

" My brother knew not what to do; but a moment's reflection convinced him, that if he wished to save the two poor girls, he must first save himself. Hastily, therefore, gathering together his clothes, and taking his dagger, he ran to the window. It was about twenty-five feet from the ground; but he instantly leapt out, and the moist earth broke his fall. He had to climb a wall which enclosed a garden, but this was a slight obstacle, and he soon found himself in the open country. He ran till he reached a little wood, where he took refuge, tired in body, but not daunted in mind, for he had a conviction that he should succeed. But *how* was the question.

" His horses and servants were lost; but a good deal of his money still remained. He remembered what he had been told of the proneness of Thinlikos to be duped by the vendors of quack medicines and elixirs, and he soon conceived a new scheme. At the first town he came to, he asked for a clever doctor; and for some pieces of gold he got him to make up a strong narcotic, but which in its effect would be only temporary. He then bought a false beard, a black cloak, and a fur cap, a complete assortment of phials, boxes, and little pots—in fact, all the

paraphernalia of a quack doctor : and having placed them all upon an ass, he once more bent his steps towards the house of Thinlikos.

" This time he felt sure that no one would know him ; for his false beard, and the colour that he had put upon his face, had changed him so completely that he could hardly recognize himself. When he reached the house, he announced himself as the famous Arabian doctor, Chakamankabudibaba, descendant of Averoës the Great, a native of Granada, who came to offer the fruits of his long experience to the powerful and magnificent lord Thinlikos.

" He was at once asked in, and invited to dinner, and before an hour had passed he had made Thinlikos consider him the greatest doctor in the world. Mustapha had promised that he should live a hundred years, and perhaps more, if he would implicitly follow his directions.

" ' To begin with, Chakababa,' said Thinlikos, who could not remember my brother's name, and made one for himself, ' you must come with me to my harem ; there are two girls whose state of health disquiets me.'

" Mustapha could hardly conceal his joy as he followed Thinlikos into a room which was richly decorated, but quite empty. Thinlikos approached the wall and put his finger upon a button, and a small opening disclosed itself in the wall.

" ' Here,'—said he, ' each of my wives will pass her arm through this hole, and you can feel her pulse and see what you think of her state of health.'

" This was not quite what my brother expected, but he was obliged to hide his disappointment. Thinlikos now began to call each of his wives in a loud voice. At each name a hand came out from the wall, and the false doctor felt the pulse. Each one was pronounced healthy, until at last, Thinlikos called ' Fatima.' A little white hand glided through the wall, which was seized by Mustapha, who trembled with emotion, and he declared with a grave air that Fatima was threatened with a serious illness.

" Thinlikos appeared much grieved, and begged the doctor to prescribe for her. My brother went out, as if to obey

his order, and tearing a leaf from his tablets, wrote hastily : ' My dear Fatima, I can deliver you if you will consent to take a draught, which will put you to sleep, and cause



you to appear dead for some hours. Do not fear, however ; I possess the means of waking you from this sleep. Let me know only that the pretended remedy which I will send you has not done you any good, and it will be a sign that you accept my plan.'

"Mustapha then returned to the room ; and under the pretext of once more feeling the pulse of his patient, he adroitly slid the note under her bracelet, while he gave her the medicine through the opening in the wall. Thinlikos appeared in great grief about Fatima, and put off the inspection of the others to another time."

"When they had left the room, he said to Mustapha : 'Tell me, frankly, what you think of Fatima's illness.'

"'Ah, Signor,' replied Mustapha, with a profound sigh, 'may the Prophet send you consolation ; the poor girl is attacked with an illness, of which I fear she will die.'

"Full of anger, Thinlikos cried out : 'Dog of a doctor, what do you say ? Fatima, for whom I paid one thousand sequins ? Where is your science, if you cannot save her ? If you do not cure her, I will have you impaled !'

"My brother saw that he had made a mistake, and promised to do all he could for her. While they were talking, a black slave attached to the harem came to tell the doctor that the medicine had no effect.

"'Exhaust all the resources of your art,'—cried Thinlikos, 'save her,—or you know what I have promised you.'

"'I will give her a sedative,' replied Mustapha, and he went joyfully to fetch the narcotic. When he had given it to the black slave, and explained how it was to be taken, he told Thinlikos, that he must go to the shore to gather some medicinal plants.

"The sea was near, and when Mustapha reached the shore, he took off his violet robe, his turban, and false beard, and threw them into the sea, which soon carried them away. He himself hid among the rocks, and waited till night was come, to introduce himself into the funereal vaults beneath the house.

"About an hour after Mustapha had gone out, a slave came to tell Thinlikos that Fatima was dying. In despair he ordered search to be made for the doctor ; but his messengers returned, bringing him word that the unhappy Chakamankabudibaba must have fallen into the sea ; for they could see his body far off floating on the waves.

"Thinlikos, now losing all hope, began to rave with grief. 'Fatima! Fatima!' cried he, 'she was so young, so beautiful! her eyes were so sweet!—I paid one thousand sequins for her! and her teeth, what pearls!'

"Meanwhile, Fatima had gone to sleep quietly in the arms of her companions. Her eyes were closed, her heart had ceased to beat, the colour had left her lips, and all believed her dead. By the orders of Thinlikos, she was to be carried down that very evening and placed in the funereal vaults.

"Mustapha had hidden himself among the tombs; and as soon as the slaves who had brought the coffin had retired, he emerged from his hiding place, and lighting a lamp, drew out a little phial containing the antidote which was to restore his dear sister to life. With trembling hand he raised the cedar lid of the coffin; but what was his dismay at seeing neither his sister nor Zoraide, but a young girl completely unknown to him.

"He stood overwhelmed at this new misfortune, and for a moment felt inclined to abandon her to her fate; but he reflected that she was ignorant of this mistake, and that she might possibly give him useful information. He therefore uncorked the bottle, and put it to the lips of the young girl. She breathed, opened her eyes, and at last sitting up, looked around her; then, throwing herself at the feet of Mustapha, she called him her preserver, and bathed his hands with tears of gratitude.

"Mustapha interrupted her, to ask how it was that it was she, and not his sister Fatima, whom he had found there. The young girl looked at him at first with astonishment, not understanding the question; but at last she cried:

"'Now I understand the mystery of my deliverance. I bore the name of Fatima in the harem; therefore, your note came to me.'

"'But my sister and Zoraide!' cried my brother, with anguish. 'What has become of them?'

"'Both are in the harem,' replied she, 'but have received other names there. They are now called Nourmahal and Mirza. As for me, my real name is Namouna.'

"My brother raised his hands and eyes to heaven with such a gesture of despair that the young girl was moved with pity. 'Recall your courage,' said she;—'listen to me, and perhaps I can show you a way to deliver both.'

"Speak quickly,' cried Mustapha, 'and may the hope that you give me, not vanish as all previous hopes have done.'

"I have belonged for five months to Thinlikos,' said she;—'but from the first day of my arrival here, I have only had one thought, and that was to escape; and night and day I have dreamed only of the means of accomplishing it. Have you remarked in the court-yard a magnificent fountain? Well, some workmen have come to repair it, and I was then able to examine the construction of the aqueduct by which it is fed. The water is conducted along a covered way six feet high and a thousand feet in length, from a stream which flows near the house. And often since I made the discovery have I deplored the weakness of my arms; for I thought that if I could but have raised a single stone, it would have been easy to have glided through this aqueduct into the open country. Now if you could by this means gain access to the harem, and were to bring with you two or three brave men, to disarm the slaves who guard it by night, I think you might succeed in rescuing your sister.'

"My brother's courage rose again at the young girl's proposal, and he thought at once of the promise Mebrouk had made to aid him.

"Come with me,'—said he to Namouna; and they both left the vaults.

"At the first village they came to, Mustapha placed Namouna at the house of a poor widow, and having bought a horse with the rest of his money, he set off at once for Mebrouk's camp. Mebrouk received him with great friendship, and inquired what had brought him back so quickly. My brother then related all his efforts, and how they had been thwarted.

"Mebrouk swore that if he ever met with the dwarf he would strangle him, and added:

"As for you, my friend, I thank you for taking me at

my word. To-morrow we will try if we cannot rescue your sister and your bride from the hands of Thinlikos.'

" My brother embraced Mebrouk and thanked him ; and the next day they both set out accompanied by three armed men, and in two days reached the place where Namouna had been left. She gave them an exact description of the harem, and of the way that they must take to reach the room occupied by Fatima and Zoraide.

" As soon as night came on they set out on their expedition, furnished with torches. They had to walk for nearly half an hour with the water up to their waists before they reached the fountain, the wall of which was very thick and solid ; but attacked at once by four strong men armed with levers and pickaxes, a sufficient opening was soon made. Then, following Namouna's directions, they traversed a covered gallery bordered with orange trees and roses, and then had to pass six doors before they reached that which led to the harem.

" Through the openings of this door a faint light might be seen ; but how to open the door was the question, for to use violence might be ruin. Mebrouk approached, and in a feigned voice cried, 'open,' at the same time knocking at the door. It was immediately half opened, and Mebrouk rushed in. It was the dwarf who had opened it, and Mebrouk seized him by the throat and in a moment he was bound and gagged. Meanwhile, Mustapha seizing the other slave, compelled him to lead him to the room of Fatima and Zoraide, whom he pressed in his arms in a transport of delight.

" 'Let us set off at once,' said Mebrouk ;—'the alarm may be given at any moment.'

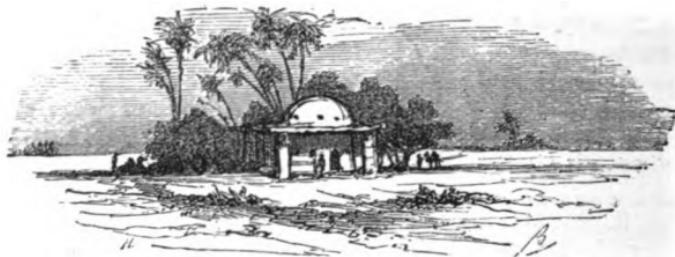
" Nevertheless, before he re-entered the aqueduct, he hanged the dwarf with his own hand, before the fountain. They all then made their escape as rapidly as they could.

" It was with real regret that my brother parted the next day from his bandit friend, the nobility of whose manners and conversation formed such a contrast to his life, that my brother never doubted that he had been driven to it by some dreadful misfortune. But the fear of offending prevented him from questioning his host.

"Namouna went to Balsora, and from thence sailed to her own country. My brother and his charges returned triumphantly to Acara, where the joy of their return was almost too much for my father, till a flood of tears came to his relief. Then turning to my brother, he said :

"'I take off, my son, the curse which I pronounced upon you ; take this maid,' placing his hand in that of Zoraide, 'as the recompense of your indefatigable zeal ; and the blessing of your old father rests upon you both. May our town always possess men who resemble you ; and may the example of your fraternal love and bravery, stimulate in the breasts of our youth the sacred fire of these noble qualities.'"





LITTLE MOUCK.

WHEN the relator had finished his story,—“I am happy, my dear Lezah,” said Achmet, to him, “that we were led to speak of Mebrouk, since that procured us the interesting story of the carrying away and deliverance of your sister. Your brother, Mustapha, displayed a rare constancy amidst the mischances that assailed him, and Mebrouk behaved nobly towards him.”

The other merchants agreed with Achmet, and praised the heroism of the bandit.

Selim Baruch, alone, said nothing, and only pressed Lezah’s hand in token of thanks.

The caravan descended into a pretty valley, at the end of which was a vast Caravanserai, and although it had little attraction in itself, our travellers hailed its appearance with a cry of joy. For even when the pilgrim is not attacked by wandering tribes, the desert is rough and painful to traverse.

All hearts were therefore disposed to be joyful; and Muley, especially felt so gay after their repast, that he began to dance and sing so grotesquely that even the grave Achmet himself could not help laughing. But not content with having pleased his companions in this way, Muley now wished to relate to them some funny story; and when he had rested a little from his gambols, he began thus:—

"At Nicœa, when I was a child, there was a person whom they called Little Mouck. He had the oddest face you can imagine; but what contributed chiefly I think to fix him in my memory is, that I was one day well beaten by my father on his account.

"He was an old bachelor when I made his acquaintance, and was but three feet and a half high. But while his body was diminutive, his head was enormously developed, and rose above his shoulders like a gigantic dome on a slight pillar, or rather, to use a less ambitious comparison, like a pumpkin on a stick; so that he had something the appearance of a cup and ball.

"He lived alone, and cooked for himself; so no one in the city knew much about him, for he only came out once a month, and that in the middle of the day, when the heat kept every one else within doors. Sometimes also, though rarely, he was to be seen of an evening walking on the roof of his house, of which the parapet hid him almost entirely; seen from the street, his big head seemed walking by itself on the roof.

"I and my companions were naughty boys, always ready for any mischievous trick, or to laugh at anybody. One day we assembled before Mouck's house, waiting for him to show himself; when after a little time the door opened, and the big head, covered with a turban, showed itself, and began casting exploring glances all around. Then followed the entire body, and Mouck showed himself to us in all his glory; his shoulders, covered with a little patched cloak, his legs lost in their large trousers, and round his waist a belt which contained a large dagger.

"The air resounded with our cries of delight. We threw our caps into the air, and danced like mad children round the little man. He, however, bowed to us right and left, with a serious air, and went slowly down the street, forced as he was to drag his feet after him, in order not to lose his slippers, which were much too large for him.

"We followed him, crying as loud as we could, "Little Mouck! little Mouck!" or singing songs that we had composed about him. I must confess that I was one of the worst, for I used to pull him by the cloak and throw

paper pellets at him ; and this day I succeeded in stepping on the heel of one of his great slippers, so that he fell down on his face.



"This made us all laugh at first ; but my gaiety soon ceased when I saw him go to my father's house, for I knew what the end would be. I hid behind the door and soon saw him come out again, conducted by my father, who was making all sorts of bows and excuses.

" All these salutations presaged nothing good ; and I began to be very uneasy as to the consequences of my foolish trick. I remained as long as I could in my hiding place, but at last hunger drove me out, and sent me, hanging my head, and abashed, to present myself before my judge.

" ' You have insulted the good Mouck, wicked child,'— said he to me in a severe tone ; ' come here, and I will tell you the story of the poor little man, and I am quite sure that when you have heard it, you will laugh at him no more.'

" I was already rejoicing at the turn things had taken, when my father added : ' but in order that the remembrance may be better engraved in your mind, you shall receive your ordinary punishment.' This signified twenty blows with a rattan, which my father was in the habit of giving me whenever I had been naughty ; but this day he gave them more vigorously than ever before.

" When the twentieth blow had resounded on my poor shoulders, my father ordered me to be attentive, and began his history of little Mouck.

" ' The father of little Mouck, whose real name was Mouckrah, was distinguished for his learning, and though little favoured by fortune, held in much consideration at Niccea. He lived almost as solitary a life as his son now leads. Unluckily he did not love his child, and he was ashamed of his appearance. When little Mouck was sixteen, he amused himself with playthings like a child, and his father, one of the most serious of men, reproached him incessantly for his puerility, without thinking it necessary, however, to attend to the education of the poor child, whose intelligence seemed to him as backward as his height.

" ' One day old Mouckrah fell down and broke his leg. Fever seized him. He lingered for some time and then died, leaving behind him little Mouck poor, and what is still worse, ignorant, and consequently quite unable to provide for his own wants.

" ' Engrossed all his life with his scientific pursuits, Mouckrah had taken but little care of his fortune, and

hardly knew how near he was to ruin at the time of his death. Some hard-hearted relations who had lent old Mouckrah money at large interest, now presented themselves, and turned little Mouck out of his father's house, but not without giving him advice.

"' Go, my lad,' said they, "roam about the world and you will be sure to make your fortune.'

"' Mouck had received no instruction, and his simplicity passed all bounds; but he was gifted with a natural quickness, which made him see at once that supplications would be useless. 'I will go,' said he; 'but at least let me carry away my father's clothes.'

"' The wardrobe of the deceased was not sumptuous, so they bestowed it on his son, talking loudly of the magnificence of the gift. Old Mouckrah had been tall and stout, and his clothes therefore were a bad fit for his son, who, however, cut off what was excessive in length, without caring for the overplus in the width. Hence proceeds the odd dress which he still wears, and which he seems to have made a vow to wear always; for no one has ever seen him dressed otherwise.

"' He put into his belt his father's old sabre; and staff in hand began his journey. He walked gaily all the first part of the day; for he was going to seek his fortune, and never doubted that he should find it.

"' Did he see some great bead glitter in the sun, he picked it up carefully, believing that he had found a beautiful diamond; or if he perceived in the distance the shining cupolas of a mosque, his heart bounded joyfully, for he believed he was reaching an enchanted land. But alas! as he approached, these deceiving images lost their glory, and poor little Mouck began to discover from the weariness of his limbs, and the calls of his stomach, that he had not yet entered the paradise that he sought.

"' He journeyed thus for two days, tired, hungry, and sad; having for food only the wild fruits, and for a pillow only the hard, cold earth; and he was beginning to grow gloomy and doubt his future fortune, when from the top of a hill he perceived the walls of a great city. The crescent shone bright and gay above its gilded cupolas, and it seemed to

little Mouck, that the flags that floated in the wind, invited him to enter.

"Yes," said he, "here I shall be sure to make my fortune," and he jumped for joy in spite of his fatigue.

"Rallying all his strength, he proceeded towards the city; but though it had seemed so near, he could not reach it till noon, for his little legs almost refused their office. At last he arrived; he arranged the folds of his cloak, settled his turban and entered bravely into the city.

"He had already traversed several streets and crossed several squares, and no door had been opened to him. No one had said, as he expected, 'Little Mouck are you tired? little Mouck are you hungry? Come here, little Mouck, eat and drink, and rest your little limbs.' He had stopped before a large and handsome house, which he was looking at with the melancholy inspired by an empty stomach, when at one of the windows an old woman appeared and sang the following strange song :

"Come to me!
Come to me!
My darlings wild and free,
Come join our fête,
The bowl doth wait,
Little ones come to me.

A treat of meat
My friends shall eat
Before the merry ball,
The food is dressed,
Of the very best,
Come to me one and all!"

"Mouck was very much puzzled to know to whom the appeal was addressed, when suddenly the door opened, and an immense number of dogs and cats ran from all sides into the house. At this sight Mouck's astonishment was redoubled; he remained for some moments in perplexity, hesitating whether he also should accept the invitation of the old woman, whose haggard and odd countenance inspired him with terror. However, his appetite decided

him, he took courage and entered the house. Before him trotted a couple of kittens, and Mouck followed them.



“‘When he reached the top of the staircase, he was stopped by the old woman, who asked him in a rude tone, what he wanted.

“‘I heard you invite everyone to your table,’ replied Mouck, ‘and as I have been horribly hungry for three days, I entered.’

"'But, little fool,' said the old woman, 'did you not perceive that it was to dogs and cats that my words were addressed? They are my friends—not men.'

"'But I am very hungry,' replied Mouck, 'and I am so little that I shall not eat much more than a cat.'

"The old woman was a little moved by this speech, and consented to let him sit down to table with two tom-cats, who seemed to regard him as an intruder.

"'Little Mouck,' said the old woman to him, when he had made a hearty meal, 'will you stop in my service? You will have little to do, and will get good food.'

"Mouck, who had been delighted with his pottage, accepted the proposal joyfully, and entered at once into the service of Madame Ahavzi, for that was the name of the old woman.

"What he had to do was little enough certainly, but very strange. Besides the animals of the neighbourhood, for whom Madame Ahavzi kept open house on certain days, she possessed six cats, of whom she took especial care, and it was for their benefit that Mouck was engaged. Every morning he had to wash their fur, comb, and anoint them with precious essences. If their mistress went out, he had to superintend their repasts, and in the evening to put them to bed on silk cushions, and wrap them in velvet coverlets.

"He had also some little dogs to take care of, but they did not require so much attention as the cats. His life was almost as solitary as it had been at home; for, with the exception of his mistress, he saw no one all day but dogs and cats.

"This sort of life suited him very well for some time; he had plenty to eat, and the old woman appeared very well pleased with him. But this state of quietness did not last long; the cats became difficult to manage, and led little Mouck into all sorts of trouble. When the old woman was out, they used to run wildly across the room like mad creatures, playing and pursuing each other, and knocking down everything that came in their way. Thus they broke several valuable vases. When they heard their mistress's step they would run and hide themselves

under their cushions, and look so quiet, that Mouck was always accused of being the cause of the disorder.

"It was in vain to protest his innocence and relate the truth; the old woman never believed him, and more than once threatened to punish him if it occurred again.

"Tired out with her continual scolding, which it was not in his power to avoid, Mouck determined to quit the service of Madame Ahavzi; but as he had learned from his first journey how hard it was to live without money, he began to think how he could obtain the wages his mistress had promised him, but which he had not hitherto received.

"There was in the house a mysterious room, which Madame Ahavzi kept carefully closed, and in which Mouck had often heard a noise. He fancied that it was there she kept her treasures, and often wondered how he could enter it.

"One morning when his mistress had gone out, one of the little dogs, of which she was not fond, but which was much attached to Mouck, seized him by the trousers, and seemed inviting him to follow. Mouck, who comprehended his language, did as he wished, and thus reached the old woman's bed-chamber. The dog went round the room, scratching and smelling, and at last arrived at a panel, before which he stopped, barking and looking at Mouck. He struck on the panel, which sounded hollow. It must be a door—but how to open it? There were no signs of a lock; but the dog kept looking at a figure of a dragon designed in nails in the middle of the panel. Mouck passed his hand over it; and as he did so, one of the nails yielded to his touch, and disclosed to his wondering eyes, the room he had so long wished to see.

"The aspect of it was strange. It contained a thousand different objects; costumes of all times and all countries, stuffed birds, serpents twined round columns, horns, skeletons of men and of animals, cabalistic mirrors, telescopes, cages, &c. Mouck was astonished—he went from one object to another, examining and touching each with the curiosity of a child.

"A magnificent vase of Bohemian glass particularly attracted his attention. He turned and turned it; when

suddenly he heard a noise. He started and let the vase fall, which broke into a thousand pieces on the floor.

"The noise was but a false alarm ; but the misfortune which it had occasioned was only too real. After such an exploit, there remained nothing for him but to decamp at once. However, he began to look round him for something which would do instead of money.



"In the search, his eyes fell on an old pair of slippers of an antiquated form, and which from the size seemed to be made for a giant ; for Mouck could easily have put his two feet into one of them. This was exactly what pleased him ; with such shoes he thought he should look like a man.

"A pretty little bamboo cane with the carved head of a lion on the top, seemed to him a thing useless to Madame Ahavzi, but useful to himself. He therefore took it, and without looking further, ran out of the room and out of the house, and never stopped till he was out of the city.

"In all his life, little Mouck had never run so long and so rapidly ; in spite of the fatigue which overwhelmed him, he felt himself obliged to continue his flight. It seemed as though some supernatural power controlled him. He conjectured, therefore, that he was under the influence of some charm, which lay in his new shoes, and he began to cry therefore, 'Hold ! stop ! gently !'

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"Immediately the shoes stopped, and Mouck sank exhausted upon the ground, where he at once fell asleep. While he slept, the little dog of Madame Ahavzi appeared in a dream, and barked out to him the following sentence :

"' Dear Mouck, you do not yet half know the use of your beautiful shoes. Know then, that if when you have them on, you turn three times on your heel, you will fly through the air and come to any place you choose. Know also, that your little cane contains the true wand of Jacob, and that by its means you may discover treasures in the earth ; for where there is gold, it will strike the ground three times, and twice to indicate silver.'

"Thus dreamed little Mouck,—and no sooner was he awake, that he wished to try the power of his shoes. He therefore raised one foot in the air, and began to turn on the other heel. Whoever has tried to accomplish such a feat in shoes too big for him, will not be astonished that little Mouck did not succeed at once.

"He fell three times, but not discouraged. He tried again and again, and at last succeeded in turning like a top, wishing at the same time to be transported to the next town. Immediately he rose high in the air, and before he had time to think was set down in a great square, in the middle of which stood a great palace. This he soon learned belonged to the king.

"Mouck was now in possession of two precious talismans, but meanwhile, it was necessary to live, and he had not a single coin with which to buy anything to eat. It was very grand to have a cane to show hidden treasures ; but in the first place it was necessary to come to a place where they were hidden, and that was not to be found every day. Flying shoes were useful, but to fly without an object would not feed him. At that moment a king's messenger entered the palace, all dusty and heated from his ride.

"' That is just what will suit me,' thought Mouck. 'Those people are well paid and well fed ; I will enrol myself among them and surpass them all, thanks to my shoes.'

"So going straight to the palace, he asked for the

superintendent of the royal household, to whom he offered his services as a runner. The superintendent burst out



laughing as he looked at the little dwarf before him, who made such an impertinent proposition.'

"' You, a runner ? ' said he.

"' Yes, I, Mouck, son of Mouckrah, surnamed little Mouck ; and I engage to surpass the most expert of his majesty's couriers.'

" The superintendent did not believe a word of this ; but he thought that the little man was some buffoon, who might amuse his majesty.

"‘Very well,’ said he, ‘I engage you. Go down to the kitchen and get something to eat; but at the same time, prepare yourself to exhibit your skill before the eyes of his majesty, and if you value your ears, mind you do well.’

“Mouck did not wait to be invited twice, but went immediately, accompanied by a slave, who desired the cook to give him all he wanted.

“An hour later, he was conducted to a great lawn before the windows of the palace, on which the trial was to take place.

“At that time, they were in great want of amusement at court. Chinchilla, the king’s favourite ape, had died of indigestion, and his beautiful cockatoo was moulting. The gold fish certainly remained, but his majesty had for some time grown tired of looking at them. He, therefore, joyfully hailed the prospect held out to him of seeing a little dwarf, who promised to surpass his fleetest couriers in speed.

“When Mouck appeared, all the court burst out laughing at seeing this little body surmounted by a big head, bowing from right to left. But our friend, not at all put out by the laughter, stood proudly by the side of his opponent.

“The princess Amarza waved her fan, and the two couriers set off like arrows discharged from a bow. But Mouck, carried away by his shoes, reached the winning post, perfectly cool, long before his adversary, who came in quite out of breath.

“The spectators remained for a few minutes stupefied with astonishment; but when the king deigned to applaud, every one else did the same, crying out: ‘Bravo little Mouck! little Mouck is the prince of runners.’

“From that time he was attached to the court as courier extraordinary, and every day advanced higher in the good graces of his master, by the rapidity, intelligence, and fidelity with which he executed all his commissions. This favour, however, excited as usual, the jealousy of the others, who never lost an opportunity of showing their ill-will.

"This state of things made him sad. Naturally loving and disposed to be kind to everyone, he could not bear the hatred or coldness of others.



"'If I could,' thought he, 'render some service to my companions, perhaps they would be different.'

"He then recollect ed his little cane. 'I do not want treasures for myself,' thought he; 'the liberality of the king suffices for me; but if I could discover some gold, I would divide it among my companions.'

"Henceforth, he never went out without taking his little cane, and hoping that chance would lead him where treasures were.

"One day while wandering alone, in the most distant part of the gardens, he felt the cane bound three times in his hand. Full of joy, he drew his dagger and marked the place.

"When night came, he went out with a spade and a lantern in search of his treasure, which, however, gave him more trouble than he expected; for his arms were weak and the spade heavy, and he had to dig for three hours to get down about two feet. At last he struck against something hard which gave a metallic sound, and before long he discovered an immense urn full to the top with gold, most of which bore the date of the last reign.

"The urn was too heavy for him to think of moving it; so he contented himself with filling his pockets, and after carefully covering up the hole, he returned to his room. Finding himself in possession of such a large sum, he believed that things would be entirely changed, and that he should now have as many warm friends, as he had formerly had enemies. Good little Mouck! these illusions show that he had no experience of life, or he never would have thought that gold would win true friendship. He would have done better to have filled his own pockets, turned on his heel and made off.

"Before, they had been jealous of him because of the king's favour; but now they detested, abused, and calumniated him.

"'He coins bad money,' said Ayoli, the chief cook.

"'He has robbed some one,' suggested Achmet, the superintendent of the slaves. And Archaz, the treasurer, his most bitter enemy, who often robbed his master himself, added, 'certainly he has robbed the king.'

"True or false, such accusations rarely fail to ruin the man on whom they fall. The band of envious people consulted together; and Korchuz, the cupbearer, presented himself one day before the king, looking sad and downcast. The king took no notice for some time, but at last growing impatient, asked him what he meant by looking so miserable?

"'Alas,' replied he, 'I am grieved to have lost the favour of my master.'

“‘What do you mean, Korchuz?’ interrupted the king. ‘Since when has the sun of my favour ceased to shine on you?’

“The cupbearer prostrated himself, and in a long harangue, full of expressions of devotion, managed to inform the king that Mouck had been for a long time so amply supplied with money that it was evident the king had put his treasures at his disposal, ‘Unless indeed,’ added he, ‘he has been either coining money or stealing. At all events it seemed to his faithful servants that the king ought to be informed of it.’

“All this did indeed sound very suspicious to the king, and he ordered Mouck to be watched to discover where his treasure came from.

“That same evening Mouck perceiving that his large presents had exhausted his money, and having no suspicion of what was going on, resolved to pay a visit to his urn. He was far from imagining that the very people with whom he proposed to divide his money were acting as spies over him. Just as, after unearthing the urn, he had raised the cover and plunged in his arm, a hand seized his, and some one cried out, ‘Ah! I have caught you.’ It was Archaz, followed by all the others.

“Little Mouck, quite overwhelmed, was immediately bound and carried before the king. His majesty, who was in a very bad humour at being awoke out of his sleep, received him very angrily. The urn, still half full of gold, was placed before him, as well as the spade of the unlucky Mouck; and the treasurer declared that they had surprised him just as he was about to bury the gold in a lonely part of the garden.

“‘Not at all,’ cried little Mouck, ‘I was not burying it, I was digging it up, after I had found it by accident.’

“Murmurs of incredulity followed this explanation, which only increased the king’s anger, who cried out loudly: ‘What! wretch, do you dare to try and deceive your king so grossly after having robbed him? Besides, whether you buried it or not, this gold did not belong to you, and you had no right to dispose of it; but we shall

confound you. Archaz, have you not remarked for some time that immense sums are missing from our treasury ?'

"Yes, your majesty," replied Archaz, "and this young rascal is the robber."

"After this impudent declaration of the treasurer's, the king ordered a gallows to be raised, and the unlucky Mouck to be hung upon it in the morning. Mouck had not wished at first to reveal to the king the secret of his cane, lest he should be despoiled of it; but now that he heard the condemnation, and found it impossible in his bonds to fly away by means of his shoes, he decided to sacrifice half of his fortune, to save the other half and his life. Having therefore begged for a private audience of the king, he threw himself at his feet, and with tears in his eyes, cried :

"Great king, appearances are against me, it is true ; but if you will listen to me for a moment, you will find that little Mouck is not one of those who would betray you. Give me only your royal word that you will save my life, and I will confide to you a secret which will make you richer than the great Haroun-al-Raschid."

"The king, whose finances were in a very bad state, lent a willing ear, and swore to Mouck on the faith of a monarch to spare his life if he told him his secret. Mouck then presented his little cane to his master, and having explained the whole mystery, he added :

"And now, O king, permit your faithful subject to make one more request. My experience of the life at court has disgusted me with it for ever ;—suffer me, therefore, to retire from a sphere which does not suit me, and into which chance alone threw me."

"But the king had been considering that this could not be the only wonder known to Mouck ; that the extraordinary swiftness of his short legs must be due to sorcery—and resolved to extort this new secret from poor Mouck. He, therefore, said to him :

"I promised that your life should be spared, and I repeat my oath that not a hair of your head shall be touched. But the crime of which you have been guilty in appropriating treasure found in my garden, is too great

to be passed over without punishment. You shall live therefore, but you must pass the rest of your life in prison ; unless,' added he in a gentler tone, seeing the expression of terror in the dwarf's face, 'you consent to confess to me by what means you run so rapidly ; and then I will set you at liberty at once.'

"Poor Mouck was so terrified at the idea of spending the rest of his life in prison, that he immediately confessed that all his art lay in his shoes. However, he did not tell the king that he would have to turn round three times on his heel.

"'Very well,' said the king, who now put on the shoes, 'You are free, Master Mouck, to quit my kingdom at once, without speaking to anyone or looking behind you. If you linger for an hour, or speak an indiscreet word to anyone, I will have you flayed alive.'

"The shoes and the little cane were then carefully locked away by the king, who was quite enchanted with his success. Meanwhile, Mouck left the palace, and proceeded rapidly on his way—having become once more as poor as he was when he left his father's house. But then he could only blame fortune, and now he blamed his own stupidity.

"Luckily, the kingdom out of which he was driven was not large, so that, after eight hours' walking, he reached the confines of it, much tired, having been lately always accustomed to use his wonderful shoes. As soon as he had passed the frontier, and was no longer spurred on by the fear of pursuit, he left the high road and turned into a wood, with the intention of living there henceforth in solitude.

"As he wandered through the wood, he came to a pretty little glade, traversed by a fresh stream running noiselessly over its bed, and which was bordered by large fig-trees with knotty trunks and large leaves, the abundant fruits of which, invited the hand of the traveller to pick them. The figs looked so beautiful, that they made Mouck's mouth water, and before long he had eaten a dozen of them. They were delicious, and Mouck thought he had never tasted better fruit.

"He now felt a desire to drink some water, and for that purpose he lay down on the bank of the stream, but jumped up again in terror, as though he had seen some hideous reptile. He remained petrified for an instant,



and then thought to himself: 'It is impossible—it must have been an hallucination.' And, once more approaching the stream, he bent over it, and could then distinctly see his big head ornamented with a pair of asses ears, while his nose projected from his face like the snout of a pig.

"Mouck seized his head in both hands. His ears were nearly half a yard long, while his long nose made him squint horribly.

"'Ah!' cried he, bitterly, 'I have behaved like a stupid ass, and I deserve to have the ears of one.'

"However, fatigued by his long walk, and in despair at his hideous metamorphosis, he lay down, and soon fell asleep. After an hour or two he awoke, and began to search about everywhere for something to eat, more substantial than the figs, but all in vain; he could find nothing else. It is true they were of different kinds, some green and others yellow, some red and some violet. For want of anything better, Mouck was forced to put up

with them ; and as he had already eaten the violet ones, he now picked a dozen of the green, which he found not less delicious than the first.

"He now wished to go once more to the stream to wash down his simple repast, but was restrained by the idea of once more beholding his horrible face.

"'At least,' thought he, I will put the ears under my turban ;' but in vain did he put up his hands to feel for them—they had disappeared. Full of joy, he ran to the stream, and found that he now looked as usual.

"When he came to think over the circumstances, he made up his mind that both events came from the figs, the violet ones having given him the ears and nose, and the green, shortening them again. Continuing to meditate over the adventure, Mouck believed that his good genius had once more given him the means of making a fortune, or at least of recovering what he had lost. He therefore gathered as many violet and green figs as he could carry in his cloak, which he made into a wallet, and threw over his shoulder, and turned his steps the way he had come.

"At the first town he came to, he bought a disguise, and then went on to the capital. It was the time of year when ripe fruits were rare ; and Mouck, who knew the habits of the palace, had little doubt that his figs would attract the attention of the king's purveyors. Indeed, he had scarcely installed himself in the market place, when he saw the chief cook and the major-domo making their accustomed rounds.

"No sooner did they catch sight of Mouck's basket of figs, than the major-domo cried :

"'Here is something fit for the king's table. How much do you ask for the whole basketful ?' said he to the dealer.

"Mouck asked a moderate price, which was paid at once, and the major-domo gave the basket to a slave to carry to the palace. As soon as the bargain was concluded, Mouck went away to prepare for the part which he intended to play in the adventure.

"That same evening there was a grand feast at the palace in honour of the twentieth anniversary of the

king's accession. The chief cook had surpassed himself, and his majesty had already deigned to express more than once his satisfaction, when, at the desert, appeared Mouck's superb figs, arranged in a pyramid, in a basket of gold filagree work. There was a general cry of admiration at their appearance, and the king took from his own cap his great Order of the Fork, with which to decorate his chief cook, who received it on his knees.

"His Majesty then gallantly sent the basket round to the Queen and the princesses; then, first helping himself, abandoned the rest to the guests, among whom were all the princes of his family and the great functionaries of state.

"One of these, the grand Mufti, presently stood up to make an address to the king: but, scarcely had he pronounced the words 'Great King,' when everybody round him began to laugh. He felt offended; but, on looking round him, he began to laugh himself, and soon the whole table was in a roar.

"The laughter soon stopped, however; for every one seeing the state of the ears and nose of his neighbour, began to examine his own, and soon found that no one need laugh at the others. As for the King, his ears were fully a foot long.

"Great was the grief of the Court at seeing themselves in this state. They sent for all the doctors in the town, but no one could give any opinion as to the case, or propose a remedy. At last one proposed simply to cut off the excrescence; but all found the remedy worse than the disease, except the Princess Amarza, who could not console herself for the loss of her pretty little nose and ears. But, alas! in vain did the poor girl submit to the horrible operation! for, no sooner were the nose and ears off, than they grew to the same length again.

"At last some one came to tell the king that an old dervish asked to speak to him, and declared that he could cure the unfortunate sufferers.

"The evil that has come upon you and yours," said he to the king, "is not a natural disease that can be cured



by medicine, but is sent as the punishment of some crime. By the grace of Allah, however, I can cure you, and I will give you a proof of it."

"So saying, he went up to the Princess Amarza, who was hiding her face in a corner, and gave her something

green out of a box. ‘Here, my child,’ said he, ‘take this, and eat it.’

“The princess, who would have swallowed live toads to recover her beauty, ate it eagerly, and a cry of admiration burst from the whole room, for she looked prettier than ever—of which she assured herself by running to the glass.

“The dervish then, turning to the king, said :

“‘What will you give me if, by the power of my art, I do for you what I have done for the princess?’

“‘Ask what you will, good dervish, and I promise to grant it,’ and, as the dervish seemed to hesitate, ‘come with me,’ added the king, and he led him to his treasury, and begged him to choose what he would have.

“The dervish, or rather Mouck—for you have doubtless recognised him—had seen in the corner his valued shoes and his little cane; and, pretending to examine the other objects, he drew near to them; then, jumping into the slippers, and seizing the cane with one hand, while with the other he tore off his false beard, he showed to the king the well-known features of little Mouck.

“‘Perfidious and foolish king!’ cried he, ‘who repay with ingratitude the faithful services of your true friends, while you let yourself be deceived by impudent rascals,—your deformity is a just punishment for your behaviour. You shall keep your asses ears for ever, that you may not forget the unworthy way in which you treated poor little Mouck.’

“‘Wretch!’ cried the king, ‘you shall die under the stick!’ and he called for help with all his might. But Mouck, turning rapidly upon his heel, wished himself a hundred miles off, and was through the window and out of sight before any one arrived.

“After travelling through the world for some time, and gaining a competency by the help of his talisman, little Mouck returned to Niccea, where he has lived ever since a solitary life, for he imbibed in his intercourse with the world, not a hatred—because for that he is too good—but a great contempt for mankind in general. However, he gained much wisdom in his travels, and, in

spite of his strange appearance, is certainly entitled rather to respect than to mockery.

"I had listened very attentively to this story, and when it was finished I expressed my regret for my conduct towards the little man, which my father praised me for, and recommended me not to forget. I soon related to my comrades the wonderful history of little Mouck, and ever after, instead of laughing at him, we bowed with the greatest respect to his great shoes every time we saw them."





THE HAUNTED SHIP.

THE pleasant story of Muley created a universal laugh. Mouck and his enchanted slippers ran all night in the heads of our travellers, and the next morning they were still ready to laugh at the misadventures and the malicious vengeance of the little man, whose wonderful history was almost the only subject of their conversation during the whole day.

After the evening repast, however, Muley, the storyteller of the previous night, addressed himself to old Achmet, with all the respect due to his white beard.

"Will you not also consent," said he, "to relate to us something—history or story, legend or remembrance?—for your life, my father," added the young man, bowing profoundly, "must have been fruitful in adventures of all kinds."

Achmet appeared to acquiesce in this invitation, by a slight motion of the head; but he remained for a moment without replying, and as if considering what he should relate.

"Dear friends," said he at last, "you have been to me during the whole journey, such attentive companions, and Selim also, during the few days that I have known him, has

gained my confidence so much, that I will not relate to you a fictitious tale, but a terrible history of what happened to me in my youth, and of which I cannot even now think without insurmountable horror. It is of my encounter with the HAUNTED SHIP.

" My father was the owner of a little shop in the town of Balsora ; neither rich nor poor, he was one of those people who never willingly embark in speculations, for fear of losing in one day the fruit of long years of labour. He particularly dreaded the sea, and had never dared to hazard the smallest cargo on its waves. One day, however, a friend came to propose to him a transaction of this kind, which presented such magnificent chances of success, that my father allowed himself to be over-persuaded, and consented to embark a thousand sequins—the bulk of his property—in chartering a vessel.

" A week after, we learned that the ship had encountered a tempest soon after leaving port, and had been entirely destroyed. The blow was so violent that my father fell down dead on receipt of the news, without uttering a single word. I was then just eighteen, and this disaster did not dishearten me. I turned all my father had left into money, and resolved to go and seek my fortune abroad. One only of our old servants, who was much attached to me, would not separate his fortunes from mine, and I took him with me.

" We embarked at the port of Balsora with a favourable wind, on board a ship destined for India, and had been at sea about a fortnight, when the captain announced the approach of a tempest. The consternation on his face made me think that he was not so well acquainted with his route on these seas as to be able to meet a tempest without apprehension. Night, however, came in clear and cold ; and already the captain began to think that he had frightened himself without cause, when a ship, that we had not before perceived, suddenly glided so near ours, as almost to touch it. A loud cry of terror sounded on our deck, and the captain, who was at my side, turned as white as a sheet, and cried : ' My ship is lost ! Death is sailing with us.'

" Before I could question him as to the meaning of this

exclamation, the sailors rushed up to us crying and lamenting. ‘ Did you see it—did you see it ? ’ repeated they, ‘ unlucky that we are, all is over with us ! ’

“ After vainly trying to calm himself by reading some verses of the Koran, the captain placed himself at the helm ; but all his efforts failed, the tempest increased rapidly, and before an hour had passed, our ship fell over on her side with a dreadful noise. We threw ourselves into the boats and endeavoured—not to proceed, that was impossible—but to save ourselves from becoming a prey to the furious waves. And the dreadful night appeared as if it would never end. We longed earnestly for day ; but no sooner did it appear, than a sudden and furious gust of wind overturned the boat. I was stunned ; and when I recovered my senses, I found myself in the arms of my old servant, who had clung to the boat and retained his hold of me, and when the little craft was righted, had placed me in it. I never saw any of the others again.

“ The sea was calmer now ; and standing up in our damaged boat we gazed earnestly at the boundless horizon, and before long discovered a ship, towards which the wind was fortunately driving us. When we were a little nearer to it I recognized the same vessel which had frightened the captain so much, and could not help shuddering. The exclamation of the captain which had been so fearfully confirmed, the deserted look of the ship, and the silence with which all our cries were received, terrified me dreadfully ; and yet it was our only chance of safety, and we blessed the Prophet for having presented it to us.

“ By using our hands as oars, we managed to get nearer the mysterious vessel. But it was in vain that we hailed ; no one replied to us. I seized a rope which hung down the side of the vessel, and in a moment was on deck. But what a spectacle awaited me there ! Even at this time, after so many years, I cannot think of it without a shudder. The deck was red with blood, and twenty or thirty corpses, in Turkish dress, lay extended on it. At the foot of the mainmast leaned a man, richly dressed and with a sabre in his hand, but his face was livid and decomposed—he also

was dead. A long iron nail which passed through his brain and into the mast, kept him from falling.



“Terror chained my footsteps, and I could scarcely breathe; soon my companion joined me, and his consternation was equal to mine. However, we went on after invoking the Prophet,—but each step only disclosed new horrors; everywhere was the same horrible stillness; not a breath nor a sound; nothing was alive but ourselves and the ocean. At last we arrived at the stairs leading to the cabin, and here we stopped and looked at each other.

“‘Oh master,’ said my faithful servant, ‘what fearful thing has happened here? Perhaps the murderers are still below. Nevertheless, let us go down, I can no longer bear this horrible spectacle.’

“However, below, as above, their reigned the silence of death. The cabin presented a scene of great disorder; clothes, arms, and articles of every description were strewn about the floor. The crew, or at least the captain and his officers, must have held in this place some recent orgy, followed doubtless by a sanguinary battle, for the floor was stained with both blood and wine. We pursued our

inspection, and found a rich cargo of silk, pearls, gold dust, and other rich and valuable merchandise. This discovery made me brighten up a little; no one living but ourselves being on the vessel, I felt myself justified in appropriating the whole. Ibrahim, however, bade me observe that my joy was premature, and that we must first think of reaching land. After we had refreshed ourselves a little with the food and drink we found in the cabin, we returned to the deck.

“ ‘Let us get rid of these bodies,’ said I to Ibrahim, ‘by throwing them overboard;’ but judge, if you can, of our terror, when we found that we could not move one of them. They were attached to the vessel by enchanted bonds. We equally failed in our endeavour to loosen the captain from the mast, or even to take the sabre from his hand.

“ When night began to fall, I persuaded old Ibrahim to take a little sleep while I watched on deck. The moon had risen, and from the position of the stars I judged that it might be about eleven o’clock, when an irresistible sleep overcame me, and involuntarily I lay down on the deck; yet I was but half asleep, for I could distinctly hear the sea beating against the sides of the vessel, and the wind whistling in the sails. Suddenly I thought I could distinguish the voices of men, and I tried to rise; but the same invisible power seemed to chain me to the deck, and I could not even open my eyes. Yet the voices became more and more distinct, and it seemed to me that a numerous crew was moving about the deck. I could hear the orders of the captain and the sound of feet moving, the cries of sailors and the clang of arms; but little by little my senses forsook me, and I fell into a deep sleep.

“ When I awoke, the sun was high in the heavens. On the deck lay the corpses, and the captain was leaning against the mast. ‘Decidedly,’ thought I, ‘the noises which I fancied I heard in the night must have been a dream’—and I went to seek my servant. He was sitting gloomily in the cabin.

“ ‘Oh, master,’ cried he, when I entered, ‘I would

rather be buried at the bottom of the sea than pass another night in this accursed vessel.'

" ' Why ? ' said I, anxiously.

" ' After I had slept some hours,' replied he, ' I awoke, and could hear footsteps overhead. At first I thought it must be you, but, listening again, I found that there must be at least thirty people moving about. Then I heard heavy steps on the stairs ; the door of the cabin opened, and I saw the same man who is nailed to the mast sit down at that table and drink and smoke and sing, while he who wears the scarlet dress, and who lies near him on the deck, sat in front of him. After they had drunk and smoked together, they appeared to quarrel, and both rushed up stairs, as if to fight on the deck. As for me, struck with horror, I fainted.'

" Thus spoke my old servant ; and you may think into what trouble his words threw me. I had not dreamed then it was the dead men that I had heard cry and run and fight around me. The idea of sailing in such company caused me indescribable horror, and I know not what resolution I should have taken, had not Ibrahim told me that he had just remembered a little formula which had been taught him by his grandfather, for protection against spirits and phantoms.

" ' All that is necessary,' added Ibrahim, ' is to struggle against the mysterious sleep that overtakes us ; and we shall succeed in this by praying fervently.'

" The words of the old man comforted me a little ; but still it was not without great terror that we saw the night approach. There was a smaller cabin out of the main one, into which we determined to retire, and Ibrahim wrote the name of the Prophet on each side of the door.

" About eleven o'clock, I felt the same violent desire to sleep ; my companion began to recite some verses from the Koran. I imitated him, and by this means we succeeded in keeping ourselves awake. After a few minutes we heard above us the sound of steps and voices ; we passed some minutes in suspense, and then we heard steps descending the stairs. The old man now began to recite the formula of which he had spoken :

'Sylphs descend from the heavens,
Arise from the depths of the sea;
Water spirits and phantoms
Glide out of your black tombs,
Come out of your flames;
Gnomes and salamanders,
Allah is your lord and master,
All spirits must submit to him.'

I must confess that I had but little faith in the efficacy of this invocation, and I shuddered when the door opened.

"Clothed in a magnificent dress, the man from the mainmast entered; the nail was still through his forehead, but he had put his sword in its sheath. Behind him came another person, rather less richly dressed, whom I recognised as one I had seen lying on the deck. The captain had a pale face surrounded by a black beard, and a fierce light shone in his eyes. Both sat down at the table which stood in the middle of the cabin, and spoke loudly in a strange language; they appeared to grow angry, and at last the captain struck the table violently with his fist. The other jumped up with a savage laugh, and signed to the captain to follow him; he rose, drew his sabre, and both rushed up stairs. When they were gone, we breathed more freely; but our terrors were not yet over; the tumult increased overhead, and we heard scuffling and shouting, then the sound of steel and a great cry, followed by profound silence.

"When, a few hours after, we ventured again on deck, we found all as we had left it; not one body had changed its place—all were stiff and cold in the same attitudes.

"Thus passed several days, and with every night returned the same horrible scenes. However, we directed our course eastward, where, according to my calculations, we should soon meet with land. But if during the day we made any progress, it seemed that during the night we went back again, for the morning always found us in the same latitude. After thinking much about the cause of this phenomenon, we decided that doubtless it was the work of the dead men; and, in order to ward off this new

danger which threatened to keep us perpetual captives in the midst of the ocean, we determined to furl all the sails before night came on ; and, for the purpose of protecting



them, we took the same measures as we had with our hiding-place, and wrote on each the name of the prophet and the formula which we had used. This done, we waited anxiously to see what would happen.

"That night the noise appeared to be more violent than ever; but in the morning we saw with great joy that the sails had not been touched. We pursued the same plan every night, and now advanced slowly but regularly. On the morning of the sixth day we discovered land, and by a spontaneous movement we both fell on our knees to bless God for our miraculous deliverance. We were about to return to the land of the living.

"The hope of escaping from our floating tomb doubled our strength; we managed to drop the anchor, and, launching a small boat which was on deck, we rowed towards the shore, and when we had taken in a caravan-sarai the repose of which we stood so much in need, I inquired for a wise and judicious man, skilled in magic. Our host led me to a by street, where he knocked at the door of a small house, and told me to ask for Muley.

"'Certainly,' said the sage, Muley, when I had told my story, 'it is in consequence of some crime that this vessel is retained by enchantment on the sea, and the charm would cease, I think, if they were brought to land; but that can only be done by bringing them ashore on the planks on which they lie.'

"I promised Muley to recompense him well if he would aid me in this work, to which he consented, and we set off, followed by five slaves, furnished with saws and axes. On the way the old magician praised us for our idea of writing on the sails the name of the prophet. 'Without it,' said he, 'you would have had no chance of ever seeing land again.'

"It was still early when we arrived at the vessel. We set to work, and in a short time four of the dead bodies were in our boat. Two slaves then took them to land in order to bury them, but they returned, saying that they had scarcely touched the shore before the bodies crumbled into dust. We continued our work, and before evening all the bodies were transported to land—there remained only the man who was nailed to the mast; but we vainly tried to detach the nail from the wood—no effort or tool had the slightest effect upon it. I feared we should have to cut the mast down; but Muley sent a slave for a vase

full of earth, and poured it over his head, pronouncing some mysterious words as he did so.

"Immediately the eyes of the corpse rolled in the sockets, he gave a deep sigh, the wound in his forehead began to bleed, the nail fell out, and he himself fell into the arms of a slave.



"Who brought me here?" said he, in a feeble voice.

"Muley pointed to me.

"Ah, blessings upon you, young stranger!" said he; "you have delivered me from a long martyrdom. For fifty years my body has been tossing on the waves, in the state in which you found me, and every night my soul was condemned to reanimate it with a horrible life; but now the earth has touched my forehead, and I can go to my fathers."

"I begged him to tell me how he had fallen into this deplorable condition.

"'Fifty years ago,' replied he, 'I was a powerful lord, and lived at Algiers. I had enough money to live without trade; but, inflamed with desire to increase my wealth, and wanting money to gratify my vicious inclinations, I equipped a ship with which to trade. One day I took on board at Zante a poor dervish who was returning from Mecca; my companions and I were rough people, and cared little for the holiness of the good man, and more than once he was the object of our indecent mockery, which he always bore patiently, or met with gentle reproaches. But one day when I had drank deeply, he reproached me with the wickedness of my conduct. Rage overpowered me, I knocked him down, and thrust my dagger into his throat.

"'In dying, he cursed us, and condemned us all to remain neither dead nor alive until our heads had been touched by earth. We threw him into the sea, laughing at his menaces; but the night was not over before they were fulfilled. Part of my crew, led on by my lieutenant, rebelled against me; we fought with desperate rage, until all who had adhered to me lay dead at my feet. As for me, I was nailed to the mainmast by these wretches, who soon, however, died themselves of the wounds they had received; and my ship became one vast tomb.'

"'My eyes closed, my breathing stopped, and I believed I was dying; but, alas! it was only a temporary unconsciousness that seized me. The following night, at the same hour we had thrown the dervish into the sea, I awoke, and all my companions with me. Life was restored to us for some hours, without our being able to say or do anything but repeat the scenes of that horrible night.'

"'This dreadful punishment has lasted fifty years. With a savage joy we have often set all sail in a tempest, hoping that at last the elements would be stronger than the curse of the dervish, and that we might go to pieces on some rock; but, unfortunate wretches that we were, death rejected us. But now I am delivered, I feel my life ebbing away with my blood. Thanks once more, my

unknown deliverer. If treasures can recompense you, take my vessel. I give it to you as a small testimony of my gratitude. Adieu !'

"As he spoke the last word, he expired. After I had sold the goods on board for a large sum, I handsomely rewarded the wise Muley, engaged some hands, and set sail for my own country. My townsmen were much astonished at my rapid fortune, and imagined the wildest things without approaching the truth.

"'I must at least,' they said, 'have found the famous valley of diamonds spoken of by Sindbad.'

"I left them in their belief ; and since then, no sooner have the young men of Balsora reached their eighteenth year than they send them to travel, hoping that they will find a fortune like mine. But the world is wide and treasures are rare, therefore I always say to my young friends when they set off :

"'If any lucky chance happens to you, profit by it, and thank Allah ; but remember, that the most precious treasures are courage and perseverance. With those you may acquire all others.'"





THE ADVENTURES OF SAID.

"UPON my faith," cried Muley, when Achmet ceased to speak, "although all ended well, I cannot help shuddering at the punishment of that unlucky captain, with a great nail through his forehead. I cannot go to bed now, I should be sure to dream of it. Besides, my dear Abdul," continued he, turning to the fifth merchant, "if you are to perform your part, it must be this evening; for to-morrow we shall separate. Come, friend, let us have something gay and lively to efface from our minds the dreadful image of the accursed vessel."

"I will do my best," replied Abdul, dropping his long pipe on his knees; "and, if your attention is not too much fatigued, perhaps you will take some interest in the account of the combats and prowess of my compatriot Said, whose name and history, after so many years, are still popular in Bagdad.

"In the time of Haroun-ad-Raschid, the famous Caliph of Bagdad, there was at Balsora a worthy man called Benezar, who was quoted as a model of wisdom and happiness. He had just enough to live comfortably on, without any business; and when in his later age a son was

born to him, he did not think it necessary to alter his mode of life.

“ ‘ Why should I begin to traffic in my old days ? ’ said he to his neighbours, ‘ in order to leave my Said a little richer if I succeed, or poorer if I fail ? Why tempt fortune ? ‘ Where two have plenty a third can live,’ says the proverb. Let my son become only a good and worthy lad ; that is the chief thing, and as to fortune he will have enough.’

“ Thus spoke Benezar of Balsora, and his conduct was conformable to his words. But if he did not think it necessary to bring his son up to earn money, he did not neglect to study with him the book of all wisdom, the divine Koran. And as, in his ideas, nothing was more becoming to a young man (saving respect for age and knowledge) than a powerful arm and a bold heart, he exercised Said in arms, who soon,—thanks to his education, acquired among the youths of Balsora the reputation of a valiant champion, and was not surpassed by any one of his own age in riding or fencing.

“ When he was eighteen, his father judged it right to send him to Mecca, that he might accomplish his religious duties at the tomb of the Prophet, as is ordained by the law. When Said was about to set off, his father said to him :

“ ‘ I have ever, my son, accorded to your past conduct the praise it merited, and I have given you for the future all the counsels suggested by my experience. I have given you the money necessary for your journey ; but I have still a communication to make, not in my own name, but in the venerated name of your mother, now dead twelve years, and, alas, little known to you. I do not share in the general opinions with regard to magic, and do not at all believe in genies, fairies, enchanters, or magicians to be called at will, and who exercise a powerful influence over the life and destiny of men. Your mother, on the contrary, believed in all these things as firmly as in the Koran ; and once, after having made me swear never to reveal the secret but to her son, should she have one, she confided to me that from her childhood she had had commu-

nlications with a fairy. I smiled at her credulity; but still, my dear child, I am bound to confess that your birth was attended by a certain phenomenon which astonished me.

“ ‘ It had rained and thundered all day, and the sky was so black that we could not read without lights. About four o’clock in the afternoon the women came to announce that a son was born to me, and I ran at once to your mother’s room; but her women opposed my passage, telling me that their mistress had sent them all away, and I ordered that no one should be admitted.

“ ‘ Without listening to them, I knocked several times and called your mother; but all in vain, the door remained closed.’

“ ‘ While I stood there the sky suddenly cleared with wonderful rapidity; but what struck me most was, that while it was perfectly blue above Balsora, the rolling of the thunder and the black clouds still surrounded it. While I was looking at the sky, the door of your mother’s room opened, and I rushed in, but was met by such a strong smell of roses, that it turned me quite giddy. Your mother, however, who seemed to feel no inconvenience from it, placed you in my arms, and showed me a little silver whistle which hung round your neck by a chain as fine as silk.’

“ ‘ The good fairy of whom I once spoke to you has been here,’ said she, ‘ and has given me this present to your little son.’

“ ‘ Was it also the fairy,’ said I laughing, ‘ who cleared the sky so suddenly, and who left such a smell of roses?’

“ ‘ Your mother placed her hand on my mouth, and begged me not to laugh, ‘ for,’ said she, ‘ fairies are susceptible, and very easily irritated, and in a moment might change their gifts into misfortunes.’

“ ‘ I said no more, for fear of annoying her; and we never spoke on the subject again, until my poor Zemira felt her end approaching six years after. She then confided to me the little silver whistle, and charged me to give it to you when you should have completed your twentieth year,

for she wished you to stay with me until then. Shortly afterwards she died. Now, my boy, here is your fairy gift,' continued Benezar, drawing out the whistle from a little casket. 'Whoever it comes from, I give it to you as I was begged to do; and I give it up before the time fixed upon, because you are going to leave me; and as I am old, before your return I may be gathered to my ancestors. I cannot, however, see any reason for keeping you here two more years, as your anxious mother wished; you are a good and prudent young man, and manage your arms with as much vigour as any man of twenty-five, and therefore I feel no fear at letting you depart. Go then, my child, and may my blessing accompany you, and in happiness or misfortune (from which may Heaven preserve you) think sometimes of your old father.'

"Such were the words of Benezar of Balsora, as he dismissed his son, who took an affectionate leave of his father, and went away much moved. He passed round his neck the fairy's gold chain, to which hung the little silver whistle; and mounting his horse, rode to the place fixed on for the caravan to meet. Before long, eighty camels and more than one hundred riders had arrived. The signal for departure was given, and in less than an hour Said had left behind him the gates of Balsora, which he was destined not to re-visit for many years.

"The charm and novelty of the route, and the thousand strange objects which our hero now saw for the first time, absorbed his attention for a few days. But when they approached the desert, and the country became more and more bare, and the horizon more vast, Said's thoughts began to wander to other things, and above all to the tale told him by his father. He drew the little whistle out, examined it curiously and then tried to blow it; but all his efforts were vain; it remained obstinately mute. 'It is a useless little bauble,' thought he, as he put it back again; but still he could not forget his mother's mysterious words. Many times during his childhood had he heard stories of fairies and enchanters, but as they never concerned anyone that he knew, but were always about distant places and past times, he had naturally concluded

that the days of such visitations were past, and that fairies had ceased to visit men. But now what was he to think ?

" Said was a handsome young man, with a bright eye, a fine mouth ; and although but eighteen, had a very manly look, which, combined with his dress, and his perfect and elegant mastery over his horse, attracted the attention of his companions. One of them, an elderly man, took particular notice of him, and seemed pleased at the intelligent and respectful way in which he always spoke. They talked on various subjects, and Said at last led the conversation to what chiefly occupied his own mind, and asked his companion if he believed in fairies and genii, good and bad spirits, who persecuted or protected mankind.

" 'I myself have never seen any of them,' replied the old man, 'and yet I must confess that there are numerous well authenticated stories, which force one to believe in their power.' And immediately he recounted to Said so many marvellous tales, that Said began to be firmly convinced that he was really under the protection of a good fairy, who had given him the little whistle that he might summon her to his aid in case of need.

" All night he dreamed of castles, enchanted palaces, flying horses, dragons, and djinns. Alas ! on the morrow, he was destined to see the fallacy of his dreams. The caravan had gone on peacefully nearly all day, when at the extreme limit of the desert a sort of thick shadow became visible. Some took it for a ridge of sand, and others for a cloud ; but Said's friend, who had frequently crossed the desert before, cried out that it was a troop of Arabs advancing towards them. The men immediately ran to their arms, the women and baggage were placed in the centre, and all was prepared for defence. The suspicious mass rolled on. They soon could distinguish the riders and their long lances ; and before long the entire band rushed upon the caravan with the rapidity of the Simoon.

" The travellers defended themselves bravely ; but the assailants were more than four hundred. After having showered on the caravan a cloud of arrows, which made great ravages in its ranks, they charged them with the lance.

At that critical moment our hero, who had shown himself one of the bravest, remembered his whistle ; he seized it and blew with all his strength, but he let it fall again sadly, for he could not bring forth the slightest sound. Furious at his disappointment, and determined to sell his life dearly, he seized his bow, aimed at one of the robbers, distinguished from the rest by the magnificence of his dress, and pierced him through and through.

"Allah ! what have you done, young man ?" cried his friend, "now we are all lost." His words were quickly fulfilled ; for scarcely had the robbers seen their leader fall, than they uttered a frightful cry and rushed upon the caravan with such rage, that the few men who still held firm were quickly overthrown. Said, attacked by five or six Arabs, managed his lance with so much skill, that he held out against them all. Already he had wounded two of his assailants, when a shock sent him backwards on his horse. One of the robbers had succeeded in throwing a noose round his neck, and all his struggles to break it were fruitless ; indeed every effort drew the rope tighter. In this manner, and in spite of his valour and desperate resistance, Said fell alive into the hands of his enemies.

"All the caravan were now overcome, some killed and others made prisoners ; and the Arabs, who belonged to various tribes, proceeded at once to divide the captives and the booty. Said had to march surrounded by four men armed to the teeth, who darted at him furious looks, and abused him violently. This made him think that the man he had killed must have been a person of consequence, perhaps even a prince.

"After three days of a most fatiguing march, during which they only stopped long enough to breathe their horses, they came near to trees and tents. As they approached, a crowd of women and children rushed to meet them ; but at the first word spoken by the robbers, a cry burst from every one ; all looks were turned upon Said, a hundred arms were raised against him, and imprecations rained from every mouth. 'That miserable dog, to kill our great Almanzor, the bravest of the brave !' cried they : 'Let him die, and let his flesh be given to the

jackals.' The prisoners were now bound two and two, and distributed among the tents. But Said was led to one larger than the others, where sat an old man richly dressed. 'The lamentations of the women and your sad looks make me fear some misfortune,' said the old man. 'My son——' 'Is no more, and here is his murderer,' cried all. 'Command, Selim! By what death shall he die? Shall we



pierce him with arrows and chase him like a wild beast? Shall he be hanged or drawn in pieces by horses?'

"Who are you, wretch?" cried Selim, darting a furious look at Said, who stood firm and calm.

"Said replied to his question.

"Murderer of my son,—you killed him, I am sure, like a vile assassin. You would not have dared to meet him face to face; it was behind his back, through treason that you pierced him."

"'No,' replied Said, 'I struck him in front, in honourable combat, after the attack of our caravan, and when I had seen eight of our men fall under his blows.'

"'Does he speak truly?' said Selim.

"'He does,' replied one of the soldiers.

"'Then,' said Selim, making an heroic effort to conquer his grief, 'he has only done what we tried to do to him. He fought and killed an enemy who attacked him. Let his bonds be taken off at once.'

The Arabs looked at their leader in astonishment, and showed no readiness to obey. 'What!' cried one, 'the murderer of your son escape! We should have done better to have killed him on the spot.'

"'No, he must not die,' said Selim, 'I will keep him here. I claim him as part of my share of the booty. He shall be my servant.'

Said, too much moved to thank the magnanimous old man, could only kneel and kiss his hand in token of gratitude and submission. However, the men left the tent murmuring, and when they had told the women and children assembled outside the resolution of old Selim, all the horde uttered doleful howlings, and cried out that they would revenge Almanzor themselves, since his father refused.

The rest of the prisoners were divided among the different families of the tribe. Some were to be released on paying ransom, others were set to watch the flocks or cultivate the ground, and among these were many who had formerly had ten slaves to serve them, but were now forced to work as menials themselves.

But as for Said, whether it was his good looks and noble bearing, or whether it was the secret protection of the fairy, which pleaded for him with the old man, he lived in Selim's tent more like a son than a slave. However, the hatred of the tribe to him was not appeased. If he wandered alone through the camp, imprecations and menaces resounded on all sides of him, and sometimes even arrows whistled by his head. Selim in vain tried to find out the offenders: the whole tribe seemed leagued against him. One day Selim said to Said:

" ' I had hoped that you would have been to me like the son your hand took from me, but I must renounce this hope ; I feel, alas ! that old Selim's protection is insufficient to guard you. I have therefore resolved to send you back to your own country, under the guidance of some faithful men.'

" ' But,' said Said, ' there is no one here but you, noble Selim, whom I could trust ; once out of your sight, they would murder me in the desert.'

" ' Your life would be under the safeguard of their oaths, and the promise of an Arab is sacred.'

" Selim therefore gave to our hero arms and a horse, and then chose five of the most valiant men of the tribe to escort him ; and having made them swear solemnly to respect his life, he took leave of Selim with tears.

" The five Arabs rode along in gloomy silence by Said's side, and he could see that they fulfilled their mission most unwillingly. On the third day he heard them talking in a dialect peculiar to the tribe, which Selim had taken some pains to teach him ; and what he overheard did not tend to calm his fears.

" ' There is the place,' said one, ' where we attacked the caravan ; and here the most valiant of warriors fell by the hand of a boy.'

" ' And, to our eternal shame,' cried another, ' he who struck him still lives and is free. But Selim begins to fall into second childhood.'

" ' Where the father fails,' said another, ' the friend must take it up. Here, at this place, the murderer should perish, according to ancient custom.'

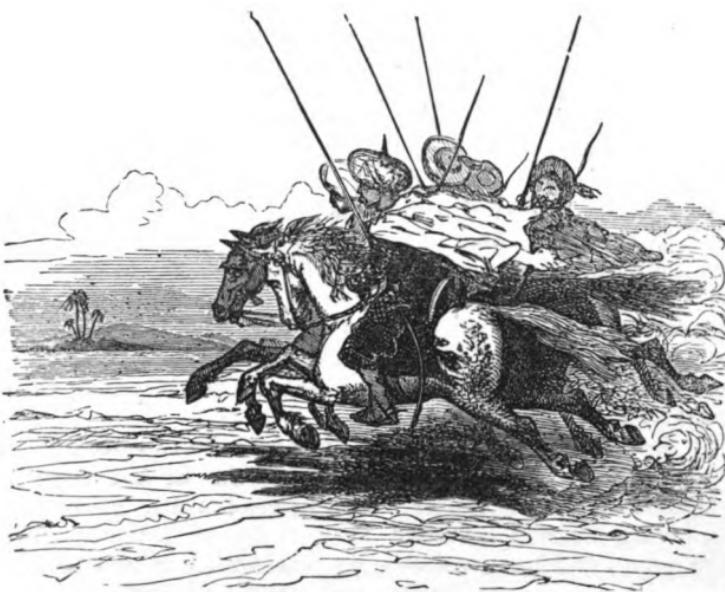
" ' But we swore to the old man, and we cannot kill him.'

" ' That is true, and the murderer will escape.'

" ' Not so,' replied another. " Old Selim is prudent, but we will outwit him. We did not swear not to take him anywhere, only not to kill him. We will not kill him, but we will leave him here bound ; the sun of the desert and the teeth of the jackals will soon do the rest.'

" As soon as Said heard these words, he struck his spurs into his horse and flew over the plain like a bird. The

five brigands stood stupefied for a moment on finding they were understood ; but their hesitation did not last long. They divided into two parties and set off to pursue the fugitive. Knowing the difficulties of the desert better



than the unlucky Said, two of them soon passed him and barred his road. Said tried to turn to one side, but was met there by two others, while the fifth was at his back. The oath which they had taken not permitting them to use their arms, the robbers had recourse once more to their terrible lasso to drag him from his horse. They then all rushed together upon him like madmen, struck him with the wood of their lances, and, having strongly bound his hands and feet, threw him down thus upon the sand.

"Said in vain invoked their pity, reminded them of their oaths, and offered them an enormous ransom, his entire fortune ; but to all his prayers, his promises, and

his cries, the avengers of Almanzor only replied by ferocious laughter ; and, remounting their horses, they set off at full gallop. For some minutes the unlucky Said heard the steps of their horses, and then all relapsed into gloomy silence. He gave himself up for lost. He thought of his father, of the grief of the old man destined to see his son no more. Then he thought of his own miserable destiny to die so young, to starve on the fiery sand of the desert, or, more horrible still, to feel himself torn to pieces by the teeth of some hungry jackal.

"The sun darted its implacable rays on the forehead of the young man. With immense trouble he managed to roll over on the sand, and as he did so, his little whistle fell from his clothes. It was a gleam of hope, and the unlucky young man exhausted himself in efforts to reach it with his mouth. When, after an immense struggle, he succeeded, alas ! it yielded no sound—the talisman was without virtue. In despair, and wearied out in body and mind, the heat of the sun, to which he was exposed, soon rendered him unconscious.

"Several hours passed thus ; when Said was roused by a noise beside him, and at the same time he felt himself shaken by the shoulder. He uttered a cry of terror, believing himself attacked by a troop of jackals. But the sound of human voices soon reassured him, and he felt that a man was untying his bonds ; and he heard some one say : 'He is alive, but his head wanders, and he takes us for enemies.'

"At this Said opened his eyes, and saw before him a little fat man, with a red face, small eyes, and a long beard. This person spoke kindly to him, helped him on to his feet, and gave him something to eat and drink, of which he stood in great need. Afterwards, when he was more recovered, the man told Said he was a merchant from Bagdad, called Kaloum Bek ; that he sold shawls, veils, and other articles of female apparel ; that he was crossing the desert on his way home, when he saw Said lying bound and half dead on the sand ; and that as the sight awakened his compassion, he had done all in his power to restore him. Said assured him of his eternal gratitude.

as, without his aid, he would certainly have perished miserably. Kaloum Bek now invited Said to accompany him to Bagdad, which offer Said was glad to accept, although it led him away from his original destination.

"On the way Kaloum Bek, who was a great talker, entertained his companions with accounts of the magnificent Haroun-al-Raschid, the commander of the Faithful. He praised his justice, his wisdom, and the admirable manner in which he decided the most intricate cases, citing many instances in proof of what he said. 'He is a wonderful man,' continued he. 'Two or three hours' sleep at night is all that he needs. I know all about him, because Mesrour, his chamberlain, is my first cousin. Instead of sleeping, he is always about the city in various disguises, to see that all is going on well. Thus it happens that nowhere are people so polite to strangers by night as in Bagdad; for the poorest-looking Arab might turn out to be the Caliph, and the least rudeness draws down the bastinado on the offender.'

"After ten days' journeying, they reached the city, and in spite of Kaloum's descriptions, Said was astonished at its magnificence; for it was then at the highest point of its splendour. The merchant kindly invited Said to stay at his house. 'I accept gratefully,' cried Said; 'for the robbers have stripped me of everything, and I much feared that except the air, the water of the Tigris, and a step for a pillow, this magnificent city would offer me nothing gratuitously.'

"On the day after his arrival, Said dressed himself to go out, and was rather pleasing himself with the thought of his handsome appearance, when his host came in, and after eyeing him from top to toe, said ironically: "All this dress is very fine certainly; but have you money enough to live comfortably with it?"

"'My dear host,' replied the young man, colouring, 'I have no money at this moment, it is true; the robbers who abandoned me in the desert stripped me of all I possessed; but if, as I trust from your kindness hitherto, you will advance me a small sum with which to regain my own home, my father will recompense you largely for all.'

"Your father!" cried the merchant, bursting into an insolent laugh, "I think that the sun has affected your brain. Do you think that I believed all the fine stories that you told me in the desert? I saw through all your impudent falsehoods. Firstly, I know all the rich merchants in Balsora, and must have heard the name of Benezar, were he one of them. I therefore feel certain either that you do not come from Balsora, or that your father is some poor wretch to whose son I would not lend a halfpenny. So that is your first falsehood. And then that attack in the desert. Since our powerful caliph Haroun-al-Raschid has cleared the roads of the bands of robbers, we hear no more of caravans being attacked and pillaged, and men led into captivity. So there is your second lie."

Said, pale with anger and shame, tried to stop him, but he cried out still more loudly: "And your third impudent falsehood is your stay with Selim. Certainly Selim's name is well known by every one who has conversed with an Arab of the desert, but he has the reputation of being a fierce and implacable bandit; and you dare to tell me that you killed his son, and he took no vengeance? He would have been sure to tear you to pieces! And that he should have defended you against his own tribe, have received you into his own tent, and then sent you away without ransom.—You must confess that you have told abominable lies."

"No," cried Said, in a voice choked by emotion, "I have not lied. All I told you was true. I swear by my soul."

"A fine guarantee!" cried the merchant.

"I cannot, it is true, give you positive proofs of the truth of my words," said Said, endeavouring to repress his indignation, "but did you not find me bound and half dying in the desert?"

"That proves nothing. You are dressed like a rich robber, and I am inclined to believe that that is what you are. Perhaps you attacked some traveller stronger than yourself, who conquered and bound you as I found you."

"Well," replied Said, "you saved my life, and in spite of your cruel suspicions, I thank you for it. But now if

you refuse me any aid, I shall have to beg. And as certainly I will not beg from my equals, I will go straight to the Caliph, and will tell him—'

"Oh! oh! you will go straight to the Caliph, will you? But please to reflect, my young adventurer, that my cousin, Mesrour, would have to present you, and that a word from me as to your falsehoods would be enough. But let us speak seriously. I pity your youth, you may improve, and it seems to me possible to do something for you. I wish to take you from your vagabond life, and therefore have thought of placing you in my shop. You shall serve me as clerk for a year; and at the end of that time, if you do not wish to remain, I will pay you your wages, and let you go where you like. I give you till noon to reflect on my proposal. If you accept, well; if you refuse, I will pay myself, as well as I can, with that fine dress of which you seem so proud, and turn you out into the street naked. You can then go and beg where you like." And the odious shopkeeper left the room, leaving Said, who looked after him with a contemptuous eye, to his reflections. The baseness of this man, who had succoured and led him home only to make a slave of him, inspired him with disgust. After long deliberation he resolved to accept Kaloum Bek's offer for the time at least; for without a farthing of money, how could he hope to reach Balsora? But he trusted to find an opportunity before long of invoking the protection of the Caliph.

"On the following day, Kaloum-Bek took his new clerk to his shop at the bazaar, and told him the duties he would have to perform. Dressed as a shopman, with a shawl in one hand and a veil embroidered with gold in the other, he was to stand at the door and call to the passers by, recommending his wares, and inviting them to enter and buy. In confiding this post to the young man, the wily merchant well knew his own interest. He himself was extremely ugly, and often, as he stood at his door, he had heard people laughing at his appearance.

"Everyone, on the contrary, was attracted by the young and handsome Said, and Kaloum in consequence began to treat him more kindly. But these proofs of an interested

attachment could not soften the grief of our hero, and his days and nights were passed in dreaming of means to regain his own home.



"One day when the sale had been very active, and all the boys kept for the purpose were sent out with packages, an elderly lady came in and made some purchases. As she was paying, she asked for a boy to accompany her home with her parcels.

"'I will send them in half an hour,' replied Kaloum Bek, 'all my boys are out.'

"'Then I must say that your business is very badly conducted, Kaloum Bek,' cried the lady. 'It is your business to send home my purchases, and I demand it.'

"'But pray wait only one half hour, noble lady,' cried Kaloum piteously.

"And what is that idle fellow doing?" cried she, pointing to Said. "Come here, young fellow, and take my parcel."

"Oh no!" protested Kaloum, "he cannot leave the door, his post is there."

"What nonsense!" cried the lady, disdainfully, giving her package to Said. "A fine merchant, and fine goods, that want some one to stand and puff them off! Come, young man,—you shall not lose your time, I promise you."

"Run, then, in the fiend's name!" whispered Kaloum Bek to his clerk, "the old woman will bring a crowd about us if I refuse longer; but come back quickly."

Said followed the old woman, who went with a much lighter step than he had expected from her age.

At last she stopped before a magnificent mansion in a retired place, gave one knock, and immediately the doors opened and displayed a marble staircase, which she ascended, inviting Said to follow her. She then led him to a beautiful room, sat down on a sofa, paid him, and told him to go. But just as he reached the door he heard a soft voice calling 'Said!' Astonished at hearing his own name in a place where no one knew him, he turned round, and saw, instead of the old lady, a marvellously beautiful one. As he looked in astonishment, she spoke again: 'Said, my dear child,' said she, 'I deplore much the sad accidents which have led you to Bagdad; and yet it was the only place marked out by fate for the fulfilment of your destiny, if you quitted your native town before you had accomplished your twentieth year. Have you still your little whistle?'

"Yes," cried the young man joyously, drawing from his neck the gold chain to which it hung. "But you, noble lady," cried he, "are you the good fairy who made me this present on the day of my birth?"

"Yes, I was the friend of your mother," replied the fairy, "and I will be yours as long as you remain good and noble. Ah! why did not your father listen to the counsels of his wife! you would have avoided many reverses."

"Fate had ordained them, I suppose," cried Said, gaily;

'but now, gracious fairy, deign to harness a good north wind to your car of clouds, take me by your side, and in two minutes we shall be at Balsora, by my old father. I



will wait there patiently, I promise you, until the six months still wanting to complete my twentieth year have gone by.'

"Ah!" said the fairy, with a sigh, "that, alas, my poor Said, is not possible. I cannot, now that you have quitted

your country, do anything for you ; nor can I deliver you from the power of Kaloum Bek, who is himself under the protection of a powerful fairy, your most terrible enemy.'

" ' What ! have I not only a good fairy, but a bad one also ? Well, what do I care ! Since I have found you, my noble protectress, I do not fear the malign influence of the other ; at least you can aid me with your counsels. Should I do well to go to the Caliph, tell him my adventures, and ask for his aid ? He is wise and just, and will protect me.'

" ' Yes, it is true that he is wise, but still he is human, and he trusts implicitly to his chamberlain Mesrour, who is faithful to him. But unluckily Mesrour listens too much to his friend Kaloum, in which he is wrong, for Kaloum is a bad man. He has already told his own story about you to his cousin, so that even if you could get an entrance into the palace, you would be badly received.'

" ' But that is abominable ! ' cried Said, saddened again. ' Am I to be forced to be another six months in this odious shop ? Can you not, at least, good fairy, grant me one favour ? I have been brought up in the practice of arms, and my greatest pleasure is a good joust with lances or swords. Now, all the most distinguished young men indulge in this amusement every week, but it requires a fine dress and a good position to obtain leave to join them. A shopman would be ignominiously driven away. Now, if you would but deign to furnish me every week with a horse, clothes, and arms, and alter my face so that it could not be recognized '—

" ' Good,' interrupted the fairy, ' that is a worthy desire. Your mother's father was the bravest warrior in Syria, and his spirit seems to revive in you. Remark this house well. Every week you will find here a horse and two grooms fully equipped, suitable clothes, arms, and a bottle of water, of which a few drops sprinkled on your face will change you completely. And now, farewell, my godson. Be patient, prudent, and virtuous. And above all, whatever trials you may still have to encounter, never despair ; however great human misery may be, the goodness of Allah is greater.'

"Said took leave of the fairy with great protestations of gratitude and respect, and after having well examined the house, returned to the bazaar, and arrived there just in time to relieve his master from an unpleasant situation. A tumultuous crowd had collected before the door, attracted by Kaloum's dispute with two people.

"During Said's absence, Kaloum had taken his place at the door. But no one paid any attention to his efforts to attract notice. Before long two men entered the bazaar, looking about them as they passed along, and Kaloum began at once to recommend his wares to them, crying out: 'This way, gentlemen, you will find here all you can want, beautiful shawls, veils, carpets.'

"'Good man,' interrupted one of them, 'it is useless to make yourself hoarse with calling out. Your goods may be very beautiful as you say; but our wives are capricious, and we'll buy nothing just now except from the handsome Said. We cannot see him, but if you will show him to us, we will buy of you some other day.'

"'Allah! Allah!' cried Kaloum, 'chance has brought you to his door. Enter then, and buy.'

"At this, one of the men burst out laughing; but the other thinking that Kaloum was mocking him, began to abuse him. Kaloum then appealed to the merchants around to know if he had not spoken truly; but they, jealous of his recent gains, declared that they knew nothing about it, and the two men swore that they would punish the old liar for trying to impose upon them. Kaloum, hampered by his shawls and goods, could not defend himself well, and began to utter doleful cries for help, which soon attracted a crowd, but no defender, for he was disliked by everyone. Already one of the men had seized him by the beard, when he was himself seized by a powerful arm and dragged backwards so violently, that his turban rolled on the ground. The other man looked fiercely round; but finding himself face to face with a tall and strong looking young man, judged it prudent to draw in, and after helping up his friend, both went away without buying either shawls or veils of the handsome clerk, who had made himself known so disagreeably.

"Oh ! you are the pearl of young men—the light of the bazaar," cried Kaloum to Said: "ten minutes later, and I should never again have wanted a barber to comb or perfume my beard."

Said had followed a natural impulse of involuntary compassion in what he had done; but he now almost repented having saved the old rogue from his punishment. However, he now made good use of the favourable opportunity, by asking for one evening's leave of absence during each week.

Kaloum consented; for he felt sure that Said would not escape him, being penniless.

On the Wednesday following, therefore, which was the day when all the young men of the place met for war-like exercises, Said asked for his leave of absence, and went to the house of his protectress. Scarcely had he knocked when the door flew open, and two servants requested him to follow them. They led him to a magnificent room, where they presented him with water in a silver basin. Said sprinkled some on his face, and then looking into the mirror of polished metal, found that he was completely changed. His complexion had become much darker, and a fine black beard encircled his face, which made him look at least ten years older.

The slaves then presented him with a complete and magnificent dress, besides a turban of the finest material, surmounted with a plume of rare feathers, fastened by a diamond clasp, and a vest of red silk, embroidered with gold; they gave him a coat of mail so artistically made, that although flexible to every movement of the body, it was impervious to sword or lance. A Damascus sword in a velvet sheath completed his equipment. They also presented him with a fine silk handkerchief, telling him that if he passed this over his face, his dark skin and beard would disappear.

Three horses superbly harnessed stood in the courtyard. Said choose the handsomest, his squires took the others, and they proceeded to the place of meeting.

All the bravest and most noble young men of Bagdad were there, including the brothers of the Caliph. When

Said presented himself, several young men advanced courteously to meet him, inviting him to join the sports, and requesting to give his name and country. Said replied



that he was called Almanzor, and came from Cairo, and was on his way to Mecca, but had heard so much of the skill in arms of the young men of Bagdad, that being very fond of such exercises, he had come out of his way in hopes to be allowed to join them. His look and manner made so favourable an impression, that without asking

farther, they gave him a lance and told him to choose his side, as they always divided into two bands, who tilted one against the other.



"But if Said's appearance had pleased them, their delight at his prowess knew no bounds. His horse was more rapid than a bird, and his sword gleamed like a flash of lightning, and he managed his lance as though it had been a feather. Afterwards he appeared alone in the lists, and vanquished successively the most renowned champions on

the opposite side, so that he was proclaimed master of the field.

"The next day all Bagdad was talking of the handsome stranger, his elegance, bravery, and noble manners. More than once, Said's delighted ears drank this in the shop. The only regret was that no one knew the abode of Almanzor; but this mystery added to the charm which surrounded him.

"On the following Wednesday, our hero found in the fairy's house, a costume still more magnificent than the first. This time half Bagdad was present, and the Caliph himself looked on from his windows. He admired the skill of Said as much as the rest; and when the games were over, he himself hung a thick gold chain round his neck. During four months, Said thus kept Bagdad in astonishment at his prowess; when one evening as he was returning home, he started at hearing some men who were walking before him talking in the peculiar dialect of Selim's tribe. He immediately concluded that they could have come to Bagdad only for plunder, and determined to listen in hopes of being able to counteract their designs.

"'In the street by the Bazaar,' said one, 'this night with the Vizier.'

"'Good,' said another, 'I am not afraid of the Vizier; the good man does not look very warlike. But the Caliph is a different foe; he is young and well armed, and will probably have ten or twelve guards within call.'

"'No,' replied a third, 'he always goes with only the Vizier and the chamberlain. There is no fear, and we may seize him easily without doing him any harm.'

"'Yes, his death might cost us too dear, we will keep him for ransom. I will attack him in front, while you go behind and pass a rope round him. As for the old Vizier, strangle him if you like; he has hanged enough of our men.'

"All laughed at this sally. 'Well, then, close to the Bazaar at eleven,' said they, and separated.

"Said's first impulse was to go to the Caliph and warn him; but then he remembered what the fairy had told him, and reflected that perhaps he should only get laughed at,

or that it would be regarded as an impudent attempt of an adventurer to win favour with the Caliph. So he came to the conclusion that it would be better to trust to his



good sword for delivering the Haroun. Instead, therefore, of going home, he sat down on the steps of a mosque and waited for night. He then proceeded close to the Bazaar, and having found a corner in which to hide, he stood there. Before long he saw some figures approach, and recognized the robbers. Three of them posted themselves not far from Said, while the fourth walked up and down as sentinel, so as to warn his companions of the approach of the people they waited for.

"Before long other footsteps were audible. The sentinel gave the signal agreed upon, and the three robbers darted out. But quick as lightning, Said drawing his sword, rushed upon the robbers, and crying: 'Down with the enemies of the great Haroun,' extended one at his feet.

Two others were busy disarming the Caliph, around whom they had thrown their terrible rope; but Said rushed violently on them, and succeeded in severing with one blow the rope and the wrist of one of the robbers. At the cry uttered by the wounded man, both his companions turned upon Said; but the brave Haroun who had succeeded in getting rid of the rope, now came to his assistance, and drawing his dagger, plunged it into the throat of another assailant. The fourth robber took to flight, the whole combat not having lasted many minutes.

“‘By Allah! the adventure is strange,’ cried the Caliph, advancing towards our hero, ‘and this audacious attack and your unexpected and lucky intervention seem to me equally mysterious. But how did you know me, or discover the criminal projects of these wretches?’

“‘Commander of the faithful,’ replied Said, ‘I was going up the Street Malek a few hours ago, and these men were talking to each other in a strange language, which I once happened to learn. They were plotting to make you prisoner and to murder your Vizier. I knew not how to warn you, so I thought the best way was to post myself here in readiness; and luckily I succeeded in defeating their wickedness.’

“‘Thanks, young man,’ said Haroun. ‘Take this ring, and bring it to me to-morrow at the palace; then we can talk more at leisure, and I will see what I can do for you. Now, Vizier come; the fellow who has escaped may bring a new troop against us. To-morrow we will clear up the affair.’

“Thus said Haroun. But the Vizier, before going, placed in Said’s hand a heavy purse. ‘Take this meanwhile,’ said he, ‘to-morrow we shall see you, I hope, but to-day only is sure.’

“Full of joy, Said rushed home. He was received with a torrent of abuse by Kaloum Bek, who had feared that his clerk had run away from him. Said, who had examined his purse, and felt that he was now free, let him expend his wrath, and then without offering any explanation told him to look out for another clerk, for that he was quite tired of the life he led, and was going away.

" ' You can keep the wages you promised me,' added he, contemptuously ; and went away, before Kaloum had sufficiently recovered from his astonishment to think of opposing him.

" But the next day the merchant sent all over the town to recover the fugitive. For a long time all researches were vain ; but at last he was told by a man that he had been seen in a caravanesrai, and that he was richly dressed.

" ' The wretch ! he must have robbed me ! ' cried Kaloum, and ran off to the police. As he was known to be a relation of Mesrour the chamberlain, he found no difficulty in getting what he wanted. Therefore, as poor Said was sitting quietly talking with a merchant whom he had met, about the best way of getting back to Balsora, he was surrounded by a number of men, who, in spite of his remonstrances and struggles, bound his hands behind his back, and only replied to his questions that they were sent by his master, Kaloum Bek.

" A minute after, the little wretch himself appeared, and after rallying Said on his intended flight, he put his hand into his pocket and pulled out a long purse full of gold. ' See ! ' cried he, ' what he has taken from me.'

" ' Who would have believed it—' cried all the bystanders, ' with his pleasing look ? It is the young clerk from the bazaar. To the Cadi with him ! Let him be bastinadoed ! '

" The Cadi received the supposed culprit roughly. Said tried to explain, but was ordered to hold his tongue and let the complainant speak first. The Cadi then turned to the merchant, and asked him if he recognized the purse, and if the gold had been stolen from him. Kaloum swore that it had.

" ' It is false,' said Said.

" ' Oh ! thieves always deny,' said the judge. ' Can you prove that the gold belonged to you ? '

" ' I defy him to do it,' said Kaloum ; ' he possessed nothing when I found him in the desert, and in the four months that he has been with me I have given him nothing. How could he have got it ? '

" ' It was given to me,' replied Said.

"‘A likely story !’ cried Kaloum. ‘Your former lie is better than that. You have abused my confidence, and little by little have taken the gold from my chest.’

“‘It is enough,’ said the judge, ‘the cause is heard. Take your purse again, Kaloum.’ Then turning to Said, he added: ‘By a recent law of the Caliph’s, every robbery committed in the interior of the bazaar, amounting to one hundred pieces of gold, is to be punished by perpetual imprisonment in a desert island. You shall set off to-morrow, my fine fellow, with twenty honest people of your own class.—Meanwhile, to prison !’

“And the Cadi descended from his tribunal and went away without listening to the cries and supplications of Said, who demanded to be taken before the Caliph. But a laugh and shrug of the shoulders was the only answer, and the unhappy young man was driven with blows towards the Felucca which was to carry him away.

“In a narrow space, so low that no one could stand upright, twenty men were lying extended on dirty straw, like cattle. The entrance of our hero was the signal for a fresh burst of oaths and abuse against the Judge and the Caliph; but after looking at the young man’s noble face, and seeing the silent tears that rolled down it, they saw at once that he was not of their class, and turned from him with pitying contempt.

“Such was the place where, and such were the companions among whom Said was to stay. On the morrow as the judge had said, they put to sea, and began to go down the Tigris, in order to reach the Persian Gulf and the Indian Sea. Once a day only they sent down to the prisoners a basket of spoiled rice and a pail of water; this was the only food allowed them, and Said was forced to content himself with it like the rest.

“They had been sailing about a week, when one morning the unlucky prisoners felt themselves more roughly shaken than usual in their floating prison. The waves beat furiously against the sides of the vessel, and they heard people running violently about overhead. Before long they felt a terrible shock, and heard a frightful crashing: the ship had struck.

" 'By Allah! the water is on us,' cried the prisoners, and all began to strike fierce blows on the hatchway ; but no voice replied, no movement was longer audible. They now tried to stop up the breach with their clothes ; but the water gained rapidly, and in a few minutes they must all have perished, when, by an immense effort, they succeeded in bursting open the door of their tomb. They rushed up the ladder, but to their dismay found the ship completely abandoned—all the crew having gone off in the boats. At this sight a cry of rage burst from every one ; and, driven to despair, these degraded beings thought of nothing but drowning the recollection of their position in drunkenness. They sang and danced as long as they could stand, and at last rolled upon the deck stupidly drunk. Soon, the waves tearing the vessel off the rock, dashed it into a thousand pieces.

" Said, wiser than his brutal companions, kept quite aloof from them, clung to the mainmast, when he felt the last shock. He was tossed about by the waves, but still succeeded in keeping his head above water, when, suddenly laying his hand on his breast, he felt under his fingers the little whistle. Often and cruelly as Said had been deceived by his pretended talisman, he yet remembered the words of the Fairy : ' Never despair.' And collecting all his breath, he put it to his lips. A clear and piercing sound was audible even over the noise of the tempest ; and suddenly, O miracle ! the waves subsided, and then the sea became as smooth as glass. Then he felt the mast under him begin to heave and move, in a singular fashion, and he felt a kind of terror at finding that he was no longer sitting on a piece of inert wood, but on the back of an enormous dolphin. However, he began to gain confidence as he saw that his aquatic courser swam rapidly and regularly.

" He could not fail to attribute this wonderful change to the influence of his good fairy, summoned to his aid by the whistle, and he addressed to her a thousand thanks in his own mind.

" The dolphin swam so rapidly that before the end of the day Said perceived land, and the dolphin entered the

mouth of a large stream. Our hero, however, began to feel extremely hungry, having tasted nothing for twenty-four hours.



"Suppose I were to try the power of my talisman once more," thought he; and putting the whistle to his lips, he tried it again, wishing at the same time for a good meal. Immediately the dolphin stopped; and from the bottom of the sea rose a table, on a fish's back, covered with food, and as little hurt by the wet as though it had never been near the water. All was delicious, and our hero found it a delightful contrast to the wretched fare he had been accustomed to lately. When he had eaten, he thanked the good Fairy as before, not doubting that his words reached her as well as his whistle. Then the table disappeared again, and the dolphin recommenced his journey.

" Daylight was fading away, when, on the right bank of the stream Said perceived a handsome castle. Before he had time to express a wish to stop there, he perceived that the dolphin was directing his course that way. Before the house were numerous slaves, and on the bank two men richly dressed, all of whom were watching the movements of our hero with curious eyes. The dolphin stopped at



the foot of a marble staircase, from which a beautiful avenue of trees led up to the castle. Half-a-dozen slaves flew to help Said to land, and invited him from their master to go to the building. He followed them, and found on the terrace two men of noble appearance, who received him courteously.

" 'Who are you, marvellous stranger?' said the youngest of the two; 'you who know how to tame and

lead the monsters of the deep as a warrior leads his battle horse. Are you an enchanter or an ordinary mortal ?'

"Sir," replied Said, "I am but a simple mortal, but destiny has brought me through strange adventures, and if they would interest you, I am ready to relate them."

"Speak, we are ready to hear."

Said then began to relate to his hosts all the story of his life, and the wonderful succession of catastrophes which had fallen upon him since he left his father's house. They showed great signs of wonder, particularly at the account of the nocturnal attack on the Caliph. When he had finished, the one who appeared to be the master of the house said :

"Said, however strange your story is, I believe every word of it. There is about you an air of truth that cannot be mistaken. But should you meet with any persons more incredulous, who might ask you for proofs, have you any to give ? You say that the Caliph once gave you a gold chain after the tournament, and a ring after the attack on the robbers. Have you either ?"

"Here they are," said Said, drawing them from his breast.

"By the Prophet's beard, it is my ring!" cried the other. "Grand Vizier, this is our preserver !"

"But Said, kneeling down, said :

"Pardon me, commander of the faithful, for having dared to speak so to you ; I knew not that I was before the noble Haroun-al-Raschid."

"Yes, I am the Caliph, and your sincere friend," replied Haroun, embracing him. "From this time forth your troubles are over. I will take you to Bagdad, and there you shall live in my own palace."

Said thanked the Caliph, and said that he should be delighted to do so after he had been home to see his old father again, who must assuredly be very uneasy about him. Haroun approved this resolution of the young man's, and soon they all mounted their horses and rode to Bagdad.

"On the following day Said was with the Caliph and the Grand Vizier, when Mesrour entered, and said :

" ' Commander of the faithful, will you grant your servant a favour ? '

" ' What is it ? '

" ' My dear cousin, Kaloum Bek, one of the most famous merchants of the Bazaar, has just been to me. He is engaged in a singular dispute with a man from Balsora, whose son he had as clerk. This young man, after having robbed his master, ran away from him, and they know not where he is. The father, however, demands that his son shall be given up to him, which it is impossible to do, as he is not there. My cousin, therefore, appeals to your justice to free him from this annoyance.'

" ' Yes, I will judge this cause,' said Haroun. ' Let your cousin and the father be here in half an hour.'

" ' By Allah ! my dear Said,' cried Haroun, when Mesrour was gone, ' this is capital. You were about to go to Balsora to see your father, and he has come to Bagdad ; I was about to punish Kaloum Bek, and the traitor himself comes half way to meet me. And now, as chance has taught me the truth in this matter, I will give a judgment worthy of Solomon. You, Said, hide behind the draperies of my throne till I call you ; and you, Vizier, send at once for the Cadi who condemned Said.'

" Said's heart beat fast when he saw his old father enter, looking pale and worn with grief, and he could scarcely repress the wish to rush into his arms and cry out : " Here I am, poor father ; dry your tears, your Said is found."

" The entrance of Kaloum Bek gave a new turn to his feelings, however ; and his anger prompted him as strongly to rush forward, seize the wretch by the throat, and force him to confess his perfidious falsehoods.

" After the Caliph had seated himself, the Grand Vizier spoke and asked who was the complainant. Kaloum Bek stepped boldly forward and said :

" ' A few days ago, as I was sitting in front of my shop, a crier, holding a purse in his hand, stopped near me, and called out : ' A purse of gold for any one who will give tidings of Said of Balsora.' This Said had been one of my clerks, so I said : ' Here, I am your man.' This

person (pointing to Benezar) was with him, and he advanced towards me, and begged me to tell him all I knew about his son. I then told him in what circumstances I had found him—in the midst of the desert—and how I had succoured him and brought him to Bagdad. On hearing that he gave me the purse at once. But when I afterwards went on to tell him that his son had worked with me, but that he had robbed me and fled, he refused to believe me, abused me, called me an impostor, and ever since has annoyed me with his complaints, claiming both his son and the purse. Now, I can give neither one nor the other ; for I fairly earned the gold ; and how can I find his thief of a son ?'

"Benezar then spoke, representing his son as a good and noble young man, incapable of the crime imputed to him, and adjuring the Caliph to institute a minute inquiry about him.

"'That shall be done if necessary,' said the Caliph. Then, turning to Kaloum, he proceeded : 'Have you denounced the robbery, as was your duty ?'

"'Yes, I took him before the Cadi.'

"'Let the Cadi be brought in.'

"To the astonishment of all, the Cadi at once entered ; and when interrogated by the Caliph, said that he remembered the affair perfectly.

"'Did you question the young man, and did he confess ?' said Haroun.

"'I did question him, O Caliph ; but he pretended that he could only explain himself to your Highness.'

"'I do not remember to have seen him.'

"'No, your Highness ; were I to listen to such fellows, I should have to bring troops to your Highness.'

"'You know that my ear is open to all,' replied Haroun, severely ; 'but perhaps the crime was so well attested that there was no need of a reference to me. Did you produce reliable witnesses, Kaloum ?'

"'Witnesses ! no,' replied Kaloum, rather troubled ; 'your Highness knows that one piece of gold exactly resembles another.'

"How, then, did you recognize yours? Have you the purse?"

"Here it is," said Kaloum, holding it out.

"That!" cried the Vizier, pretending astonishment, "you say that purse was yours? I swear that it belonged to me, and that I gave it, with one hundred pieces of gold in it, to a brave young man who helped me out of a great danger."

"Will you swear that?" said the Caliph.

"Yes, that I will; I cannot be mistaken, for it was my daughter who embroidered it."

"You have then judged wrongly, Cadi," said Haroun; "and since there was neither proof nor witness, what made you think the purse belonged to Kaloum Bek?"

"He swore to it," said the trembling judge.

"Then you took a false oath!" cried the Caliph in a voice of thunder, to Kaloum, who was now as white as a sheet.

"Allah! Allah!" groaned he, "I would not contradict the Grand Vizier certainly—but still perhaps—he might be deceived. Oh! I would give one thousand tomans if Said were here."

"What was your sentence?" said the Caliph to the judge.

"According to the law, I condemned him to perpetual imprisonment in a desert island," stammered the judge.

"Oh, Said, my poor unhappy child!" cried the father, bursting into tears.

"Appear, Said," cried the Caliph, "come and confound your accusers."

As Said appeared, the merchant and the Cadi remained petrified for a moment, as though they had seen a ghost, and then fell on their knees. But the Caliph pursuing his enquiry, said:

"Now, Kaloum, here is Said,—did he rob you?"

"No, no," groaned the wretch.

"Cadi, the law orders you to listen to the accused, whoever he be. And what proof had you of Said's guilt?"

"Only the oath of Kaloum; but I thought he was a respectable man."

"‘ You have betrayed the trust reposed in you,’ said the Caliph. ‘ I banish you for ten years to a desert island, there to reflect upon justice and injustice. And as for you, wretch,’ said he to Kaloum, ‘ you said just now you would give one thousand golden tomans if Said were here; pay that sum at once.’

“ Kaloum prostrated himself, and was congratulating himself on getting off so cheaply, when the Caliph added: ‘ Besides this, as your punishment for your false oath, you shall receive one hundred blows on the soles of your feet; and further, I leave to Said the choice either to take the whole contents of your shop, or to receive ten sequins of gold for every day that he was unlawfully detained in your service.’

“ ‘ No, noble Caliph,’ cried Said, ‘ I desire nothing belonging to the fellow.’

“ ‘ But, by Allah! I choose you to be indemnified for all the grief this wretch’s avarice has caused you. And since you will not choose, I choose for you the ten golden sequins a day, so you have only to count up the time passed with this vampire. It is the love of gold that has led him to do wrong; let him be punished by the loss of his gold.’

“ Said lived henceforward in happiness and riches, honoured and loved by all, for his generosity and noble disposition;—and succeeded in conquering even envy. And it was long a saying in Bagdad, to wish anyone the fortune and bravery of Said, the son of Benezar.”





THE LETTER.

THE story of Said pleased the hearers much. They retired rather early, having a long way to travel the next day, in order to reach Cairo. But in the morning when they were ready to start, Selim was not to be found. They called him in vain ; but as they were conjecturing what his absence could mean, the chief of the escort presented himself, and told them that while they still slept, the stranger had come to him and ordered him to saddle his horse, stating that urgent business prevented him from waiting for the rest of the caravan. "But," added he, "I do not know what his business can be, for instead of going towards Cairo, he turned back in the direction of the desert. I have nothing to complain of him certainly," he continued, "for he has most generously recompensed my little services. And, by the way, I have something for you, Sir," continued he, giving a note to Lezali, who opened it and read aloud as follows :

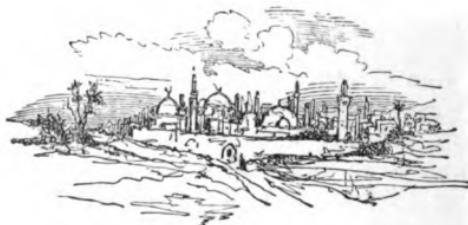
" Warned by my scouts of the coming of your caravan, and knowing that you, the brother of my guest, were among the travellers, I wished, by extending to you and yours the sacred laws of hospitality, to ensure that no accident should happen to you on the way. Some wandering tribe might, however, without my knowledge, have

attacked and robbed you. I therefore accompanied you in disguise to protect you. You are nearly at the end of your journey, and my task is over. Adieu! the hours we have spent together are sweet to me, and made me for the time forget my sad destiny. Return to the bosom of your families, O you whose existence the Prophet has blessed. I go to rejoin my band, the banished from the world, the king of the desert.

“MEBROUK.”

A cry of astonishment followed this discovery, although the talkative guide tried to insinuate that he had guessed before who the stranger was.

“We do not believe that,” said Muley; “but be quick, and prepare for our departure,—for to-night we must sleep at Cairo.”



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