

Tales from Germany

IMAGINATIVE SERIES

SELECTED AUTHORS

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Libraries of Hope

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Imaginative Series

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Tales from Germany

Grimm's Fairy Tales

Edited by Edna Henry Lee Turpin

The Elves and the Cobbler

Once upon a time there lived a cobbler. He was honest and hard-working, but he was very poor. Times were bad and he grew poorer and poorer.

At last he had only enough leather to make one pair of shoes. This he cut out one night.

"Now," he said, "I am all ready to begin work in the morning. I will get up early and make these shoes."

Then he said his prayers and went to bed and slept in peace.

In the morning he got up early to begin his work. How surprised he was to find the shoes lying finished on the table! He looked carefully at them, but there was not a bad stitch in the work. Who had done it? He could not even guess.

Soon a man came in to buy some shoes. The pair was so well made that he bought it for a good price. With this money the shoemaker got leather to make two pairs.

That night he cut them out. But he did not have to make them next day. The work was done for him in the night.

He sold these two pairs of shoes and bought leather for four pairs. These he cut out that night and found finished the next morning.

So it went on. The work which he began one day, he found finished the next. He had only to buy leather and cut out shoes.

One winter night the shoemaker cut out several pairs of shoes. Then, instead of going to bed, he said to his wife: "My dear, I should like to find out who helps us every night. Suppose we sit up and watch."

His wife agreed. So they left the candle burning. They hid

themselves in a corner of the room.

As the clock struck twelve there came into the room two little naked elves. They sat down on the shoemaker's table and began to work. They sewed so well and so fast that the shoes were soon finished. Then they skipped down and away they went.

The next morning the wife said: "Husband, these little men have helped us and I should like to do something for them. Hear my plan! They must be cold, running about with not a rag upon their backs, I will make them some clothes and knit them some stockings. Do you make a pair of shoes for each."

"That I will and gladly, too," said her husband.

So they set to work and made the clothes and shoes. That night they did not put any work on the table. Instead, they laid there the gifts. Then they hid to see what the little men would do.

At midnight in they came. They jumped up on the table, expecting to find leather cut out for them to make into shoes. There was nothing but the beautiful little clothes. The elves looked at them in wonder. They felt the soft cloth and put their hands in the little pockets.

At last they dressed themselves, and jumped and danced for joy. Over stools and chairs they went, singing:—

"Who will wonder at our glee?
Happy little men are we,
Well dressed now, as you may see."

At last they danced out of the room and they never came back any more.

But the shoemaker who had been kind to those who had helped him was never again in want. As long as he lived, he and his wife lacked nothing.

The King of the Birds

A bear and a wolf were walking together in the woods.

"Listen, Brother Wolf!" said the bear. "What bird is that singing?"

"That is the king of the birds," said the wolf. "We must treat him with great respect."

The wolf was in fun, for it was only a little wren. The wren is sometimes called the hedge king.

"Is that the king of birds?" said the bear. "I have long wished to see the home of a king. Come and show me his house."

"Wait till the queen comes home," said the wolf.

Soon Jenny Wren came in sight, bringing food for her little ones.

"The king did not choose a very beautiful mate," said the bear. "Let us follow and see their home."

But the wolf held him back.

"No. Let us wait until the king and queen go away," he said.

When the wrens flew away, the bear and the wolf went to the tree. The bear climbed up to peep into the nest. There he saw five young birds.

"Do you call this a king's house?" he cried to the wolf. "Why, it is only a clod of mud and grass. In it are five ugly little things with big mouths and no feathers."

The young wrens heard and were very angry.

"We are not ugly little things," they cried, "and our home is all that heart could wish. You shall be made to beg our pardon for such a speech."

The bear laughed and went his way. The little wrens cried

and quarreled till their father and mother came back.

"We will not eat a thing, not even a fly's leg, till the bear is punished," they said. "He laughed when the wolf told him we are king's children. He called our nest a clod and said that we are ugly little things."

"Do not fret about that," said the father wren. "The bear shall be punished." Then he flew to the bear's den and said: "Old growler, how dare you show so little respect to a king? You shall suffer for it. Prepare to fight."

The bear called to his help all the four-footed things of the wood and field—the wolf, the deer, the fox, and many others. The wren gathered together all things that fly. Not only the birds, great and small, came to his help, but bees and gnats, and all other winged things.

The smallest of the gnats was sent to find out the bear's plans. He hid under a leaf where he could see and hear without being seen. "Fox, you are the most cunning of us all," he heard the bear say. "So you shall lead in the fight."

"Good!" said the fox. "But we have no flag. What shall we use instead?"

No one seemed to know.

"Well," said the fox, "I have a beautiful long, bushy tail. I will hold it up as long as everything is well. Then you must all go forward. But if I lower my tail, run away as fast as you can."

The gnat flew back and told word for word what the fox had said.

"Ah, ha!" said the wren. "Stands the matter thus? Brother Wasp, when the fight begins, fly to the fox. Whenever he raises his tail, sting it with all your might."

Next morning the fight began. There were so many beasts that the ground trembled under their tread. The flying things croaked and buzzed and squawked, and darkened the air like a thunder cloud.

The fox now wished the beasts to march forward. So he raised his bushy tail for a flag. At once the wasp stung him so

that he jumped high in the air. Still he kept his tail up.

A second time the wasp stung him. It hurt so that he was forced to lower his tail, but he raised it again. When the wasp stung him a third time, he could bear it no longer. He dropped his tail between his legs. Away he ran as fast as he could go.

When the beasts saw this, they were sure that the day was lost. They ran this way and that way to hide. And so the birds won the fight. Back flew the wren to his nest.

"Be glad, children," he cried. "Eat and drink, for we have won the day."

"No," said the young wrens, "we will not eat nor drink till the bear comes and begs our pardon."

The wren flew to the bear's den.

"Old growler," he cried, "if you do not wish to fight again, come and beg our children's pardon." The bear in great fright crawled to the tree and begged pardon for his rude speech. Then the little wrens were quite content. They ate and drank and were merry all the day.

Little Red Riding Hood

Once upon a time there lived a sweet little girl in a cottage with her mother. Not far away lived her old grandmother, who loved her dearly and often brought her toys and gifts. One day she went to the market and came home with a red cap and cloak for her little granddaughter. The child liked them so much that she wore them everywhere she went. So she came to be called little Red Riding Hood.

One day her mother said: "Come, Red Riding Hood. I want you to take these cakes and this butter and this jar of honey to your grandmother. Go straight down the path till you come to her cottage. Do not run for fear you fall and break the jar. And then poor grandmother would get no honey."

"Yes, mother," said little Red Riding Hood, putting on her red cap and cloak. She took the basket on her arm and kissed her mother good-by. Off she went through the woods.

As she walked along the path, she met a wolf. She did not know what a wicked beast it was, and so she was not at all afraid.

"Good day, Red Riding Hood," said the wolf.

"Good morning, sir," she said.

"Where are you going so early, Red Riding Hood?" he asked.

"I am going to my grandmother's, sir," said the little girl. "Mother baked to-day, and I am taking grandmother some cakes and some butter and a jar of honey."

"Where does she live?" asked the wolf.

"About half a mile away in the woods. The cottage stands under a great oak tree, and there are nut bushes near by."

"I will go to see her some day," said the wolf. He thought, "Ah, if only those woodcutters were out of the way, I would eat you at a mouthful! But I may get you yet."

On he walked at her side.

"See, Red Riding Hood," he said. "What pretty flowers are growing here! Would you not like to rest and gather some? You walk straight on as if you were on your way to school. See how pretty it is here in the woods."

Red Riding Hood looked around.

"Grandmother will be glad to have a nosegay," she thought. "It is so early that I can gather some flowers and still get home in good time."

She forgot that her mother had told her to go straight down the path. She left it to pick some flowers a few steps away. Then she saw some prettier ones a little farther on. And so she wandered about till she was deep in the woods.

Meanwhile the wolf ran straight on down the path. He went to the old grandmother's house and knocked at the door. Tap, tap, tap!

There was no answer. The grandmother had gone out to gather cresses from the brook, and had not yet come home.

The wolf knocked three times; then he pushed open the door and went in. There at the head of the bed hung one of the grandmother's caps. He put it on and pulled it down over his ears. Then he got into the bed.

All this time Red Riding Hood was still gathering flowers. At last she had as many as her hands could hold. So she made her way back to the path and walked fast until she came to her grandmother's cottage. She, too, knocked at the door.

"Who is there?" asked the wolf, trying to speak like the grandmother. But his voice was so rough that Red Riding Hood was frightened at first.

Then she thought, "Poor grandmother must have a bad cold;" so she answered, "It is I, little Red Riding Hood. I bring you some cakes and butter and a jar of honey."

"Pull the latch, and the door will fly open," said the wolf.

Little Red Riding Hood pulled the latch and the door flew open. In she went. There in bed lay her grandmother, as she thought. The wolf had drawn the cover up so that she could only see his head. He had pulled the nightcap as far over his face as he could, but his great eyes were shining out.

Red Riding Hood put the basket on the table. Then she went to the bedside.

"Oh, grandmother," she said, "what great eyes you have!"

"The better to see you, my dear, the better to see you," said the wolf.

"And, grandmother, what great ears you have!"

"The better to hear you, my dear, the better to hear you!"

"And what sharp teeth you have!"

"The better to eat you up!" said the wolf, jumping out of bed. He was just about to eat poor little Red Riding Hood at one mouthful. But at that minute the door flew open. In came some woodcutters and behind them the grandmother.

The men had seen the wolf talking to the little girl. Fearing that he meant harm, they followed him, and on the way they met the grandmother coming home. One blow from a woodcutter's sharp ax and the wicked wolf lay dead on the floor.

And of one thing you may be sure—little Red Riding Hood never stopped in the woods again to talk with a wolf.

The Three Little Men in the Woods

Once upon a time there was a man whose wife died and left him with one daughter. Not far away lived a widow who had also one daughter.

One day the two girls were playing together. The woman said to the man's daughter, "Go, tell your father that if he marries me you shall wash in milk and drink wine while my child shall wash in water and water she shall drink."

The girl went home and told her father the woman's words.

Then said the man, "What shall I do? Shall I marry again or not?" At last he pulled off his boot and said to his daughter, "Take this boot which has a hole in the sole. Hang it up on a nail and pour in water. If it holds the water, I will again take a wife. But if not, I will not marry."

The girl did as her father told her. The water made the leather swell and drew the hole together. So when the man came to look at the boot it was full to the brim. He went then to the woman and soon after they were married.

The first day the husband's daughter had milk to wash in and wine to drink. The wife's daughter had only water. The second day there was water for them both. But the third day there were milk and wine for the wife's daughter and there was only water for the stepchild. So it was from this day on.

The wife hated the stepchild because she was prettier and better than her own daughter. Not a day passed in which she did not do something unkind to the poor girl, who bore it all without a word.

At last winter came. The ground was white with snow and the bare trees shivered in the cold wind.

One bitter morning the woman called her stepchild and said, "Put on this muslin dress and go out in the woods. Take this basket and bring it back full of strawberries. Strawberries I wish, and strawberries I will have."

"Alas!" said the poor girl. "Where can I find strawberries now when the ground is covered with snow? I shall freeze in this thin muslin dress. It is so cold to-day that one's breath freezes on the lips."

"Why do you stand talking there?" asked the woman. "Go at once as I tell you. Do not dare come back without the strawberries. Here is your dinner."

She put a crust of bread in the girl's hand. Then she pushed her out and shut and locked the door.

"She will freeze or die of hunger," thought the wicked woman. "Then I shall never be vexed by seeing her again."

The girl stood a little while crying and shivering on the doorstep. Then she walked on down the road. As far as she could see, the ground was white with snow.

"I will go into the woods," she said to herself. "There, at least, I shall be sheltered from this bitter wind."

On and on she went until she came to a little cottage. She knocked at the door and a voice cried "Come in." She opened the door and went into a room where there were three little men.

"Good-day," she said. "May I please sit beside your fire and warm myself while I eat my dinner?"

They nodded their heads. So she sat down on a stool in the corner and took out her crust.

Then one of the little men said, "Give us a piece of your bread."

"Willingly," she answered. So she broke the bread in two and gave them the larger piece.

After a while one of them asked, "Why do you wear a muslin dress this bitter day?"

"Ah," she answered, "my stepmother made me put it on.

She sent me to fill this basket with strawberries and told me not to come home without them."

The little men said no more until she finished eating her crust. Then one of them gave her a broom and said, "Go and sweep away the snow from our back door."

Without a word the girl took the broom and went out.

"She is kind and sweet-tempered," said one. "What good fortune shall we give her?"

"I promise," said the first, "that she shall grow more beautiful every day."

"I promise," said the second, "that whenever she opens her mouth to speak a gold piece shall fall out."

"And I promise," said the third, "that she shall marry a king's son."

While they talked, the maiden was busy sweeping at the back door. And what do you think she found there? Why, strawberries, ripe and red, hid under the snow.

"They are for you," said the little men.

She thanked them, and filled her basket as quickly as she could. Then home she ran, so fast that she kept quite warm.

"Good evening," she said, as she came into the house. Out dropped a piece of gold from her mouth.

How surprised her stepmother and her stepsister were! She showed the strawberries, and told what had happened in the woods. And at every word a piece of gold fell from her mouth. Soon the room glittered with gold. Then the woman's own daughter said, "I, too, will go into the woods to find strawberries."

"Oh, no, no, my dear little daughter!" said the mother. "It is far too cold."

But the girl cried and fretted, and begged to go.

So at last her mother said: "Go then, but dress yourself from head to foot in fur. Take this large piece of cake to eat when you are hungry."

The girl went out, and followed her sister's footprints in

the snow till she came to the cottage. She did not stop to knock at the door. Into the room she went and sat down beside the fire. When she was warm, she took out her cake and began to eat.

"Give us a piece of your cake," said one of the little men.

"I have no more than I want myself," she answered, and kept on eating.

They waited till she finished. Then one of the little men said: "There is a broom in the corner. Take it and sweep around the back door."

"Go and sweep for yourself," she cried. "It is not my place to serve you."

Then she remembered that her sister had found the strawberries at the back door. So at last she took the broom and went out, grumbling.

"What shall we give her?" asked one of the little men. "She has such a bad and unkind heart that we can give her nothing good."

"She must grow more and more ugly every day," said the first.

"Out of her mouth, when she speaks, shall fall frogs and toads," said the second.

"She shall come to a bad end at the last," said the third.

After sweeping away the snow, the maiden searched for strawberries. But not one could she find, so she went home much vexed.

When she opened her mouth to tell her mother what had happened, how frightened she was! Out of her mouth jumped frogs and toads.

So it was from that time on. And every day she grew uglier and uglier, and so cross and spiteful that no one could bear to be near her. At last she died, and no one shed a single tear.

Meanwhile her stepsister had a harder time than ever. Every day she had to sit outdoors in the snow and spin.

One day as she sat there with tears frozen on her cheeks,

like pearls, a coach came by. In it sat the young king with his crown on his head.

When he saw the beautiful maiden, he stopped and said, "Why are you out in the cold, poor maiden, and what are you doing?"

"My stepmother has driven me from the house," she said, "and sent me here to spin." And at every word there fell gold pieces from her mouth.

Then the king was full of wonder and said, "Will you go home with me?"

"Oh, yes," she said, "with all my heart."

"Come, then, and I will make you my queen," said the king.

The Fairy's Two Gifts

A fairy was once wandering about in the shape of a poor old woman. Night came on as she was going along a country road. She went past fields and woods till she came to two houses. One, large and beautiful, belonged to a rich man. The other was the little cottage of a poor ditcher.

The fairy thought, "It will be no trouble to the rich man to give me shelter."

So she went to his door and knocked.

He opened a window and called out, "Who is there? What do you want?"

"I have lost my way, and night is near," said the fairy. "I beg you to give me shelter."

The rich man looked at her from head to foot. Then he shook his head and said, "I cannot take you in. If I let in every poor man and woman who knocks at my door, I shall soon be a beggar myself. Go your way."

Then he shut the window and left her outdoors.

She turned her back upon his house and went to the cottage. As soon as she knocked, the ditcher opened the door and asked her to come in.

"You look tired," he said, "and it is already late. You must spend the night with us."

His wife then came forward.

"We have not much, good mother," she said. "But what there is we will share, with all our hearts."

There were some potatoes cooking on the fire, and the woman brought out a bowl of bread and milk. The supper was good, because it was seasoned with peace and content.

When bedtime came, the wife called her husband aside.

"Dear husband," she said, "let us make a bed of straw for ourselves. Then this poor woman can lie in our bed and rest. She is old, and, after walking the whole day, she must be tired."

"With all my heart," said the husband.

The fairy did not wish them to do this, but they would not take "no." So she rested in their bed, and they slept on a bundle of straw.

In the morning the wife got up and cooked breakfast. The sun shone into the room, and the faces of the man and the woman were as bright as the day. After breakfast the fairy thanked them and said good-by.

But at the door she turned and said: "You were kind to me when you thought I was poor and could do nothing in return. To show you that I have both will and power to aid you, I will grant you three wishes."

"What more can I wish," asked the husband, "than that we two, as long as we live, may be well and strong, and that we may not want our daily bread? I cannot think of a third wish."

"Would you not like a new house?" asked the fairy, smiling.

"Oh, yes," cried the ditcher and his wife, "that we would. With these three wishes granted, we want nothing more."

The fairy changed the old house into a new one. Then she went her way, promising that their other wishes also should be granted.

About noon the rich man happened to look out of his window. To his surprise, he saw the new cottage. He stared at it a long time. Then he called his wife and said: "Yesterday there was a poor old cottage across the road. To-day there is a pretty new one in the same place. Run over and ask how this came to pass."

The wife went and asked the ditcher, "How in one night did you get a new house in place of your old one?"

"I will tell you," he said. "Yesterday evening a poor woman

came to our door and asked shelter for the night. This morning she told us that she was a fairy, and would grant us three wishes. We wished for health and daily food, and then she changed our house into this new and beautiful cottage."

The rich man's wife ran back to tell her husband this news.

"I could beat myself!" he cried. "If only I had known that she was a fairy! Why, she came to my door first—poor old beggar that she seemed. She asked me to take her in, and I said 'no.'"

"What a pity!" said his wife. "But make haste and get on your horse and ride after her. If you overtake her, beg her to grant three wishes for us also."

The rich man saddled his best horse and rode with speed after the fairy. At last he overtook her. He spoke very gently and kindly.

"I hope you are not angry because I did not take you in last night," he said. "I had lost the key of the house door. Before I found it, you went on. If you pass our way again, you must stay with us."

"Yes," she said, "I will, if I ever come your way again."

Then the rich man asked her to grant him three wishes as she had done his poor neighbor.

"It would do you no good," said the fairy. "What is there for which you need to wish?"

"Oh," cried the rich man, "I am sure I can find something I want."

"Very well," said the fairy, "ride back home. The first three wishes that you make shall be granted."

The rich man was so busy thinking what he should wish that he forgot to hold his bridle up. His horse began to prance and kick.

"Be quiet, Bess," he said, and struck her.

But she pranced and kicked the more.

This made him so angry that he cried, "Whoa, Bess! What

do you mean? I wish your neck was broken."

No sooner were the words out of his mouth than she fell down under him and lay dead. He had made his first wish, and it had come to pass.

"Well, at least I have two wishes left," he said.

He did not like to leave the saddle and bridle in the road. So he took them on his back and started home on foot. The noonday sun shone bright. Walking with such a load was warm and tiresome work. He thought how cool his wife was, sitting at ease in their room. Yet it was she who had sent him after the fairy.

"Ah! I wish she had this saddle fast to her back," he said, not thinking what he was saying.

At the words the saddle slipped from his back. Warm as he was, he ran home as fast as he could go. There sat his wife with the saddle on her back, screaming and crying that she could not get it off.

"Do not fret so about a little thing," he said. "I will wish for us to have all the riches in the world, and the wish will come true if you let the saddle stay on."

"You stupid thing," she cried. "Of what use would be all those riches if I had this saddle on my back all my days? No, no! You wished it on, now you must wish it off."

Much against his will, he had to wish that the saddle might come off her back. At once it fell to the ground.

The rich man had had his three wishes. They brought him only anger and trouble, hard words from his wife, and the loss of his horse. The three wishes of the kind and contented ditcher freed him from want to the end of his days.

The Golden Goose

There was once a poor man who had three sons. Two of these thought themselves very clever. They laughed at their youngest brother, and called him Dummling.

One day the father told his oldest son to go out into the forest and cut wood. The mother gave him cake and wine to take with him for his dinner.

On the way to the forest he met an old man, dressed all in gray.

"Give me cake from your basket and drink from your bottle," said the old man. "I am hungry and thirsty."

But the youth said: "What! give you my cake and wine? I have no more than I want myself."

With these words he went on into the forest. He had hardly begun to cut when the ax slipped and hurt his foot. Home he went, groaning with pain. On the way the gray man passed him and smiled.

Next day the father said to the second son: "Take the ax and go into the forest to cut wood. And do you be more careful than your brother was."

His mother gave him, also, some cake and a bottle of wine. As he entered the woods, the little gray man met him, and begged for a piece of cake and a drop of wine.

But the second brother answered as rudely as the first. "What you ask for, I want for myself. I will give you nothing, so out of my way."

He left the little old man standing in the road, and walked on. Then he began to cut wood. But he had hardly made two strokes when the ax slipped and hurt his leg. Home he limped, in great pain. On the way he met the little gray man, who

smiled as he passed.

Then Dummling went to his father, and said, "Father, let me go and cut wood in the forest."

"No," said his father; "your brothers have both been hurt. You are not so wise as they, and would fare worse."

But Dummling begged so hard that at last his father said, "Go, then, if go you must! No doubt you will get hurt or killed, but that will be your own fault."

His mother gave him a crust of bread and a bottle of sour milk for his dinner. He went on singing a merry song until he reached the woods.

There the little gray man met him, and said, "Give me a piece of your bread and a drink of your milk. I am hungry and thirsty."

"Alas!" said Dummling, "my bread is only a stale crust and my milk is sour. But if you are as hungry and thirsty as I am, even they will taste good. Let us sit down here and eat and drink together."

They sat down, and Dummling opened his basket. Lo! the bread and milk were changed into cake and wine of the best.

They both ate their fill; then the little gray man said: "Because you are kind-hearted, and share with me your food and drink, I will give you good luck. There stands an old tree. Cut it down and take what you find at the root."

Then he went away.

Dummling set to work and soon cut down the tree. It was hollow, and at the root was a goose with feathers of pure gold. He took it in his arms. As it was now late, instead of going home, he went to an inn to pass the night.

The landlord had three daughters who looked at the goose with longing eyes.

Each said to herself, "What beautiful golden feathers! I should like to have a few."

When Dummling went out of the room, the eldest daughter said, "Now is my time." She went up to the bird and

took hold of its right wing. But she could not pull out a feather nor could she take her hand away.

Soon the second daughter came in and said, "I, too, will have some of these golden feathers." As she put out her hand to the bird, she touched her sister's dress. Then she, too, stuck fast. Try as they would, neither could get free.

Now in came the third sister.

"Keep away, keep away!" screamed the other two. "Oh, do not come near this golden goose."

But she could see no reason for their words. Since they were there, why should she keep away? Did they wish to take all the golden feathers and leave her none?

She made a spring forward. She touched her second sister's hand, put out to stop her. She, too, stuck fast, and there stood the three without power to move.

In the morning Dummling took the goose on his arm, and started homeward. He did not turn to look at the three girls who followed him. As he walked quickly, they had to run. Now he turned to the right, and to the right they went. Now he changed his goose to the left arm, and to the left they whirled.

They had not gone far in this strange way, when they met the parson.

"Shame on you, bold girls!" he cried. "Why do you run after this young man? Go home, all of you."

He put his hand on the youngest to pull her back. But he had no power to take it away. Like the others, he had to follow the golden goose.

Just then the clerk came out of the church door. He saw the parson running behind the girls, and he cried, "Sir, sir, what are you doing at the heels of those silly girls? Come back, come back! The people are waiting for you at the church."

As the parson did not stop, he ran after and caught hold of him. His hand stuck fast like the others. And now there were five trotting along, one behind the other.

On the road they met two farmers with hoes on their shoulders.

"Come and get me loose, come and get me loose!" cried the clerk, dancing up and down. They came, but they, too, stuck fast, and had to follow. On went Dummling with his golden goose and the seven trotting on behind.

After a while they came to a great city. Here lived a king who had one only child, a daughter. She was so sad and solemn that she had never been known to laugh. This was such a grief to the king that he said, "Any one who can make the princess laugh shall have her for his wife and have half of my kingdom besides."

Now Dummling drew near the king's palace with the seven following at his heels.

The goose was squawking, the girls were crying and laughing, the parson was groaning, the clerk was scolding, and the farmers were bawling. Straight in a row they trotted behind Dummling. He moved the goose, and they whirled about like the tail of a comet.

It was such a strange sight that the princess began to laugh, and she laughed until tears came and she had to hold her sides. And so Dummling had the princess for his bride and half of the kingdom for his own.

Grimm's Fairy Tales

Edited by Sara E. Wiltse

The Queen Bee

Once upon a time two sons of a king set out to see the world and fell into such a wild kind of life that they did not return home. So their youngest brother, Dummling, went to seek them, but when he found them they mocked him because of his simple manners. However, they took him with them.

After a time they came to an ant hill. This the two older brothers would have torn in pieces, to see the little ants run away with their eggs, but Dummling said, "Let the little creatures live in peace; I will not let you hurt them."

Then they went along until they came to a lake, on which ducks were swimming in great numbers. The two brothers wanted to catch a pair and roast them, but Dummling would not allow it, saying, "Let these fowls alone; I will not let you kill them!"

At last they came to a nest of wild bees, in which was so much honey that it was running out at the mouth of the nest. The two brothers would have killed the bees and spoiled the nest for the sake of their honey, but Dummling again held them back, saying, "Leave the bees alone; I will not let you hurt them!"

After this the three brothers came to a castle, in the stable of which stood a number of stone horses, but no man was to be seen. They went through all the rooms of the castle until they came to a door on which hung three locks, and in the middle of the door was a hole through which one could see into a room. Peeping through this hole, they saw a fierce-looking man sitting at a table. They called him once, twice, but he did not hear; the third time they called he got up,

opened the door, and came out. Not a word did he speak, but led them to a well-set table, and when they had eaten he took each of them into a sleeping-room.

The next morning the man went to the oldest brother and led him to a stone table on which three sentences were written.

The first was that under the moss in the wood lay the pearls of a king's daughter, a thousand in number. These must be sought; and if at sunset even one was wanting, he who had looked for them would be changed into stone.

The eldest brother went off and hunted the whole day, but he found only a hundred. So it happened to him as the table had said—he was changed into stone. The next day the second brother went, but he did no better than the other, for he found but two hundred pearls, and he was turned into stone. Then came Dummling's turn. He searched in the moss, but the pearls were so hard to find that he sat down upon a stone and wept. While he was weeping, the ant king, whose life he had once saved, came to him with five thousand ants and before very long they found and piled in a heap the whole thousand pearls.

The second sentence was to fetch the key of the princess's sleeping-room out of a lake which the brothers had passed. When Dummling returned to the lake, the ducks whose lives he had saved swam toward him, and diving below the water, quickly brought up the key.

The third sentence, however, was the hardest of all. Of the three daughters of the king he must pick out the youngest and prettiest. They were all asleep and looked alike, without a single mark by which to tell them apart, except that before they fell asleep they had eaten three kinds of sweets—the eldest a piece of sugar, the second a little sirup, and the youngest a spoonful of honey. But in came the queen of all the bees that Dummling had saved.

She instantly settled on the mouth which had eaten the

honey, and thus the king's son knew the right princess. The spell was broken; everyone awoke; and Dummling was given a kingdom as his reward.

Rumpelstiltsken

By the side of a wood in a faraway country ran a stream of water beside which there stood a mill. The miller's house was built on the bank of the stream.

Now the miller had a beautiful daughter who was not only beautiful but very sensible. The miller was so proud of her that one day he told the king, who sometimes hunted in the wood, that his daughter was so clever that she could spin gold out of straw, or silver out of hemp.

It so happened that this king was very fond of money, and when he heard the miller's boast, his greediness was raised, and he sent for the girl to be brought before him.

Then, he led her to a chamber in his palace where there was a great heap of straw and gave her a spinning wheel, and said, "All this must be spun into gold before morning as you love your life."

It was in vain that the poor maiden said that, "It was only a silly boast of her father," for that she could do no such thing as spin straw into gold. The chamber door was locked, and she was left alone.

She sat down in one corner of the room and began to bewail her hard fate. When, on a sudden the door opened, and a droll looking little man hobbled in and said, "Good morrow to you my good lass. What are you weeping for?"

"Alas," said she, "I must spin this straw into gold, and I know not how."

"What will you give me," said the dwarf, "to do it for you?"

"My necklace," replied the maiden.

He took her at her word and sat himself down to the wheel and whistled and sang:

"Round about, round about,
Lo and behold!
Spin away, spin away,
Straw into gold!"

And round about the wheel went merrily. The work was quickly done, and the coarse straw was changed into a heap of spun gold.

When the king saw this he was greatly pleased, but his heart grew still more greedy of pelf, and he set the poor miller's daughter to a fresh task.

She knew not what to do and again sat down to weep. Again the dwarf opened the door and said, "What will you give me to do your task?"

"The ring on my finger," the girl gladly answered.

So the dwarf took the ring and again began work, whistling and singing as the wheel turned:

"Round about, round about,
Lo and behold!
Spin away, spin away,
Straw into gold!"

Long before morning all was done, every straw having been changed into a glittering thread of gold. The king was greatly delighted to see all this glistening treasure, but still he had not enough to satisfy his greed, so he took the miller's daughter to a yet larger heap of straw and said: "All this must be spun into gold this very night. If you do it you shall be my queen."

As soon as the maiden was alone the dwarf came in and asked, "What will you give me to spin gold for you this third time?"

The maiden hung her head and tears sprang to her eyes as she answered: "You have my necklace and my ring. I have nothing more to give."

"Then say you will give me the first child that you may have when you are queen."

"I shall never be queen," thought the unhappy maiden, "and I may as well save my life with such an empty promise."

Round went the wheel again to the old song, and before morning another heap of straw was turned into a heap of gold.

When the king saw this he was bound to keep his word, so he married the miller's daughter without delay.

At the birth of her first child the queen was very happy and for a time forgot her promise to the dwarf. But one day he came into the room where she was playing with her baby and reminded her of it.

She wept bitterly and told the manikin she would give him all the money and jewels she had if he would release her from her promise.

All her pleadings seemed in vain until she pressed the child to her heart and begged the dwarf to take her life but to spare the king's son.

This appeal softened his heart and he said: "I will give you three days' grace, and if by the end of that time you can tell me my name, you may keep the child."

Now the queen lay awake the whole night, thinking of all the odd names that she had ever heard. She even sent messengers throughout the land to find new ones. The next day when the little man came, she asked him if he answered to the name of Ichabod, Elzevir, Esarhaddon, or Elsheimer, and all the names she could remember, but to each of them he made the same reply, "Madam, that is not my name."

The second day the queen tried all the comical names she could think of: Beans, Bandylegs, Crookshanks, Fathead, but to every one of them the manikin answered, "Madam, that is not my name."

The third day a messenger came to say: "Gracious queen, I traveled two days without hearing one new name, but yesterday as I was climbing a steep hill, there, among the trees of

the forest, I heard the fox and the hare bid each other good night. Then I saw a little hut before which burned a fire, and round about the fire a funny little dwarf was dancing upon one leg. As he danced he sang:

"'Merrily the feast I'll make,
Today I'll brew, tomorrow bake;
Merrily I'll dance and sing,
The third day will a stranger bring.
For little dreams the royal dame
That Rumpelstiltsken is my name!'"

When the queen heard this she clapped her hands for joy and, taking the baby in her arms, danced about the palace as if she were herself the very queen of fairies.

But when the dwarf came she sat upon her throne and called all her courtiers about her to enjoy the fun. The nurse stood by her side with the baby in her arms as if quite ready to give him up. The dwarf could not conceal his satisfaction, and chuckled as he thought of having the child with him in his hut in the woods. So he airily demanded, "Now, lady, what is my name?"

"Is it Elzevir?" the queen asked.

"No, madam," he answered.

"Is it Esarhaddon?"

"It is not Esarhaddon, your Majesty."

"Is it Elsheimer?"

"It is not Elsheimer, your ladyship."

"Can your name be Rumpelstiltsken?" asked the lady, slyly.

"Some witch told you that! some witch told you that!" the little man said in his rage, and he dashed his right foot so deep into the floor that he was forced to lay hold of it with both hands to pull it out. Then he made his way off as best he could, while the nurse laughed, the baby crowed, and the court jeered at him, saying, as he hobbled off, "We wish you

a very good morning and a merry feast, but our baby prince will stay with us, Mr. Rumpelstiltsken!"

The Frog Prince

In the olden time, when wishing was having, there lived a king whose daughters were all beautiful, but the youngest was so very beautiful that the Sun himself, although he saw her very often, was pleased every time he looked at her.

Near the castle of this king was a large and gloomy forest in the midst of which stood an old lime tree, beneath whose branches splashed a little fountain. When the day was very hot the king's youngest daughter would run into this wood and sit down by the fountain and when she felt dull she would often play with a golden ball, throwing it up in the air and catching it as it fell.

One day when the king's daughter threw this golden ball into the air, it fell on the grass and rolled past her into the fountain. She followed the ball with her eyes as it sank into the water, which was so deep that no one could see to the bottom. Then she began to cry; and as she cried, a voice called out: "Why weepest thou, O king's daughter? Thy tears would melt even a stone to pity."

The king's daughter looked around to see whence the voice came, and there was a frog stretching his head out of the water.

"Ah! you old water-paddler," said she, "was it you that spoke? I am weeping for my golden ball, which has dipped away from me into the water."

"Be quiet and do not cry," said the frog; "perhaps I can help thee. But what wilt thou give me if I fetch thee thy ball?"

"What will you have, dear frog?" said the king's daughter. "My dresses, my rings and pearls, or the golden crown which I wear?"

The frog answered, "Dresses or rings or golden crowns are

not for me; but if thou wilt love me and let me be thy playmate and sit at thy table and eat from thy little golden plate and drink out of thy cup and sleep in thy little bed—if thou wilt promise me all these, then will I dive down and get thy golden ball."

"Oh, I will promise you all those," said the king's daughter, "if you will only get me my ball." But she thought to herself: "What a silly frog! Let him remain in the water with his equals; he cannot play with me."

As soon as he had her promise, the frog drew his head under the water and dived down. Soon he swam up again with the ball in his mouth and threw it on the grass.

The king's daughter was full of joy when she again saw her beautiful plaything, and picking it up she ran off.

"Stop! stop!" cried the frog; "take me with thee. I cannot run as thou canst."

But all his croaking was useless. Although it was loud enough, the king's daughter did not heed it, but ran home and soon forgot the poor frog, who was obliged to leap back into the fountain.

The next day, when the king's daughter was sitting at table with her father, eating from her own little golden plate, something was heard coming up the marble stairs, splish splash, splish splash! When it came to the top it knocked at the door, and a voice said, "Open the door, thou youngest daughter of the king!"

The maiden rose and went to see who it was that called her. When she caught sight of the frog she shut the door again and sat down at the table, looking very pale. The king saw that she was in fear of something, and asked her if a giant had come to take her away.

"Oh, no!" answered she; "it is not a giant, but an ugly frog."

"What does the frog want of you?" said the king.

"Oh, dear father, when I was playing by the fountain my

golden ball fell into the water, and this frog fetched it up again because I cried so much. I must tell you that I promised him he should be my playmate. I never thought that he could come out of the water, but somehow he has jumped out, and now he wants to come in here."

At that moment there was another knock, and a voice said:

"King's daughter, youngest,
Open the door.
Hast thou forgotten
Thy promises made
At the fountain so clear
'Neath the lime tree's shade?
King's daughter, youngest,
Open the door."

Then the king said, "What you have promised, that you must perform; go and let him in."

So the king's daughter opened the door, and the frog hopped into the room right up to her chair. As soon as she was seated, the frog said, "Take me up." But she waited so long that at last the king ordered her to obey the frog.

As soon as the frog was placed on the chair, he jumped upon the table and said, "Now push thy plate near me, that we may both eat from it." And she did so, but, as everyone saw, with very bad grace.

The frog seemed to relish his dinner, but every bit that the king's daughter ate nearly choked her.

At last the frog said, "I feel very tired; wilt thou carry me upstairs into thy chamber and make thy bed ready for me to sleep in it?"

At this speech the king's daughter began to cry, for she was afraid of the cold frog and dared not touch him; and, besides, he wanted to sleep in her own beautiful clean bed. But her tears made the king very angry, and he said, "Never

treat with scorn one who has helped you in time of trouble."

So she took the frog up with two fingers and put him in a corner of her room. But he hopped up to her and said, "I am so very tired that I shall sleep well; do let me rest on your pillow." But she threw him against the wall, saying, "Now, will you be quiet, you ugly frog!"

As he fell he was changed from a frog into a handsome prince with beautiful eyes, who after a little while became, with her father's consent, her dearest friend and playmate. Then he told her how he had been changed to a frog by an evil witch, and that no one but herself had the power to take him out of the fountain, and that now she should share his kingdom.

So one day a carriage drawn by eight white horses, with ostrich feathers on their heads and golden bridles, drove up to the door of the palace, and behind the carriage stood trusty Henry, the servant of the young prince. When his master was changed into a frog, trusty Henry had grieved so much that he had bound three iron bands round his heart, for fear it should break with grief and sorrow.

When the carriage was ready to carry the young prince to his own country, the faithful Henry helped the princess and the prince into the carriage and placed himself in the seat behind, full of joy at his master's release.

They had not gone far when the prince heard a crack as if something had broken behind the carriage.

He put his head out of the window and asked Henry what had broken, and Henry answered, "It was not the carriage, my master, but a band which I bound round my heart when it was in such grief because you were changed into a frog."

Twice afterwards on the journey there was the same noise, and each time the prince thought that it was some part of the carriage that had given way; but it was only the breaking of the bands which bound the heart of the trusty Henry, who was ever after free and happy.

The Faithful Beasts

There was once a man who had very little money, but with what he had he went into the wide world.

Soon he came to a village where some boys were running together screaming and laughing, and he asked them what was the matter.

"Oh!" said they, "we have a mouse which we are going to teach to dance. What sport it will be! How it will skip around!"

The man pitied the poor mouse, and said, "Let it go, my boys, and I will give you money." He gave them some coppers, and they let the poor animal loose, and it ran as fast as it could into a hole close by.

After this the man went on to another village, where some boys had a monkey which they forced to dance and tumble without letting the poor thing have any rest. To these also the man gave money to get them to set the monkey free.

By and by, coming to a third village, the man saw the boys making a bear dance in chains and stand upright, and if he growled they seemed all the better pleased. The man also bought the bear and set him free. The bear, very glad to find himself on his four feet again, tramped away.

The man had now spent all his money, and found he had not even a copper left in his pocket with which to buy a morsel of food. At last he was nearly dead with hunger, and as no one would give him bread, he was tempted to steal. One of the king's guards caught him and put him into a chest and threw the chest into the water.

The lid of the chest was full of holes whereby he might obtain air, and a jug of water with a loaf of bread was put in.

While he was floating about in great distress of mind, he heard something gnawing and scratching at the lock of his chest, and all at once it gave way and up flew the lid. Then he saw the mouse and the monkey and the bear standing by, and found it was they who had opened the chest because he had helped them, but they did not know what to do next.

Just then a white, egg-shaped stone rolled into the water.

"This has come in the nick of time," said the bear, "for it is a magic stone which will take its owner to whatever place he wishes to see."

The man picked up the stone, and as he held it in his hand he wished himself in a castle with a garden and stables. Scarcely had he done so when he found himself in a castle with a garden and stables just to his mind, where everything was so beautiful that he could not admire it enough.

After a time some merchants came that way, and as they passed, one called to the other, "See what a noble castle stands here, where there was nothing but sand."

They entered the castle and asked the man how he had built the palace so quickly.

"I did not do it," said he, "it is the work of my wonderful stone."

"What kind of a stone can it be?" inquired the merchants.

The man showed it to them, and the sight of it pleased them so much that they asked if he would sell it, and offered him all their beautiful goods for it.

The goods took the man's fancy, and, his heart being fickle and wishing for new things, he thought them worth more than his stone, so he gave it to them, taking their goods in exchange. But scarcely had it left his hands when all his fortune was gone, and he found himself again in the floating chest on the river, with nothing but the jug of water and the loaf of bread.

The faithful beasts—the mouse, the monkey, and the bear—as soon as they saw this, came again to help him, but

they could not unfasten the lock, because it was much stronger than the former one.

The bear said, "We must get the wonderful stone again, or our work is useless."

Now the merchants had stopped at the castle and lived there, so the three faithful animals went together to the castle.

The bear said the mouse must peep through the keyhole and see what was going on, for, being so small, no one would notice him. The mouse soon came back, and said, "It is useless; I have peeped in, but the stone hangs on a red ribbon below the mirror, and above and below sit two great cats with fiery eyes to watch it."

The bear and the monkey said, "Never mind, go back again and wait till the master goes to bed and falls asleep; then do you slip in through the hole and creep on the bed, twitch his nose, and bite off one of his whiskers."

So the mouse crept in and did exactly as she was told, and the master, waking up, rubbed his nose in a passion and said: "The old cats are good for nothing! They let in the mice, who bite the very hair off my head!" And so saying, he drove all the cats away.

The next night, as soon as the master was sound asleep, the mouse crept in again and nibbled and gnawed at the ribbon until it broke in halves, and down fell the stone, which she then pushed out under the door. But this was very hard for the poor little mouse to manage, and so she called to the monkey, who drew it quite out with his long paws. It was an easy matter for him, and he carried the stone down to the water.

There the monkey asked how they were to get at the chest.

"Oh," replied the bear, "that is easy to do; you, monkey, shall sit upon my back, holding fast with your hands while you carry the stone in your mouth. You, mouse, can sit in my right

ear and I will swim to the chest." They all did as the bear said, and he swam off down the river.

Soon he felt uneasy at the silence, and began to chatter to himself. At last he said: "Do you hear, Mr. Monkey? We are brave fellows." But the monkey did not answer a word.

"Is that manners?" said the bear, again. "Will you not give your comrade an answer? A crabbed fellow is he who makes no reply."

Then the monkey could no longer restrain himself, and letting the stone fall into the water he cried out: "You stupid fellow, how could I answer you with the stone in my mouth? Now it is lost, and it is your own fault."

"Do not be angry," said the bear; "we shall soon find it." He called to all the frogs and other creatures living in the water, and said to them, "There is an enemy coming against you; but make haste and bring us some stones as quickly as you can, and we will build a wall to protect you."

These words frightened the water animals, and they brought stones from all sides. At last a fat old frog came waddling along with the wonderful stone in her mouth. The bear was glad to see it, and taking the stone he thanked them all and told them they might go home.

Then the three beasts swam to the man in the chest, and, breaking the lid by the aid of stones, they found that they had come in the nick of time, for he had drunk his last drop of water and eaten the last crumb of his bread, and was almost starved.

As soon as the man took the magic stone in his hand he wished himself quite well and back in the castle with the garden and stables. No sooner had he wished than he was there, and his three faithful beasts with him. And there they all lived in great comfort to the end of their days.

The Bear and the Skrattel

Once upon a time when the king of Norway was holding a feast in his palace, he rose to drink to the health of the king of Denmark.

"What present shall we send to our royal brother of Denmark as a pledge of our good will?" he asked.

"Please, your Majesty," answered Gunter, the king's chief huntsman, "send him one of our white bears, that he may see what sort of kittens we play with here in Norway."

"Well said!" cried the king; "but how shall we find a bear that will travel so far and will know how to conduct himself in the presence of our worthy brother when he gets to that court?"

"Please, your Majesty," said Gunter, "I have a magnificent creature, as white as snow, one I caught when but a cub; a bear, now, that will follow me wherever I go, play with children, stand on two legs, and behave as any well-bred person should. We are at your service and will go wherever you choose to send us."

The king was well pleased, and ordered Gunter to start with the dawn the next day.

The Norseman went to his house in the wood, put the king's collar around Bruin's neck, and away they went over hills and valleys, across lakes and seas, until they reached the court of the king of Denmark.

Unhappily when they arrived there the king was away on a journey, so Gunter and Bruin set out to follow and find him. The weather was bright, the sun shone, and the birds sang as they journeyed merrily on, day after day, over hill and dale, until they came within a day's journey to the town where the

Danish king was visiting.

All that afternoon Gunter and Bruin walked in a gloomy forest which lay between them and the place they were seeking. Toward evening clouds gathered, the wind whistled through the trees, and a stormy night threatened them. The road was almost unbroken, and so rough that they stumbled over roots and fallen branches until they were too tired to travel further.

"A pretty state of affairs, this," said Gunter to himself. "I am likely to enjoy a night in the woods with an empty stomach, a damp bed, and only my good Bruin for company."

The wind blew louder and louder, the clouds grew darker and darker, the bear shook his ears disconsolately, and Gunter felt himself at his wit's end, when he heard a joyful sound. A woodman came whistling along the road, which proved to be at the very edge of the forest, Gunter having missed it in the darkness.

The woodman had a horse and a load of fagots, and you may be sure Gunter begged for a night's lodging for himself and his companion. The woodman was good-natured and quite willing to give shelter to the huntsman, but as to the bear, he had never before seen such a beast and would not take Bruin along on any terms.

Gunter begged hard for his friend, telling the man that he was taking the bear as a gift to the king of Denmark; that Bruin was very gentle, in fact, the best-natured, best-behaved animal in the world; but the woodman was obdurate. He said that his wife would not admit such a guest, and, besides, the dog and the cat would object; while the ducks and all the fowls would run away in terror if they but caught a glimpse of such a visitor. "So good night, Master Huntsman!" said he; "if you and your shaggy companion will not part company, I'm afraid you'll have to stay where you are." Then he cracked his whip, started up his horse, and set off on his homeward way.

The huntsman grumbled and Bruin growled as they

followed slowly after the woodman.

They had not gone far when the woodman pulled up his horse and turned to speak to them. "Stay, stay!" said he, "I think I can tell you of a better sleeping place than under those logs. I know where you may find shelter if you will run the risk of some trouble with a ruffian imp that has taken up his abode in my old house yonder, down at the foot of the hill. I lived in that snug little house until last winter, when one night while a storm raged, as it is likely to do tonight, a spiteful guest took it into his head to pay us a visit. Ever since then there have been such noises, such clattering and scampering upstairs and down, from midnight until dawn, that at last we were driven out of our own house and home. What he is like no one knows, for we have never seen him or anything belonging to him except a little crooked high-heeled shoe that he left in the pantry one night. But though we have not seen him, we know he has a hand or a paw as heavy as lead, for when it pleases him to lay it upon anyone, down goes the unfortunate person as if struck by a blacksmith's hammer. There is no end to his evil tricks. He cuts the line when the clothes are hung out to dry, he lets the fowls out of the henhouse, he turns the pig into the garden, rides the cows, and leads the horses into the hay-yard. Several times he nearly burned the house down by leaving a lighted candle among the fagots. Sometimes he is so nimble that nothing stands still around him. Dishes, plates, pots, and pans dance about, making horrible sounds as they break each other in pieces. When the whim takes him, the chairs and tables seem to be alive, dancing a hornpipe or playing battledore and shuttlecock together. It is no use to put things in order, for the imp turns everything upside down whenever the fancy seizes him.

"My wife and I bore it as long as we could, but at length we were beaten, and thought we would give the house up to him. The little rascal knew what we were about when we began moving, and seemed in a hurry for us to go. When our

goods were on the wagon and we were ready to leave, we heard a shrill laugh; and a voice sounded from the window: 'Good-by, neighbors!' Now he has the house to himself. If you and your friend care to run the risk of taking up your quarters in the elf's house, pray do so. I hope he is not at home."

"Anything is better than sleeping out of doors such a night as this," said Gunter. "Your troublesome neighbor may be of the same mind, and we may have to fight for our shelter, but Bruin is a good hand at boxing, and the goblin may find what it is to be hugged by a Norse bear."

Then the woodman gave Gunter a fagot to burn and wished him good night.

The huntsman and the bear soon reached the deserted house, and finding no one at home, they went to the kitchen and made a blazing fire.

"Lackaday!" said the Norseman, "I ought to have asked that woodman for some supper. I have nothing but dry bread. However, this is better than sleeping in the woods. We must make the most of what we have, keep ourselves warm, and get to bed as soon as we can."

So after eating their last crust and drinking some water from a well close by, the huntsman wrapped himself in his cloak and lay down in the snuggest corner he could find, while Bruin curled up on the hearth in front of the fireplace. They were soon fast asleep.

Just as the clock struck twelve the noise of the storm grew louder, the wind blew the door open, and in popped an ugly little skrattel barely three spans high. His face was like a dried apple, his nose as purple as a ripe mulberry, and he had a squint eye that had lost its mate. He wore high-heeled shoes with long, pointed toes, and on his head was a tiny, pointed red cap. He dragged after him a fat kid, skinned ready for roasting.

"A rough night this," grumbled the goblin to himself, "but, thanks to that booby woodman, I've a house to myself. Now

for a hot supper!"

He busied himself about, here and there. Presently the fire blazed up, and the kid was on the spit and turning merrily around, the odor of its cooking enough to make one's mouth water. Then the little imp rubbed his hands, tossed his red cap in the air, and danced as he sang:

"Oh, 'tis weary enough abroad to bide,
In the shivery midnight blast;
And 'tis dreary enough alone to ride,
Hungry and cold,
On the wintry wold,
When the drifting snow falls fast.
But 'tis cheery enough to revel by night,
In the crackling fagots' light;
'Tis merry enough to have and to hold
The savory roast
And the nut-brown toast
With jolly good ale and old."

The huntsman lay snug, sometimes quaking in fear and sometimes licking his lips at the tempting supper so near. He had half a mind to jump up and fight the imp. However, he kept quiet in his corner.

All of a sudden the skrattel caught sight of Bruin as she lay asleep, rolled up like a ball in the chimney corner. He crept closer and closer to Bruin, unable to make out what she was: "One of the family, I suppose," said he to himself.

Just then Bruin gave her ears a shake and showed the tip of her muzzle.

"Oho!" said the imp, "that's all, is it? But what a large one! Where can she have come from? And how came she here? What shall I do? Shall I let her alone, or shall I drive her out? I'm not afraid of mice or rats. So here goes! I've driven out the rest of the live stock. Why should I not send this brute after them?"

With that the elf walked softly to the corner of the room, and taking up the spit tiptoed close to the bear and gave her a rattling thump across the nose.

The bear rose up slowly, snorted, shook her head, scratched her ear, opened first one eye and then the other, took a turn across the room, and grinned at the enemy, who stood with gridiron in hand ready for the coming attack. The bear walked leisurely forward, and with one paw jerked the spit out of the goblin's hand and sent it spinning across the room.

Now began a fierce battle. This way and that flew tables, chairs, pots, and pans. One moment the elf was on Bruin's back, pulling her ears and pommeling her with blows that might have felled an ox. In the next moment the bear would throw the skrattel into the air, and when he came down would catch and hug him until the little imp squealed like a pig. Meantime Gunter was terrified by the battle and crept as far into the corner as he could. The skrattel was losing strength every moment, and at last in a frenzy dashed his red cap right in Bruin's eye and then darted out into the pitiless storm.

"Well done! Bravo, Bruin!" cried the huntsman, who hurried to shut and bolt the door. "Thou hast well combed his locks, and as for thine own ears, they are rather the worse for his spiteful pulling. But come, let us make the best of the good cheer our friend has left us!" They fell to and ate a hearty supper and then betook themselves again to bed.

In the morning the huntsman made ready to go on his way. Not far from the door he met the woodman, who was eager to learn how he had passed the night. So Gunter told him about the visit of the elf and how Bruin had fought and beaten him. "Let us hope," said he, "you will now be forever rid of Master Skrattel; he will not be likely to return for another hug from Bruin. If so, your hospitality to us will be well repaid; although if your spiteful little tenant had not

brought his supper with him, we should have gone to bed hungry."

Then the huntsman and Bruin went on their way. Let us hope that they found the king of Denmark without meeting another elf. To tell the truth I never heard that part of the story.

The woodman, however, went to his work, and you may be sure he kept a sharp lookout for any visit from Skrattel, who might still prowl around at night.

After three nights had passed without sight or sound of the mischief-maker, the woodman began to think of moving back to his own home. But on the fourth day, as he went to his work, a storm of sleet and snow drove him to the shelter of a wide-spreading spruce tree. As the storm passed over, he heard a cracked voice croaking in the bushes close by, and, sure enough, there was the very figure described by the huntsman. The goblin was without hat or cap on his head. His face was woebegone, his jacket was torn into shreds, his legs scratched and bleeding, as if he had crawled a mile through bramble bushes. The woodman sat very still and listened to this mournful song:

"Oh, 'tis weary enough abroad to bide,
In the shivery midnight blast;
And 'tis dreary enough alone to ride,
Hungry and cold,
On the wintry wold,
When the drifting snow falls fast."

"Sing the other verse, man!" shouted the woodman to his enemy. The instant he spoke, however, the little imp jumped and stamped with rage and was out of sight in a breath.

The woodman finished his task and was going home, when all of a sudden he saw that same little skrattel standing on a high bank, looking grim and sulky as ever.

"Hark ye, bumpkin," cried the ill-tempered elf, "is thy

great cat at home and alive?"

"My cat?" said the woodman. "What do you mean?"

"Thy great white cat, to be sure, the one whose ears I pulled off and whose eyes I put out," boasted the skrattel.

"Oh, yes, to be sure, my cat is alive and well, I thank you. She would be happy to see you or your friends whenever you will favor us with a call. As you seem so friendly toward my cat, you may be pleased to hear that Mrs. Bruin had five kittens last night."

"Five kittens?" muttered Skrattel.

"Yes, five of the most beautiful white furry kittens you ever saw! It would do your heart good to see the whole family—such soft, gentle paws and delicate little mouths! Their mother is already teaching them to box and scratch. Look in sometime about midnight. The old cat would be glad to show you her family, I'm sure."

"No indeed!" shrieked the imp. "I do not want to see the kittens; I've seen enough of the mother cat."

"But do call around about midnight, as you have so often come at that hour," urged the woodman.

"Keep your cat and her kittens. I must be off; this is no place for me. Good-by to you; you'll see no more of me," and the skrattel began to hop away. But the woodman hailed him once more, and throwing after him the red cap he had left behind as he fled from Bruin, taunted him: "Then good-by to you. Keep away from my cat and her kittens, and let us have no more of your pranks!" Now that the woodman was sure his troublesome guest would never return he moved back to his home, where he and his wife and children lived happily ever afterwards, never forgetting the king of Norway, who sent the white bear to Denmark.

The Three Crows

Long ago after many years of war, peace was at last made so that the king no longer needed his armies, and he let the soldiers go home.

One of these discharged men, whose name was Conrad, had saved most of his pay instead of spending it as fast as it was earned.

Now two of Conrad's fellow countrymen were great rogues who plotted to rob him of his hard-earned money. Being artful knaves they made a pretense of great friendship for him, and one day they said: "Comrade, why should we stay in this town as if we were prisoners, when you, at least, have enough to live upon at home by your own fireside? Why should not the three of us go out into the world to try our luck?"

Conrad agreed to make the venture by going first to a country not far distant.

They had gone but a little way when, coming to a parting of the road, one of the knaves said, "We must go to the right, for that is the nearest way to a country where we shall be safe from robbers."

Conrad said: "No, that will lead us straight back to the town we have just left. We must keep to the left hand."

The rogues made this an excuse to pick a quarrel with Conrad, and one of them said angrily: "Why do you give yourself airs? You know nothing about these roads!"

Then they fell upon him and beat him on the head until he was quite dazed and blind, after which they bound him to a great beam of wood, took all his money, and left him there under a gallows tree, to die or live, they cared not which.

When Conrad came to himself he did not know where he

was, nor just what had happened to him. Night had come on, however, and he heard a fluttering over his head, which was caused by three crows flying round and round before perching in the tree. Having settled themselves for the night, directly over Conrad's head, they began to talk.

One of them said, "Sister, what is the best news with you today?"

"Oh! if men did but know all that we know!" answered the crow. "The princess is ill, and the king has vowed that she shall marry anyone who will cure her; but this no one can do, for she will surely die unless yonder blue flower is burned to ashes and given to her as a powder."

"Oh, indeed!" said the third crow; "if men did but know what we know! Tonight there will fall a dew from heaven which would restore sight to the blind if they but washed their eyes with it. The flower is wanted by but one only, and she a princess. The dew is needed by only a few, but there is a fearful drought in the land; the wells are dry and no rain has fallen for many weeks. If men only knew what we know! But alas! no man knows that if the large stone by the fountain in the market place should be removed, water would gush forth, clear, sparkling, and plentiful, until the thirst of the very earth itself would be quenched."

"Oh! if men only knew what we know!" whispered the three crows.

While the crows were talking, Conrad lay very quiet lest he should lose a single word of all the wonderful things they were saying. When they flew away, the first thing he thought of doing was to get some dew to restore his sight. But it took all his strength to break the heavy cords with which the wicked men had bound him, and he feared the sun would dry the precious dew before he could reach it. Bound for so many hours, and bruised as he had been, it was no easy task for him to stumble around in his blindness, but he soon caught hold of a wisp of sweet, cool grass still wet with the priceless,

healing dew and bathed his aching eyes.

O joy unspeakable! he could see! he could see! And looking about he found the blue flower, which he quickly burned. Gathering the ashes he hurried to the king's court. Arrived at the palace, he told the king he had come to cure the princess and to claim the promised reward.

The magic ashes quite cured the princess of her illness, as the crows had said they would do, but when she saw Conrad's shabby clothes she had no mind to become his wife.

The king, also, was sorry for his rash promise, and his behavior was as shabby as the soldier's clothes. Shame upon any man, king or peasant, who would so try to break a promise! He thought to get rid of Conrad by giving him a yet harder task, so he said, "Whoever wants the princess for a wife must find water enough to release the country from this direful drought."

The soldier went out of the palace and told the people to take the heavy stone from before the market-place fountain, and then by digging only a few inches they would find a spring with water enough for the whole town.

Alas! the people, though nearly dying of thirst, scorned such simple means of relief and told the poor soldier to do it himself if it were so easy.

Conrad, therefore, lifted the heavy stone, which really needed the strength of two or three men, and with his bleeding fingers scratched a little earth aside. Water—clear, cold, sparkling water—bubbled out from its hidden but limitless source.

The king and the princess at once thought better of the man who had so served them. So the fair daughter of a king became the bride of this servant of the people, and all lived happily as they deserved.

One day, not long after they were married, Conrad was walking through a field when he met the two comrades who had treated him so badly. Though they did not know him in

his princely garb, he knew them at once, and facing them he said: "Look at me! I am your old comrade in arms whom you left to die after you had beaten and robbed me. But your cruel designs have been defeated, and all the wrong you sought to do me has brought me good fortune instead."

When the two comrades heard this they fell at his feet, begging his forgiveness, and as Conrad was kind of heart he granted their plea and took them to the palace, where he gave them food and clothes. He told them all that had happened to him, and how he had reached his honors through hearing what the three crows had said as he lay blind and suffering under the tree where the rogues had bound him.

As soon as they left the palace these ungrateful, greedy villains began plotting more evil against Conrad, whom they envied.

They said: "We will go some night and listen to the crows. We may hear something which will put that proud fellow at our feet and bring us good luck besides."

So they went to the gallows tree and soon heard the birds fluttering to their perches, but could not understand their talk.

"Sisters," said one of the crows, "someone must have overheard us, for all the world is telling what wonders have been done. The blue flower has been plucked and burned, the princess is cured, a blind man has received his sight, and the spring has been found which gave water to the whole town. Whoever heard our secrets was an honorable man, but my wisdom whispers that some villain is sneaking around with evil thoughts in his mind. We will punish any wrongdoer whom we may find."

Seeing the men lying at the foot of their tree, the crows flew at them in a great rage, plucked out their eyes with sharp beaks, and beat their heads with angry wings until the men were nearly dead. In that plight Conrad found them, justly punished for their baseness.

Star Dollars

Once upon a time there was a little girl whose father and mother died leaving her so poor that she had no roof to shelter her and no bed to sleep in. At last she had nothing left but the clothes on her back, and a loaf of bread, which some kind person had given to her, in her hand. But she was a good and pious little girl, and when she found herself forsaken by all she went into the fields, trusting God.

Soon she met a poor man, who said to her, "Give me something to eat, for I am very hungry." She handed him the whole loaf, and with a "God bless you!" walked on.

Next she met a little girl crying. This child said, "Pray give me something to cover my head, it is so cold!" So she took off her bonnet and gave it away.

Then she met another who had no dress, and to this one she gave her frock.

By that time it was growing dark, and our little girl entered a forest, where she met a fourth person, who begged for something to wear, and to her she gave her petticoat. For, thought our heroine, "It is growing dark, and no one will see me, so I can give away this."

And now, when she had scarcely anything left to cover herself with, some of the stars fell down in the form of silver dollars, and among them she found a petticoat of the finest linen! And in that she collected the star money, which made her rich all the rest of her life!

The Gold Children

Once upon a time there was a poor man and his wife who had nothing in the world but their hut. They lived from hand to mouth by catching fish. Once the man, sitting by the water's edge, threw in his net and drew out a golden fish. While he was looking at the fish with great wonder, it said: "Do you hear, fisherman? Throw me back into the water, and I will change your hut into a fine castle."

But the fisherman replied, "What use is a castle to me if I have no food?"

"That is taken care of," said the fish, "for in the castle you will find a cupboard which is full of food."

"Well, if that be so," said the man, "you will soon have your wish."

"Yes," said the fish, "but you must make me one promise: that you will tell nobody in the world, whoever he may be, from whence your luck comes, for if you speak a single word about it, all will be lost."

The man threw the fish back into the water and went home, and where his hut had stood he found a large castle. The sight made him open his eyes, and stepping in he found his wife dressed in costly clothes sitting in a large room.

She was very much pleased and said: "Husband, how has all this happened? This is very nice!"

"Yes," said her husband, "it pleases me also; but now I am hungry, so give me something to eat."

His wife said, "I have nothing, and I am sure I do not know where to find any food in this new house."

"Oh, there is a great cupboard; open that," said the husband; and as soon as she did so, behold! there were cakes,

meat, and fruit.

At the sight of these the wife laughed, and cried, "What else can you wish for now, my dear?" and they began eating at once. But when they had had enough, the wife asked, "Now, my husband, whence comes all this?"

"Ah," he said, "do not ask! I dare not tell you, for if I let out the secret to anyone our fortune will fly."

"Well, I am sure I do not want to know," she replied; but she was not in earnest, and she let him have no peace, night or day, teasing him so long that at last he told her that all their fortune came from a golden fish which he had caught and set free again.

No sooner were the words out of his mouth than the fine castle, with its cupboard, was gone, and they found themselves again in their old hut.

The man now had to take up his old trade of fishing, and he pulled out the golden fish a second time.

"Alas," said the fish, "let me go again, and I will give you back your castle, with the cupboard of meat; only keep it secret, or again you will lose all."

"I will take care," replied the fisherman, and he threw the fish into the water.

At home all was in its former splendor, and the wife was glad of her good fortune, but after a few days she began to beg her husband again to tell her how he came by the castle.

For a long time the man held his tongue, but at length he became so angry with her that he told the secret. At the same moment the castle sank into the earth, and they found themselves in the old hut.

"There, are you happy now?" said the man to his wife. "Now we may feel the pangs of hunger again."

"Ah," she replied, "I do not care for wealth unless I may know from whence it comes."

The man went fishing again, and in a few days he was lucky enough to pull up the golden fish for a third time.

"Well, well," said the fish, "I see I am fated to fall into your hands, so take me home and cut me into six pieces, two of which you must give to your wife to eat, two to your horse, and two you must put into the ground, and then you will be blessed."

The man took the fish home, and did as it had said. From the two pieces which he sowed in the ground, two golden lilies grew up; from the two pieces eaten by the horse, two golden colts were born; and from the wife's share, she had two gold children.

The children grew up beautiful and fair, and with them grew the two lilies and the two colts.

One day the children said to their father, "We will mount our golden steeds and travel in the world."

But he replied, "How shall I know if you are well and happy when you are so far from me?"

"The two golden lilies," said they, "will remain here, and by them you can see how we prosper: do they remain fresh, so are we well; do they droop, so are we ill; do they die, so are we dead." With these words they rode away.

Soon they came to an inn where there were many people, who, when they saw the two gold children, laughed at them.

One of the children, when he heard the jeers, was ashamed and would go no farther, but turned round and went home to his father. The other rode on till he came to a large forest. Just as he was about to ride into it the people said to him, "You would better not go there, for the forest is full of robbers, who will act badly to you, and when they see that you and your horse are golden they will kill you."

But the youth said, "I must and will go."

Then he took bearskins and covered himself and his horse with them, so that nothing golden could be seen. This done, he rode into the wood.

When he had ridden a little way he heard a rustling among the bushes and soon heard voices talking. One voice

said, "Here comes one!" But another said: "Let him alone; he's only a bear-hunter and as poor and cold as a church mouse. What should we do with him?"

So the gold child rode unharmed through the forest. Next he came to a village, where he saw a maiden so beautiful that he thought there could not be one like her in all the world. He loved her and asked her if she would be his wife.

The maiden was very much pleased and said, "Yes, I will become your wife and be true to you forever."

So they made a wedding feast, and while they were still at the table the father of the bride came and asked in great anger where the bridegroom was.

They showed him the gold child, who still wore his bear-skins around him, and the father said, "Never shall a bear-hunter marry my daughter!" and he would have killed him.

The bride begged for his life, saying, "He is my husband, and I love him with all my heart," so at last her father consented to spare him.

The father, however, was always thinking about this man, and one morning he rose early in order to look at his daughter's husband and see whether he were a common ragged beggar or not. When he looked, behold there was a gold man, while the bearskin lay upon the ground. Then the father went away, well pleased that he had not killed the bear-hunter.

The same night the gold child dreamed that he hunted a fine stag, and when he awoke in the morning he said to his bride, "I must be off to the hunt!"

She begged him to stay, and said, "A great misfortune may happen to you," but he said, "I must and will go!"

So he rode away into the forest, and soon met a proud stag, just as he had dreamed. He aimed at it, and would have shot, but the stag sprang off. Then he followed it over hedges and ditches the whole day, and at evening it went from his sight. When now the gold child looked round he found himself before a little house where dwelt a witch. He knocked

at the door, and a little old woman came, and asked, "What are you doing so late in the midst of this forest?"

"Have you seen a stag?" the gold child inquired.

"Yes," replied the old woman; "I know the stag well." Just then a little dog barked loudly at the stranger.

"Be quiet, you evil dog!" he cried, "or I will shoot you."

At this the witch was in a great passion and cried, "What! will you kill my dog?" Then she turned the gold child into a stone.

His poor wife waited for him in vain, and soon she thought, "Ah! what I feared in my heart has fallen upon him."

At home the other brother stood by the golden lilies, and suddenly one of them fell off. "Ah, heaven!" said he, "some misfortune has happened to my brother! I must be off and see if I can save him."

But the father said: "Stay here. If I lose you too, what will become of me?"

"I must and will go," said the youth. So he mounted his golden horse and rode away till he came to the large forest where his brother lay in the form of a stone. Out of her house came the old witch. She called to him, and would have turned him to stone also, but, without going near her, he said, "I will shoot you if you do not restore my brother to me."

She was afraid of the brave brother, and touching the stone with her fingers she gave the gold child his human form again.

The two gold children were full of joy when they saw each other again, and kissed and embraced and rode together out of the forest. Then they parted— the one went to his bride and the other to his father.

The father said to the child that returned to him, "I knew that you had saved your brother, for the golden lily became fresh and blooming while you were gone."

After this they lived happily, and all went well with them till the end of their lives.

The White Snake

Long ago there lived a king whose wisdom was the wonder of the world. Nothing was unknown to him, and it seemed as if the tidings of the most hidden things were borne to him through the air. He had, however, one strange custom: every noon, when the table was quite cleared and no one else was present, his trusty servant had to bring him a covered dish. The servant himself did not know what lay in it, and no man knew, for the king never ate thereof until he was quite alone.

This went on for a long time, until one day the servant who carried the dish was seized with such a desire to know the secret that he could not resist it, and so took the dish into his chamber. As soon as he had locked the door he raised the cover, and there lay before him a white snake. When he saw it he wished to taste it, so he cut a piece off and put it into his mouth. Scarcely had his tongue touched it when he heard before his window a strange whisper of low voices.

He listened, and found out that it was the sparrows, who were talking with one another and telling what each had seen in field or wood. The morsel of the snake had given him the power to understand the speech of animals.

Now it happened on this day that the queen lost her finest ring, and many thought this faithful servant, who had the care of all her jewels, had stolen it. The king ordered him to appear before him and said in angry words that he should be taken up and tried if he did not know before the morrow whom to name as the guilty person.

In his distress and trouble the servant went away into the courtyard, thinking how he might help himself. There, on a running stream of water, the ducks were smoothing

themselves down with their beaks while they talked to one another. The servant stood still and listened to them as they told where they had waddled and what nice food they had found. One said, in a vexed tone, "Something very hard is in my stomach, for in my haste I swallowed a ring which lay under the queen's window."

Then the servant caught the speaker up by her neck and carried her to the cook, saying, "Just kill this fowl; it is fat."

"Yes," said the cook, lifting it in her hand, "it has spared no trouble in cramming itself; it ought to have been roasted long ago." So saying, she chopped off its head. When she cut the duck open, in its stomach was found the queen's ring.

The servant was now able to prove his innocence to the queen, who, wishing to repair the wrong done him, not only granted him pardon but offered him the greatest place of honor at court. The servant refused the office and asked for a horse and money instead, for he had a desire to see the world and to travel about it for a while.

As soon as his wish was granted he set off on his tour. One day he came to a pond, in which he saw three fishes caught in the reeds, gasping for water.

Although men say fishes are dumb, yet he heard their complaint that they must soon die. Having a kind heart he put them into the water again. They splashed about for joy and, putting their heads above the water, said to him, "We will be grateful and repay you for saving us."

The youth rode onward, and after a while heard, as it were, a voice in the sand at his feet. He listened and heard an ant king complain thus: "If these men would but keep away with their great fat beasts! Here comes an awkward horse treading my people underfoot without mercy." So he rode onto a side path, and the ant king called to him, "We will be grateful and reward you."

His way led him into a forest, and there he saw two ravens dragging their young out of their nest. "Off with you," they

cried, "we can feed you no longer; you are big enough now to help yourselves."

The poor young ones lay on the ground beating their wings and crying: "We helpless children, we must feed ourselves, we who cannot fly yet! What is left to us but to die here of hunger?" Then the servant gave them food enough to last until they could fly, and they said, "We will be grateful and will reward you in time of need!"

After the youth had gone a long way he came to a large town, in the streets of which there was a great crowd. A man on horseback shouted as he rode, "The princess seeks a husband; but he who wins her must perform a hard task, and if he fails his life shall be lost."

Many had tried in vain. But when the youth saw the princess he was so blinded by her beauty that he forgot all danger and, stepping before the king, offered himself as a suitor.

He was taken to the sea, and a golden ring was thrown in before his eyes. Then the king bade him fetch this ring up again from the bottom of the sea, adding, "If you rise without the ring you shall be thrown in again and again, until you perish in the waves." Everyone pitied the handsome youth as they left him alone on the seashore.

While he stood planning what he should do, he saw three fishes swimming toward him, and they were no others than the three whose lives he had saved. The middle one bore a mussel shell in its mouth, which it laid on the shore at the feet of the youth, who opened it and found the gold ring within.

Full of joy he took the jewel to the king, hoping that he should receive his reward. But the proud princess, when she saw that he was not her equal in birth, was ashamed of him and gave him a second task. She went into the garden and strewed there ten bags of millet seed in the grass, saying, "These he must pick up before sunrise tomorrow, and let him not miss one grain."

The youth sat down in the garden, wondering how he

could do it, but as he could devise no way he sat there in sorrow, fearing at the dawn of day to be led to his death.

However, as soon as the first rays of the sun fell on the garden, he saw that the ten sacks were all filled and standing by him, while not a single grain was left in the grass. The ant king had come in the night with his thousands and thousands of followers, and the grateful insects had picked up every seed of the millet and put it into the sacks.

The princess herself came into the garden and saw with wonder that the youth had done what was asked of him.

Still she could not bend her proud heart, and she said, "Although he may have done these two tasks, yet he shall not be my husband until he has brought me an apple from the tree of life."

The youth did not know where the tree of life stood. He started, indeed, and was willing to go, but he had no hope of finding it.

After he had gone through three kingdoms he came at evening to a forest and sat down under a tree, for he wished to sleep.

Suddenly he heard a rustling in the branches, and a golden apple fell into his hand. At the same time three ravens flew down and settled on his knee, saying: "We are the three young ravens whom you saved from dying of hunger. When we were grown up and heard that you sought the golden apple, then we flew over the sea, even to the end of the world, where stands the tree of life, and we have brought you the apple."

Full of joy the youth set out on his return and gave the golden apple to the beautiful princess, who now had no more excuses. So they divided the apple of life, and after they had eaten it the heart of the princess was filled with love toward the youth, and they lived to a great age in peace and happiness.

The Musicians at Bremen

Once upon a time an ass that had been a faithful, hard-working animal for many years became unfit for heavy tasks because of his old age. His master therefore made up his mind to kill the poor creature.

The ass overheard some talk about his having outlived his usefulness, and being a shrewd animal ran away from the pasture, where he had been turned out to graze, and began a journey toward Bremen. "There," he thought to himself, "as I have a good voice I may chance to be chosen town musician."

After he had traveled a little way he saw a dog lying panting by the roadside, as if he was too tired to go farther.

"What is it that makes you pant so, my friend?" asked the ass.

"Alas!" answered the dog, "my master was going to knock me on the head because I am so old and weak that I can no longer be of use to him in the chase. So I ran away. But what can I do to earn my living?"

"Hark ye," said the ass, "I am going to Bremen to be a musician. Come with me."

The dog was glad of this friendly offer, so they jogged slowly along together until they met a cat in the middle of the road. She looked as sad as three wet days.

"Pray, my good lady," said the ass, "what is the matter with you? You look quite out of spirits."

"Ah me!" answered Grimalkin; "how can a poor old body be in good spirits when her life is in danger. Because I am beginning to age, and would rather lie by the fire than run about the house to catch mice, my mistress, who used to stroke me gently and praise me for a good mouser,"—here the

cat wiped tears from her blinking eyes, and choked with the words—"she, my beloved mistress, laid hold of me this very day and tried to drown me. I was lucky enough to get away from her, but I know not how I am to live!"

"Oh," said the ass, "by all means you must go with us to Bremen. You are a good singer at night and may make your fortune as one of the Waits."

The ass introduced the cat to the dog, who gave her his paw and offered to carry her on his back until she should recover from her fright and feel quite able to walk.

The cat was pleased with the manners of both the ass and the dog. Indeed, the kindness of both made her feel stronger, so wiping her eyes with her tiny handkerchief she joined the party, saying she already felt able to walk.

Soon afterwards, as they passed a farmyard, they saw a cock perched upon a gate, screaming with all his might.

"Bravo!" said the ass. "Upon my word, you make a fine noise. Pray what is it all about?"

"Why," said the cock, "I was just now telling all the neighbors that we have fine weather for our washing-day, and in spite of that my mistress and the cook threaten to cut off my head tomorrow and make broth of me for the guests that are coming Sunday!"

"Heaven forbid!" said the ass; "come with us, Master Chanticleer. Anything will be better than staying here to have your head cut off. Besides, if we take care to sing in tune, we may get up a concert of our own. So come along with us."

"With all my heart!" said the cock.

So the four went on toward Bremen, the cat consenting to ride upon the dog's back when they had to cross puddles in the road, for you have, perhaps, noticed that cats do not like to get mud on their pretty paws. The cock perched upon the neck of the ass, and once in a while tried his voice to get it in tune with the ass's bray.

When night came the four friends turned into a wood to

sleep. The ass and the tired dog lay down under a tree; while the nimble cat climbed upon a low branch, resting as well as she could in a crotch of the tree. The cock, thinking that the higher he perched the safer he would be, flew nearly to the top of the tree. Looking about on all sides to see that no owl or nighthawk was near, he spied something bright in the distance. Calling to his companions, he said, "There surely must be a house close by, for I see a light."

"If that is true," said the ass, "we will change our quarters, for our lodgings here are not the best in the world!"

"Besides," added the dog, "I should like a bone or two, and I would not refuse a bit of meat."

"And maybe," said Puss, "a stray mouse or a saucer of milk for me may be found on the premises."

So they walked away to the place where Chanticleer had seen the light. As they drew near, the light became larger and brighter, till at last they came close to a lonely house where a gang of robbers lived.

The ass, being the tallest of the musical band, marched up to the window and peeped in.

"Well, Donkey," said Chanticleer, "what do you see?"

"What do I see?" replied the ass. "Why, I see a table spread with all kinds of good things, and robbers sitting around it making merry."

"That would be a comfortable lodging for us," said the cock.

"Yes," said the ass, "if we could only get inside."

So the friends put their wits to work to see how they could get rid of the robbers.

At last they hit upon this plan, which you will agree was a clever one. The ass stood upright on his hind legs, with his forefeet resting on the window sill. The dog stood on the donkey's back, the cat scrambled up on the dog's shoulders, and the cock flew up to sit on the cat's head.

When all were ready Chanticleer gave the signal by

jerking the cat's head.

Then Puss mewed, the dog yapped, the ass brayed, and the cock crowed. In the noisiest part of this performance the donkey struck the window with his hoof, and they all tumbled through, making a hideous clatter!

The robbers, who had been frightened by the first notes of this strange serenade, scrambled out of the house as fast as they could, not doubting that hobgoblins had found their hiding-place.

The robbers having gone, our travelers feasted upon what food was left, and when the last morsel was eaten they made ready for a good sleep.

The donkey chose a heap of straw in the yard and stretched his tired legs; the dog turned himself around and around, as dogs will before lying down, and then dropped upon a mat behind the door; the cat curled herself cosily on the hearth; the cock perched upon the ridgepole of the house; and all were soon fast asleep.

When the robbers, who were still lurking around, saw that the lights were put out, they began to think they had been too easily scared away from their booty, and the boldest one of them went back to see what might be going on. As there was no sound or sign of hobgoblins he marched into the kitchen and groped around until he found a match to light a candle.

Suddenly the robber caught sight of the fiery eyes of Grimalkin, and mistaking them for live coals held the match near them. The cat, not liking such a joke, sprang at his face and scratched him with all her might. This frightened the robber so that he ran for the back door, but there the dog jumped up and bit him in the leg.

As the man hurried out to the yard, the ass, angry at being broken of much-needed rest, leaped up and viciously kicked him, while the cock, always a light sleeper, began to crow with all his might.

At this the robber ran to his comrades and told the

captain of the band that a horrid witch had got into the house and had spit at him and had scratched his face with her long bony fingers, that a man had hidden behind the door and stabbed him in the leg, that a black monster stood in the yard and struck him with a club, and that a demon sat on the housetop and shouted: "Throw the rascal up here! throw the rascal up here! throw the rascal up here!"

After this the robbers did not dare to go back to the house, and our musical friends were so well pleased with their quarters that they never tried to go any nearer to Bremen.

Briar Rose

In olden times there lived a king and queen who wished day by day that they had children, and yet never a one was born.

One day, as the queen was bathing, a frog hopped out of the water and said to her, "You shall have your wish; before a year passes you shall have a daughter."

As the frog had said, so it happened, and a little girl was born who was so beautiful that the king almost lost his senses.

He ordered a great feast to be held, and invited to it not only his relatives, friends, and acquaintances but also twelve fairy women who are kind to children. There happened to be thirteen of these in his kingdom, but, since he had only twelve golden plates from which they could eat, one had to stay at home.

The feast was held, and as soon as it was over the wise women gave the infant their wonderful gifts: one gave virtue, another beauty, a third riches, and so on, until the child had everything that is to be desired in the world.

Just as eleven had given their presents, the thirteenth old lady stepped in. She was in a passion because she had not been invited, and without greeting or looking at anyone she exclaimed loudly, "The princess shall prick herself with a spindle on her fifteenth birthday and die!" Immediately she turned her back and left the hall.

All were terrified. But the twelfth fairy, who had not yet made her wish, stepped up, and because she could not take away the evil wish, but could only soften it, she said, "The princess shall not die of the wound, but shall fall into a sleep for a hundred years."

Then the king, who wished to protect his child from this fate, made a decree that every spindle in the kingdom should be burned.

In time all the wishes of the wise women were fulfilled, and the maiden became so beautiful, gentle, virtuous, and clever that everyone who saw her fell in love with her.

On the day that she was fifteen years old she happened to be left alone in the castle. The maiden looked about in every place, going through all the rooms and chambers just as she pleased, until she came at last to an old tower.

Up the narrow, winding staircase she tripped, until she came to a door in the lock of which was a rusty key. This she turned, the door swung open, and there, in a little room, sat an old woman spinning flax.

"Good day, my good old lady," said the princess, "what are you doing here?"

"I am spinning," said the old woman, nodding her head.

"What thing is this which twists round so merrily?" asked the maiden, as she took the spindle to try her hand at spinning.

Scarcely had she done so when she pricked her finger, and at the very same moment fell back in a deep sleep upon a bed which stood near.

Everybody in the castle fell asleep also. The king and queen, who had just returned, fell asleep in the hall, and all their courtiers with them; the horses in the stables, the doves upon the eaves, the flies upon the walls, and even the fire upon the hearth all ceased to stir; the meat which was cooking stopped sizzling; and the cook, at the instant of pulling the hair of the kitchen boy, lost his hold and began to snore. The wind fell, and not a leaf rustled on the trees around the castle.

Soon a thick hedge of briars began to grow around the palace. Every year it grew higher and higher, till the castle was quite hidden from view, so that one could not even see the flag upon the tower.

Then there went through the land a legend of the beautiful maiden Briar Rose (for so was the sleeping princess named), and from time to time princes came and tried to break through the hedge into the castle. This was impossible, for the thorns held them, as if by hands, and the youths, unable to release themselves, perished miserably.

After the lapse of many years there came into the country the son of another king. He heard an old man tell the legend of the hedge of briars, behind which stood a castle where slept a fair and lovely princess called Briar Rose who had slumbered nearly a hundred years, and with her the king and queen and all their court. The old man also told what he had heard from his grandfather, that many a prince had come from afar and tried to get through the hedge, but had died a miserable death.

This youth was not to be daunted, and however much the old man tried to dissuade him, he only answered, "I fear not; I will see this hedge of briars!"

Just at that time came the last day of the hundred years, when Briar Rose was to wake again.

As the young prince drew near the hedge the thorns turned to large, fine flowers which, of their own accord, made a way for him to pass through and again closed behind him.

In the courtyard he saw the horses and dogs lying fast asleep, and on the eaves were the doves with their heads beneath their wings.

In the house he saw the flies asleep upon the wall, the cook still standing with his hand on the hair of the kitchen boy, and the maid at the board with the fowl in her hand. He went on, and found the courtiers lying asleep in the hall, and above, by the throne, were the king and the queen. He went on farther, and all was so quiet that he could hear himself breathe, till at last he came to the tower and opened the door of the little room where slept Briar Rose.

There she lay, looking so beautiful that he could not turn

away his eyes, and he bent over her and kissed her. As he did so she opened her eyes, awoke, and greeted him with smiles.

Then they went downstairs together, and instantly the king and the queen and the whole court awoke and stared at each other.

Then the horses in the stable got up and shook themselves; the dogs wagged their tails; the doves upon the eaves drew their heads from under their wings, looked around, and flew away; the flies upon the walls began to crawl; the fire began to burn brightly and to cook the meat; the meat began again to sizzle; the cook gave the kitchen boy a box upon the ear which made him call out; and the maid began to pluck the fowl. The whole palace was once more in motion, as if nothing had occurred, for the hundred years' sleep had made no change in anyone.

By and by the wedding of the prince and Briar Rose was celebrated with great splendor, and to the end of their days they lived contented and happy.

The House in the Wood

There was once a poor woodcutter who lived with his wife and three daughters in a little hut at the edge of a large forest.

One morning when he went out to his usual work he said to his wife: "Let my dinner be brought by our eldest daughter, for I shall not be ready to come home until evening. That she may not lose her way I will take with me a bag of seeds and strew them in my path."

When the sun was risen to the center of the heavens the maiden set out on her way, carrying a jug of soup. But the field-sparrows and wood-sparrows, the larks, blackbirds, goldfinches, and greenfinches had picked up the seeds, so that the maiden could find no trace of the way.

She walked on, trusting to fortune, till the sun set and night came on. The trees rustled in the darkness, the owls hooted, and the girl began to feel afraid. All at once she saw a shining light at a distance among the trees.

"Surely people must dwell there," she thought, "who will keep me during the night," and she walked toward the light.

In a short time she came to a cottage where the windows were all lighted up, and when she knocked at the door a hoarse voice called, "Come in."

The girl opened the door and saw a hoary old man sitting at a table with his face buried in his hands, and his white beard flowing over the table down to the ground. On the hearth lay three animals—a hen, a cock, and a brindled cow.

The girl told the old man her adventures and begged for a night's lodging. The man said:

"Pretty hen, pretty cock,

And pretty brindled cow,
What have you to say now?"

"Cluck!" said the fowls; and as that meant they were satisfied, the old man said to the maiden: "Here is abundance and to spare. Go into the kitchen and cook some supper for us."

The girl found plenty of everything in the kitchen and cooked a good meal, but thought nothing about the animals.

When the supper was ready she carried a full dish into the room, and, sitting down opposite the old man, ate till her hunger was satisfied. This done, she said: "I am very tired. Where shall I sleep?"

The animals replied:

"An ungracious guest,
You have eaten your fill
Without thought of us,
But we bear no ill will;
You may stay here and rest."

Thereupon the old man said: "Step down the stairs and you will come to a room containing two beds. Shake them up and cover them with white sheets, and then I will come and lie down to sleep myself."

The maiden stepped down the stairs, and as soon as she had shaken up the beds and covered them afresh she laid herself down in one.

After some time the old man came, and looking at the girl shook his head when he saw that she was fast asleep. Then, opening a trapdoor, he dropped her down into the cellar below.

Late in the evening the woodcutter went home and scolded his wife because she had let him hunger all day long.

"It is not my fault," she replied; "the girl was sent out with your dinner. She must have lost her way, but tomorrow, no

doubt, she will return."

At daybreak the next morning the woodcutter got up to go into the forest, and told his wife to send the second daughter with his dinner this time. "I will take a bag of peas," he said. "They are larger than corn seed, and the girl will therefore see them better and not lose my track."

At noonday the girl set out with her father's dinner, but the peas had all disappeared, for the wood birds had picked them up as they had picked up the seeds on the day before. So the girl wandered about till it was quite dark, and then she also arrived at the old man's hut, was invited in, and begged food and a night's lodging.

The man of the white beard asked his animals again:

"Pretty hen, pretty cock,
And pretty brindled cow,
What have you to say now?"

They answered, "Cluck!" and everything happened as on the previous day.

The girl cooked a meal, ate and drank with the old man, but did not once think of the animals. When she asked for her bed they made answer:

"An ungracious guest,
You have eaten your fill
Without thought of us,
But we bear no ill will;
You may stay here and rest."

As soon as she had gone to sleep the old man came, and after looking at her and shaking his head as before he dropped her into the cellar below.

On the third morning the woodcutter told his wife to send their youngest child with his dinner.

"For," said he, "she is always obedient and good; she will keep in the right path and will not run about like her sisters!"

But the mother refused and said, "Shall I lose my youngest child too?"

"Be not afraid of that," said her husband. "The girl will not miss her way; she is too steady and prudent. But I will take beans to strew. They are larger than peas and will show her the way better."

By and by, when the girl went out with her basket on her arm, she found that the wood pigeons had eaten up all the beans, and she knew not which way to turn. She was full of trouble, and thought with sorrow how her father would want his dinner and how her dear mother would grieve when she did not return. At length, when it became quite dark, she also saw the lighted cottage, and entering it begged very politely to be allowed to pass the night there.

The old man asked the animals a third time in the same words:

"Pretty hen, pretty cock,
And pretty brindled cow,
What have you to say now?"

"Cluck, cluck!" said they. Thereupon the maiden stepped up to the fire, near which they lay, and fondled the pretty hen and cock, smoothing their plumage down with her hands and stroking the cow between her horns.

Afterwards, when at the old man's request she had prepared a good supper and had placed the dishes on the table, she thought to herself: "I must not satisfy my own hunger until I have fed these good creatures. There is plenty in the kitchen. I will serve them first."

Thus thinking, she brought some corn and strewed it before the fowls, and then she gave an armful of hay to the cow.

"Now, eat away, you good creatures," said she to them, "and when you are thirsty you shall have a cool, fresh drink." So saying she brought in a pailful of water, and the hen and cock perched themselves on its edge, put their beaks in, and

then drew their heads up as birds do when drinking. The cow also took a hearty draft.

After the animals were thus fed, the maiden sat down at table with the old man and ate what was left for her. In a short time the hen and cock began to fold their wings over their heads, and the brindled cow blinked with both eyes. Then the maiden asked, "Shall we not also take our rest?"

The old man replied as before:

"Pretty hen, pretty cock,
And pretty brindled cow,
What have you to say now?"

"Cluck, cluck!" replied the animals, meaning,

"Dear courteous guest,
You ate not until
You had waited on us
With hearty good will;
We hope you will rest."

So the maiden went down the stairs and shook up the feather beds and laid on clean sheets. When they were ready the old man came and lay down in one, with his white beard stretching down to his feet. The girl then lay down in the other bed, saying her prayers before she went to sleep.

She slept quietly till midnight. At that hour there began such a tumult in the house that it awakened her. Presently she heard a cracking and rumbling in every corner of the room, and the doors were slammed back against the wall.

Then the beams groaned as if they were being torn away from their fastenings, and the stairs fell down, and at last it seemed as if the whole roof fell in. Soon after that all was quiet, and the maiden, who was unharmed, went quietly to sleep again.

When, however, the bright light of the morning sun awoke her, what a sight met her eyes! She found herself lying

in a large chamber, with everything around belonging to regal pomp. On the walls were gold flowers growing on a green-silk ground, the bed was of ivory, and the curtains of red velvet. On a stool close by was placed a pair of slippers ornamented with pearls.

The maiden thought it was all a dream, but presently in came three servants dressed in rich liveries, who asked her what were her commands.

"Leave me," replied the maiden; "I will get up at once and cook some breakfast for the old man and feed the pretty hen, the pretty cock, and the brindled cow." She spoke thus because she thought the old man was already up, but when she looked round at his bed she saw a young and handsome stranger asleep in it.

While she was looking at him he awoke, and starting up said to the maiden: "I am a king's son who was long ago changed by a wicked old witch into the form of an old man and condemned to live in the wood, with nobody to bear me company but my three servants in the forms of a hen, a cock, and a brindled cow. The enchantment was not to end until a maiden should come who would be kind to my animals as well as to me. Such you have been; therefore at midnight we were saved through you, and the old wooden hut has again become my royal palace."

When he had thus spoken they arose, and the prince told his three servants to fetch the father and mother of the maiden, that they also might live in the palace.

"But where are my two sisters?" asked the maiden.

"I have put them into the cellar," replied the prince, "and there they must remain till tomorrow morning, when they shall be led into the forest and bound as servants to a collier. When they have reformed their tempers and learned not to let poor animals suffer hunger, they, too, may live here."

Thumbling, the Dwarf Who Became a Giant

Once upon a time an honest farmer had a son born to him who was no bigger than my thumb, and for a number of years the child did not grow a hairbreadth taller.

One day as the father was going to the field to plow, his little son said, "Father, let me go too?"

"No," said his father; "stay where you are. You can do no good out of doors, and if you go, I might lose you."

Little Thumbling began to cry, and to quiet him his father at last said he might go.

Of course Thumbling could not keep up with his father on the way to the field, so the good man put the child in his pocket, and when they arrived at the field took him carefully out and set him upon the top of a newly made furrow so that the little fellow could look about him.

While Thumbling was sitting there a giant came striding over the hill, a long way off, and the farmer said: "See that tall steeple man. Take care that he does not run away with you."

Now the father only said this to frighten Thumbling, so that he would not stray out of sight. But the giant came close to the furrow, with only a step or two, and seeing Thumbling picked him up to see if he were really a child or a new sort of grasshopper or cricket. Thumbling was not a bit afraid, and as the giant's hand was warm, he rather liked walking about on it. The giant took a liking to the midget, though the father stood aside speechless with fright, for he thought he should never again see his dear child.

The giant, however, was very gentle with Thumbling,

taking him to his house in the woods, where he fed him with tiny morsels of the same kind of food upon which giants thrive.

So Thumbling grew tall and strong like the giant who had adopted him.

At the end of two years the old giant took Thumbling into the woods and put him beside a slender white birch tree, bidding him pull it up by the roots for a walking-stick.

The lad easily tore the young tree out of the ground by its roots, and the giant was well pleased, but determined that Thumbling should grow even stronger. So he kept him two years longer, feeding him on giant's fare, and then took him again to the woods, this time placing him beside an oak tree.

"Pull it up, my little man," said the giant, and Thumbling did as he was bidden.

Then the old giant said, "Well done, you will get along now without any help," and so saying he carried Thumbling back to the field where he first found him.

Thumbling's father happened to be plowing, just as he was when his son was lost, and the young giant went proudly up to him and said: "Look, father! See me! Don't you know who I am? Don't you know your own son?"

But the farmer was frightened and cried out, "No, no, you are not my son."

"Indeed, I am your own son. Let me plow a little. I've grown strong and can plow as well as you."

"No, no, go your way," said the father, who, truth to tell, was afraid of the tall man before him. At last he let go of the plow and sat down on the ground beside it.

Then the youth grasped the plow handles, and with but a slight push drove the plowshare deep, deep into the soil.

The farmer was not pleased with the work, and said more harm than good came of such deep plowing. But his son unhitched the horses and said, "Father, go home and tell my mother that I want a good dinner."

When his father was out of sight the giant went on driving the plow without any horses till the whole field was turned over, then he harrowed it while the horses rested, and when all was done he took up the plow, harrow, horses, and all as if they were only a bundle of straw and started for the house. On reaching home he sat down on a bench, saying, "Now, mother, is dinner ready?"

"Yes," said she, not daring to deny him anything. So enough food was brought to have lasted his parents eight days, but the son ate it all and then said: "I see plainly, father, that I shall not get enough to eat in this house. If you will give me an iron walking-stick, so strong that I cannot break it across my knee, I will go away again."

The farmer gladly hitched his two horses to the cart, drove them to the forge, and dragged back a bar of iron as long and thick as the horses could draw.

The lad snapped the bar across his knee as if it were only a dry beanstalk. "I see, father," said he, "you can get no stick that will do for me, so I will go and try my luck for myself."

Then away he went and turned blacksmith. He traveled till he came to a village where lived a miserly smith who earned a great deal of money, but kept it all for himself.

Thumbling, now a young giant, you must remember, stepped up to the blacksmith and asked if he wanted to hire a journeyman.

"Ay," said the cunning smith, as he looked at the stout young man and thought how lustily he could work. "What wages do you ask?"

"I want no pay, but every fortnight when the other workmen are paid you shall let me give you two strokes over your shoulders, just to amuse myself."

The old smith thought he could bear this very well, and reckoned on saving a great deal of money by such a bargain, which was struck at once.

The next morning the new workman was about to begin

work, but at the first stroke the red-hot iron was split in pieces and the anvil sunk so deep into the earth that it could not be got out.

This made the master smith very angry, and he shouted: "I can't have you for a workman; you are too clumsy. We must put an end to our bargain."

"Very well," replied the young giant, "but you must pay for what I have done. Let me give you one of the little strokes agreed upon, and we shall be quits." Saying which he gave the man a thump that sent him flying over a load of hay which was standing near. Then he took the thickest bar of iron on which he could lay his hands and went jogging along with it for a walking-stick.

The first stop he made was at a farmhouse, where he asked for work as a foreman. The farmer hired him at once, making the same agreement as that entered upon with the blacksmith.

In the morning when all the workmen were ready to start, the giant was found asleep.

"Come, get up," said one of them to him. "It is high time to be stirring."

"Go your way," Thumbling sleepily muttered. "I shall do my work and get home long before you." So he lay in bed two hours longer, then got up, cooked and ate his breakfast, and leisurely harnessed his horses to go to the wood.

Just before the wood was a hollow way through which he must pass, so he drove his cart on first and built up behind him a heap of brush and briars through which no horse could pass. This done he drove on, and on entering the wood met the others coming out to go home.

"Drive away," he called out cheerfully, "I shall be there before you." However, he had gone but a little way when he concluded to tear up one of the largest trees to take home on his cart. When he came to the brush heap in the hollow he found all the men standing there, unable to pass by.

"So," said he, "if you had stayed with me, you would have been home just as soon, and you might have slept two hours longer, as I did." So saying he put the tree on one shoulder and the cart on the other, and strode through the barrier as if he were laden only with feathers. When he reached the yard he showed the tree to the farmer and asked what he thought of his little walking-stick.

"Wife," said the farmer at supper, "this man is worth something. If he sleeps longer than the others, he still works better than they."

Time went on, until he had been on the farm a whole year, and when the others were paid, he said he also had a right to his promised wages.

Great dread came upon the farmer when he thought of the blows he was to have, so he begged to have the old bargain given up, offering his whole farm with all its stock instead.

"Not I," replied the giant; "I will be no farmer. A foreman I am, and a foreman I will remain. You must pay as you agreed."

Finding he could do nothing with this stubborn workman, the farmer begged for a fortnight's respite, which was granted. So he called all his friends in to get their advice on the matter.

The friends took a long time to consider, and at last agreed that the shortest way out of all the trouble would be to kill the foreman, and be done with it. It was arranged that he should be ordered to carry some great millstones to the edge of the well, down which he should be sent to clean it out. While he was at the bottom of the well, the stones could be tumbled down upon his head.

So down into the well Thumbling went, and the stones were rolled after him. As the stones struck the bottom, water splashed to the very top. Of course the men thought the giant's head must be crushed, but what was their surprise to hear him shout: "Drive those chickens away from the well. They are scratching the sand about, and it falls into my eyes!"

When his work in the well was finished, up he sprang to the surface, laughing at the joke which they had been playing on him. "See what a fine neckcloth I have," he said, pointing to one of the millstones that had fallen over his head and hung about his neck like a loose-fitting collar.

The farmer was again overcome by fear and begged for another fortnight to think about his debt to the foreman. Again his friends advised him. This time they said the giant should be sent at night to grind corn in a haunted mill, out of which no man ever came alive. That very night the farmer sent him to the mill with eight bushels of corn to be ground.

Away Thumbling went to the barn loft, where he put two bushels of corn into his right pocket, two into his left, and four into a long sack which he slung over his shoulders, and then set off to the mill.

The miller told him that the mill was bewitched, so that he could only grind by daylight, for whoever went in at night was found dead the next morning.

"Never mind, miller, I'll come out safe. Only make haste to get out of the way, and look out for me in the morning." So saying, the giant went into the mill, put the corn into the hopper, and about twelve o'clock sat down on the bench in the miller's room.

In a few minutes the door opened of itself and in came a table well set with a hearty meal. The chairs moved themselves up, and as the man was hungry he took a seat and ate whatever he liked best.

All of a sudden the lights went out, but this merry fellow said to himself, "No matter; one does not need a candle to go to sleep by."

As soon as it was pitch dark he felt a heavy blow upon his head. "Foul play!" he said; "if I get another box on the ear I shall hit back," and this he did when the blow came. This was kept up until morning, and not for one moment did the courageous fellow feel afraid.

At daybreak the miller came in and was greeted with: "Good morning to you. I've had a few slaps in the face, but I gave as good as I took, and meantime I've eaten as much as I liked."

The miller was glad to find that the evil spell was broken, and he would have given the brave foreman a large sum of money. But the man said, "I have all I need," and taking the meal on his back went home to his master to claim his wages.

The farmer was now in great trouble, and as he paced up and down the room great drops of sweat rolled down his face. He opened a window to get some fresh air, and before he knew it the foreman gave him a blow that sent him flying over the hills and far away. The next blow sent the farmer's wife after her husband, and for aught I know they are flying yet. The foreman did not look after them, but took his stick and walked away.

The Iron Stove

In the days when wishing was having, a certain king's son was enchanted by an old witch and obliged to sit in a great iron stove which stood in a wood! There he passed many years, for nobody could release him. One day a princess who had lost herself, and could not find her way back to her father's kingdom, came, after nine days' wandering, to the spot where the iron stove stood.

As she came near the stove she heard a voice say, "Whence comest thou, and whither goest thou?"

"I have lost the road to my father's kingdom and am unable to find my home!" the princess replied.

"I will help you, and that in a short time," said the voice from the iron stove, "if you will consent to what I desire. I am the child of a far greater king than your father, and I am willing to marry you."

The princess was frightened at this and exclaimed, "What can I do with an iron stove?" but as she was anxious to get home she consented to follow his directions.

The prince told her that she might go home, but she must return and bring with her a knife with which to cut a hole in the stove, and then he gave her such minute directions as to her road that in two hours she reached her father's palace.

There was great joy there when the princess returned, and the old king fell on her neck and kissed her; but she was very unhappy, and said: "Alas, my dear father, how things have happened! I should never have got home out of the great wild wood had it not been for an iron stove which I have promised to marry."

The king was so frightened when he heard this that he fell

into a swoon, for she was his only daughter. When he recovered they resolved that the miller's daughter, a very pretty girl, should take the princess's place; and so the maiden was led to the spot, furnished with a knife, and told to scrape a hole in the iron stove.

For four and twenty hours she scraped and scraped without making the least bit of a hole; and when day broke, the voice out of the stove exclaimed, "It seems to me like daylight."

"Yes," replied the girl, "it seems so to me, too, and methinks I hear the clapping of my father's mill."

"Oh, then, you are the miller's daughter," said the voice again. "Well, you may go home and send the princess to me."

The girl therefore returned and told the king the stove would not have her, but demanded his daughter. This frightened the king and made the princess weep. But the king had also in his service a swineherd's daughter, prettier still than the miller's, to whom he offered a piece of gold if she would go to the iron stove instead of the princess.

Thereupon this girl went away and scraped for four and twenty hours on the iron without making any impression. When day broke, a voice in the stove exclaimed, "It seems to me like daylight."

"Yes, it is so," said the girl, "for I hear my father's horn."

"You are, then, the swineherd's daughter," said the voice. "Go back and tell the princess, who sent you, that it must be as I said; and if she does not come to me everything in the old kingdom shall fall to pieces and not one stone be left upon another anywhere."

As soon as the princess heard this she began to cry, but it was of no use, for her promise must be kept. So she took leave of her father and, carrying a knife with her, set out toward the iron stove in the wood.

As soon as she reached it she began to scrape the iron, and before two hours had passed she had made a small hole.

Through this she peeped, and inside the stove she beheld a handsome prince, whose clothes glittered with gold and precious stones.

Then she scraped away faster than before, and soon made a hole so large that the prince could get out.

"You are mine, and I am yours," he said, as soon as he stood on the earth. "You are my bride, because you have saved me."

He wanted to take the princess at once to his father's kingdom, but she begged that she might go back to her father to take leave of him.

The prince consented to this, but said she must not speak more than three words and must return immediately.

Thereupon the princess went home, but alas! she said many more than three words; and the iron stove disappeared and was carried far away over many icy mountains and snowy valleys, but without the prince, who was no longer shut up in his prison.

By and by the princess took leave of her father and, taking a little gold, went back into the wood and sought for the iron stove, but could find it nowhere. For nine days she searched, and then her hunger became so great that she knew not how to help herself, and thought she must perish.

When evening came she climbed up a little tree, for she feared the wild beasts which night would bring forth.

Just at midnight she saw a little light at a distance. "Ah, there I may find help," thought she; and getting down she went toward the light, saying a prayer as she walked along.

She soon came to a little hut surrounded with grass, and before the door stood a heap of wood.

"Ah, how came you here?" thought she to herself, as she peeped through the window, and saw nothing but fat little toads and a table covered with meat and wine and dishes made of silver. She took courage and knocked, and a toad exclaimed:

"Little toad with crooked leg,
Open quick the door, I beg,
And see who stands without."

As soon as these words were spoken, a little toad came running up and opened the door, and the princess walked in. The toads very politely bade her welcome and asked her to sit down. They then inquired whence she came and whither she was going.

The princess told the toads that because she had spoken more than three words the stove had disappeared, as well as the prince, and now she was about to search over hill and valley till she should find him.

On hearing this the old toad cried out:

"Little toad with crooked leg,
Quickly fetch for me, I beg,
The basket hanging on the peg."

So the little toad brought the basket to the old one, who took meat and milk from it and gave them to the princess. After that he showed her a beautiful bed made of silk and velvet, in which, under God's protection, she slept soundly.

As soon as day broke, the princess arose; and the old toad gave her three needles to take with her which would be of great use, since she would have to pass over a mountain of glass, three sharp swords, and a big lake before she would regain her lover.

The old toad gave her, besides the three needles, a plow-wheel and three nuts.

With these the princess set out on her way, and by and by came to the glass mountain, which was so smooth that she used the three needles as steps for her feet, and so reached the top.

When she came to the other side she put the needles in a secure place, and soon coming to the three swords, she rolled

over them by means of her plow-wheel.

At last she came to a great lake, and when she had passed that she found herself near a fine large castle that belonged to her lost prince. She entered and offered herself as a servant, saying she was a poor girl who had rescued a king's son from an iron stove which stood in the forest.

After some delay she was hired as a kitchen-maid at very small wages, and soon found out that the prince was going to marry another lady because he supposed his princess was dead.

One evening, when the princess had washed and made herself neat, she felt in her pocket and found the three nuts which the old toad had given her. One of them she cracked and found in it a fine royal dress instead of a kernel. The bride said she must have it, for it was no dress for a kitchen-maid; but the princess said she would sell it only on condition that she might be allowed to pass a night by the chamber of the prince.

This request was granted because the bride was anxious to have the dress, which was more beautiful than any of her own. When evening came she told her lover that the silly girl wanted to pass the night near his room.

"If you are contented, so am I," he replied; but she gave him a glass of wine into which she put a sleeping draft. In consequence he slept so soundly that the poor princess could not wake him, although she cried the whole night, and kept repeating: "I saved you in the wild forest and released you from the iron stove. I have sought you, and I traveled over a mountain of glass and over three sharp swords and across a wide lake before I found you, and still you will not hear me!"

The servants, however, who slept in the anteroom, heard the complaint and told the king of it the following morning.

That evening, after the princess had washed herself, she cracked the second nut and found in it a dress more beautiful than the other, and the bride declared she must have it also.

But it was not to be purchased except on the same condition as the first, and the prince again allowed her to sleep near his door.

The bride, however, gave the prince another sleeping draft, and he slept too soundly to hear the poor princess crying as before: "I saved you in the wild forest and released you from the iron stove. I have sought you, and I traveled over a mountain of glass and over three sharp swords and across a wide lake before I found you, and still you will not hear me!"

The servants, however, in the anteroom, heard the crying again and told the prince of it the next morning.

On the evening of that day the poor maid broke her third nut and produced a dress starred with gold, which the bride declared she must have at any price, and the maid begged for the same privilege as before. This time the prince threw away the sleeping draft, and therefore when the princess began to cry, "Alas! my dear treasure, have you forgotten how I saved you in the great wild wood and released you from the iron stove?" the prince heard her and, jumping up, exclaimed: "You are right. I am yours, and you are mine."

Thereupon, while it was yet night, he got into a carriage with the princess, first hiding the clothes of the false bride so that she might not follow them.

When they came to the lake they rowed over very quickly, and passed the three sharp swords again by means of the plow-wheel. Soon they crossed the glass mountain by the aid of the three needles, and arrived at last at the little old house, which, as soon as they entered, was changed into a noble castle.

At the same moment all the toads were disenchanted and returned to their natural shapes, for they were the sons of the king of the country.

So the wedding took place, and the prince and princess remained for some time in the castle. However, because the old king grieved at his daughter's continued absence, they

went to live with him, and, joining the government of the two kingdoms in one, they reigned many years in happiness and prosperity.

Snow-White and Rose-Red

There was once a poor widow who lived all alone in a hut with her two children, who were called Snow-White and Rose-Red because they were like the flowers which bloomed on two rosebushes that grew before the door. They were two as pious, good, industrious, and amiable children as any in the world. Snow-White was more quiet and gentle than Rose-Red, for Rose-Red would run and jump about the meadows, seeking flowers, while Snow-White sat at home helping her mother to keep house, or reading to her, if there were nothing else to do.

The two children loved each other dearly, and always walked hand in hand when they went out together; whenever they talked of it they agreed that they would never separate from each other, and that whatever one had the other should share.

They often ran deep into the forest and gathered wild berries, but no beast ever harmed them. The hare would eat grass out of their hands, the fawn would graze at their side, the goats would frisk about them in play, and the birds remained perched on the boughs singing as if nobody were near.

No accident ever befell them; and if they stayed late in the forest, and night came upon them, they used to lie down on the moss and sleep till morning. Because their mother knew they would do so, she felt no concern about them.

One time they had thus passed the night in the forest, and when the dawn of morning awoke them they saw a beautiful child dressed in shining white sitting near their couch. She got up and looked at them kindly, but without saying anything went into the forest. When the children looked round

they saw that they had slept close to the edge of a pit, into which they would have fallen had they walked a step further in the dark.

Their mother told them the figure they had seen was doubtless the good angel who watches over children.

Snow-White and Rose-Red kept their mother's cottage so clean that it was a pleasure to enter it. Every morning in the summer time Rose-Red would first put the house in order and then gather a nosegay for her mother, in which she always placed a bud from each rose tree. Every winter's morning Snow-White would light the fire and put the kettle on to boil, and although the kettle was made of copper it shone like gold because it was so well scoured.

In the evenings, when the flakes of snow were falling, the mother would say, "Go, Snow-White, and bolt the door"; and then they used to sit down on the hearth, and the mother would put on her spectacles and read out of a great book, while her children sat spinning. By their side, too, lay a little lamb, and on a perch behind them a little white dove rested with her head under her wing.

One evening, when they were thus sitting together, there came a knock at the door, as if somebody wished to come in.

"Make haste, Rose-Red," cried her mother; "make haste and open the door. Perhaps there is some traveler outside who needs shelter."

So Rose-Red drew the bolt and opened the door, expecting to see some poor man outside, but instead a great fat bear poked his black head in.

Rose-Red shrieked and ran back, the little lamb bleated, the dove fluttered on her perch, and Snow-White hid herself behind her mother's bed.

The bear, however, began to speak, and said: "Be not afraid; I will do you no harm. But I am half frozen, and I wish to come in and warm myself."

"Poor bear!" cried the mother; "come in and lie down

before the fire, but take care you do not burn yourself." And then she said, "Come here, Rose-Red and Snow-White, the bear will not harm you." So they both came back, and by degrees the lamb and the dove overcame their fears and welcomed the rough visitor.

"You, children," said the bear, before he entered, "come and knock the snow off my coat." Then Rose-Red and Snow-White took their brooms and swept him clean, and he stretched himself before the fire and grumbled out his satisfaction.

In a little while the children became familiar enough to play tricks with the unwieldy animal. They pulled his long, shaggy fur, set their feet upon his back and rolled him to and fro, and even ventured to beat him with a hazel-stick, laughing when he grumbled.

The bear bore all their tricks with good temper, and if they hit too hard he cried out:

"Leave me my life, you children,
Snow-White and Rose-Red,
Or you'll never wed."

When bedtime came and the others were gone, the mother said to the bear, "You may sleep here on the hearth if you like, and then you will be safely protected from the cold and bad weather."

As soon as day broke, the two children let the bear out, and he trotted away over the snow.

Afterwards he came every evening at a certain hour. He would lie down on the hearth and allow the children to play with him as much as they liked, till by degrees they became so accustomed to him that the door was left unbolted till their black friend arrived.

But when spring returned, and everything out of doors was green again, the bear one morning told Snow-White that he must leave her, and could not return during the whole

summer.

"Where are you going, then, dear bear?" asked Snow-White.

"I must go into the forest and guard my treasures from the evil dwarfs. For in winter, when the ground is hard, they are obliged to keep in their holes, and cannot work through; but now, since the sun has thawed the earth and warmed it, the dwarfs pierce through and steal all they can find, and what has once passed into their hands and gets concealed by them in their caves is not easily brought to light."

Snow-White, however, was very sad at the departure of the bear, and opened the door so hesitatingly that when he pressed through it he left behind on the latch a piece of his hairy coat, and through the hole which was made in his coat Snow-White fancied she saw the glittering of gold, but she was not quite certain of it. The bear, however, ran hastily away, and was soon hidden behind the trees.

Some time afterwards the mother sent her children into the wood to gather sticks. On the way they came to a tree lying across the path, on the trunk of which something kept bobbing up and down, and they could not imagine what it was.

When they came nearer they saw that it was a dwarf with an old, wrinkled face and a snow-white beard a yard long. The end of this beard was fixed in a slit of the tree, and the little man kept jumping about like a dog tied by a chain, for he did not know how to free himself.

He glared at the maidens with his red, fiery eyes, and exclaimed: "Why do you stand there? Are you going to pass without offering me any assistance?"

"What have you done, little man?" asked Rose-Red.

"You stupid, gazing goose!" exclaimed he, "I wanted to split the tree in order to get a little wood for my kitchen. I drove the wedge in properly, and everything was going on well, when the smooth wood flew upwards and the tree closed

so suddenly together that I could not draw out my beautiful beard, and here it sticks, and I cannot get away. There, don't laugh, you milk-face thing!"

The children took all the pains they could to pull the dwarf's beard out, but without success.

"I will run and fetch some help," cried Rose-Red at length.

"Crack-brained sheepshead that you are!" snarled the dwarf; "what are you going to call other people for? You are two too many, now, for me. Can you think of nothing else?"

"Don't be impatient," replied Snow-White, "I have thought of something," and pulling her scissors out of her pocket she cut off the end of the beard.

As soon as the dwarf found himself at liberty he snatched up a sack of gold which lay between the roots of the tree and, throwing it over his shoulder, marched off, grumbling, groaning, and crying: "Stupid people, to cut off a piece of my beautiful beard! Plague take you!" and away he went without once looking at the children.

Some time afterwards Snow-White and Rose-Red went fishing, and as they neared the pond they saw something like a great locust hopping about on the bank, as if going to jump into the water. They ran up and recognized the dwarf.

"What are you after?" asked Rose-Red. "You will fall into the water."

"I am not quite such a simpleton as that," replied the dwarf; "but do you not see that this fish will pull me in?"

The little man had been sitting there angling, and unfortunately the wind had entangled his beard with the fishing-line; and so when a great fish bit at the bait the weak little fellow was not able to draw it out, and the fish had the best of the struggle. The dwarf held on by the reeds and rushes which grew near, but to no purpose, for the fish pulled him where it liked, and he must soon have been drawn into the pond.

Luckily, just then the two maidens arrived, and tried to release the beard of the dwarf from the fishing-line, but it was

so entangled that they could not get it loose. So one of the maidens pulled out her scissors again and cut off another piece of the beard.

When the dwarf saw this done he flew into a great rage and exclaimed: "You donkey! that is the way to disfigure my face! Was it not enough to cut it once, but you must now take away the best part of my fine beard? I dare not show myself now to my own people. I wish you had run the soles off your boots before you had come here!" So saying, he took up a bag of pearls which lay among the rushes and, without speaking another word, slipped off and disappeared behind a stone.

Not many days after this the mother sent the two maidens to the next town to buy thread, needles, pins, laces, and ribbons.

Their road passed over a common strewn with rocks. Just over their heads they saw a great bird flying round and round, and every now and then dropping lower and lower, till at last it flew down behind a rock.

Immediately afterwards they heard a piercing shriek, and, running up, they saw with affright that the eagle had caught their old acquaintance the dwarf and was trying to carry him off.

The compassionate children thereupon laid hold of the little man and held him fast till the bird gave up the struggle and flew off.

As soon as the dwarf had recovered from his fright, he exclaimed in his squeaking voice: "Could you not hold me more gently? You have seized my fine brown coat in such a manner that it is all torn and full of holes, meddling rubbish that you are!" With these words he shouldered a bag filled with precious stones and slipped away to his cave among the rocks.

The maidens were now accustomed to his ingratitude, and they walked on to the town. Going home they passed over the same common, and, unawares, walked up to a clean spot

on which the dwarf had shaken out his bag of precious stones, thinking nobody was near.

The sun was shining, and the bright stones glittered in its beams, displaying such a variety of colors that the two maidens stopped to admire them.

"What are you standing there gaping for?" asked the dwarf, while his face grew as red as copper with rage. He was still abusing the poor maidens, when a loud roaring was heard, and a great black bear came rolling out of the forest.

The dwarf jumped up in terror, but he could not gain his hiding-place before the bear overtook him. Thereupon he cried out: "Spare me, my dear lord bear! I will give you all my treasures. See these beautiful precious stones which lie here. Only give me my life, for what have you to fear from a little weak fellow like me? You could not touch me with your big teeth. There are two wicked girls; take them. They would make nice morsels; they are as fat as young quails. Eat them, I beg!"

The bear, however, without troubling himself to speak, gave the bad-hearted dwarf a single blow with his paw, and he never stirred again.

The maidens were going to run away, but the bear called to them: "Snow-White and Rose-Red, fear not! Wait a bit, and I will go with you."

They knew his voice and stopped; and as the bear approached them his rough coat suddenly fell off, and he stood up a tall man, dressed entirely in gold.

"I am a king's son," he said, "and was condemned by that wicked dwarf to wander about in this forest in the form of a bear till his death released me. He also stole all my treasures. Now he has his punishment."

Then they went home, and Snow-White was married to the prince, and Rose-Red to his brother. The mother lived happily for many years with her two children; and the rose trees which had stood before the cottage were planted near

the palace, and every year produced beautiful red and white roses.

The Two Brothers

Once upon a time there were two brothers, one rich and the other poor. The rich man was a goldsmith and was very selfish, but the poor brother, who mended brooms, was honest and pious.

The poor man had two children—twins, as like one another as two drops of water—who used often to go to their rich uncle's house, where the cook would give them a dinner from pieces left by her master.

One day when the broom-mender went into the woods for twigs he saw a golden bird, which was more beautiful than any bird he had ever before seen. He picked up a stone and flung it at the bird and hit it, but with so little force that only a single feather dropped off. This feather he took to his brother, who looked at it and said: "It is of pure gold! I will give you a good sum of money for it."

The next day the broom-mender climbed a birch tree to lop off a bough or two, when the same bird flew out of the branches, and as the man looked round he found a nest with an egg in it, and the egg was of pure gold. This he took to his brother, who gave him what it was worth, but said he must have the bird itself.

For the third time, now, the man went into the forest, and again saw the golden bird sitting upon a tree. Taking up a stone, he threw it and killed the bird, which he took to his brother, and received a large pile of gold for it. With this the man went home with a light heart.

The goldsmith was crafty and knew very well what sort of a bird it was. He called his wife and said to her, "Roast this bird for me, and take care of whatever falls from it, for I have

a mind to eat it by myself." Now, the bird was not a common one, for it was said that if anyone should eat its heart and liver he would find a gold piece under his pillow every morning.

The wife made the bird ready and, putting it on a spit, set it down to roast. While it was on the fire the two children of the poor broom-mender ran in, and two little tidbits fell out of the bird into the pan. These the goldsmith's wife gave to the children, not knowing their magic powers, but in order that her husband might not miss them and fly in a passion she quickly killed a little chicken, and taking out its liver and heart put them inside the golden bird.

As soon as the bird was done she carried it to the goldsmith, who ate it quite alone and left nothing at all on the plate. The next morning, however, when he looked under his pillow to find the gold pieces, there was not the smallest one to be seen.

The two children did not know what good luck had befallen them, but when they got up the next morning two gold pieces fell ringing on the ground. These they took to their father, who hardly knew what he should do with them; but as the next morning the same thing happened, and so on every day, he went to his brother and told him the whole story.

The goldsmith knew at once that the children had eaten the heart and liver of his bird. In order to avenge himself, and because he was so hard-hearted, he told the father that his children were in league with evil spirits, and warned him not to take the gold, but to turn the children out of the house, for he said the Evil One had them in his power and would make them do some mischief.

The father feared the Evil One, and although it cost him a sharp pang he led his children out to the forest and with a sad heart left them there.

The two children ran about the wood seeking the road home, but they could not find it. At last they met a huntsman, who asked who they were.

"We are the children of the poor broom-mender," they replied. "Our father could no longer keep us at home, because a gold piece lay under our pillows every morning."

"Well," replied the huntsman, "that does not seem right, if you are honest and not idle."

The good man, having no children of his own, took the twins home with him, because they pleased him, and told them he would be their father and bring them up.

With him they learned all kinds of hunting, and the gold pieces which they found each morning they laid aside against a rainy day.

When they became young men the huntsman took them into the forest, and said, "Today you must show me how well you can shoot, that I may make you free huntsmen like myself."

So they went with him, and waited a long time, but no wild beast came. At last the huntsman, looking up, saw a flock of wild geese flying over in the form of a triangle. "Shoot one from each corner," said he to the twins.

When they had done this another flock came flying over in the form of a figure 2, and from these they were also bidden to shoot one at each corner. When they had done this their foster father said, "I now make you free."

Then the two brothers went together into the forest to plan what they should do, and when at evening time they sat down to their meal they said to their foster father, "We shall not touch the least morsel of food till you have granted our request."

He asked them what it was, and they replied: "We have now learned everything you can teach us. Let us go into the world and see what we can do there, and let us set out at once."

"You have spoken like brave huntsmen," cried the old man with joy. "What you have asked is just what I wished. You can set out as soon as you like, for you will succeed."

Then they ate together once more in great joy.

When the day came for them to go the old huntsman gave to each youth a good rifle and a dog, and let them take from the gold pieces as many as they liked. Then he went with them a part of their way, and at parting he gave them a knife, saying: "If one of you should ever be lost, stick this knife in a tree by the roadside, and then, if the other returns to the same point, he can tell how his brother fares; for the side upon which there is a mark will rust if he dies, but as long as he lives it will be as bright as ever."

The two brothers now went on till they came to a forest so large that they could not get out of it in one day. There they passed the night, and ate what they had in their pockets.

The second day they again walked on, but found no opening, and having nothing to eat, one said, "We must shoot something or we shall die of hunger," and he loaded his gun and looked around.

Just then an old hare came running up, at which he aimed, but it cried out:

"Dear huntsman, pray now let me live,
And I will two young lev'rets give."

So saying, it ran back into the brushwood and brought out two hares, which played about so prettily that the hunters could not make up their minds to kill them. So they took the hares with them.

Presently a fox came up, and as they were about to shoot him he cried out:

"Dear hunters, pray now let me live,
And I will two young foxes give."

These he brought, and the brothers, instead of killing them, put them with the young hares, and all four followed.

In a little while a wolf came out of the brushwood, at which the hunters also aimed; but, like the others, he cried

out:

"Dear hunters, pray now let me live;
Two young ones, in return, I'll give."

The hunters placed the two wolves with the other animals, who still followed them.

Soon they met a bear, who also begged for his life, saying:

"Dear hunters, pray now let me live;
Two young ones, in return, I'll give."

The two bears were added to the others, which made eight animals.

And now who came last? A lion, shaking his mane. The two brothers were not afraid, but aimed at him, and he cried:

"Dear hunters, pray now let me live;
Two young ones, in return, I'll give."

The lion then brought his two young ones, and now the huntsmen had two lions, two bears, two wolves, two foxes, and two hares following and waiting upon them. But the brothers were hungry, having eaten nothing, and they said to the foxes, "Get us something to eat, for you are both sly and crafty."

The foxes replied, "Not far from here lies a village where we can get many fowls, and we will show you the way there." So they went into the village and got food.

As they walked on without finding any place where they could live together they decided to part. The two brothers therefore divided the beasts, each taking a lion, a bear, a wolf, a fox, and a hare. Then they said good-by, promising to love each other till death. The knife which their foster father gave them they stuck in a tree, so that one side pointed to the east and the other to the west.

The younger brother with his animals came to a town which was hung with black crape. He went into an inn and

asked if he could lodge his beasts, and the landlord gave him a stable. In the wall was a hole through which the hare crept and took a cabbage; the fox caught himself a hen; but the lion, the bear, and the wolf, being too big for the hole, could get nothing.

Their master made the host fetch an ox for them, on which they feasted merrily, and then, having cared for his beasts, he asked the landlord why the town was all hung in mourning. The landlord replied that it was because the king's only daughter was to die the next day.

"Is she, then, sick unto death?" inquired the huntsman.

"No," replied the other, "she is well enough; but still she must die."

"How is that?" asked the huntsman.

"Out there before the town," said the landlord, "is a high mountain on which lives a dragon, who every year demands the sacrifice of a pure maiden. Should the king refuse, the monster would lay waste all the country. Now all the maidens have been given up, until there is but one left, the king's daughter, who must die, for there is no other way, and tomorrow morning it is to happen."

The huntsman asked, "Why does no one kill the dragon?"

"Ah!" replied the landlord, "many knights have tried, but every one has lost his life. The king has promised his daughter and, after his death, his kingdom to anyone who will kill this dragon."

The huntsman said nothing further at that time, but the next morning, taking with him his beasts, he climbed the dragon's mountain.

A little way up stood a chapel, and upon an altar were three cups. By them was written, "Whoever drinks the contents of these cups will be the strongest man on earth and may take the sword which lies buried beneath the threshold."

Without drinking, the huntsman sought and found the sword in the ground, but he could not move it from its place.

So he drank out of the cups, and then he easily pulled out the sword, and was so strong that holding it with one hand only he waved it about like a feather.

When the hour came at which the maiden should be given over to the dragon, the king and all his court went with her. From a distance they saw the huntsman upon the mountain and took him for the dragon waiting for them, and so dared not ascend; but at last, because the whole city must otherwise have been killed, the princess made the dreadful ascent alone. The king and his men went home full of grief, but the marshal had to stop and watch it all from a distance.

When the king's daughter reached the top of the hill she found the young hunter there instead of the dragon. The hunter said that he would save her, and led her into the chapel and shut her up there.

In a short time the seven-headed dragon came up roaring with an awful noise, but when he saw the hunter he was afraid and asked, "What do you here on my mountain?"

The hunter replied that he came to fight him, and the dragon said, breathing out fire from his seven jaws as he spoke, "Many a knight has already left his life behind him, and you I will soon kill as dead as they."

The fire from his throat set the grass in a blaze, and the smoke would have choked the hunter had not his beasts come running up and stamped it out.

The dragon made a dart at the hunter, but he swung his sword round so that it whistled in the air and cut off three of the beast's heads. The dragon now became furious and raised himself in the air, spitting out fire over his enemy, trying in every way to overthrow him; but the hunter, springing on one side, raised his sword again and cut off three more of the dragon's heads.

The beast was half killed with this, and sank down; but he tried once more to catch the hunter. The hunter beat him off and, with his last strength, cut off the dragon's tail. Then,

being unable to fight longer, he called his beasts, who came and tore the dragon to pieces.

As soon as the battle was over, the hunter unlocked the chapel, where he found the princess lying on the floor. She had fainted with terror while the contest was going on. The hunter carried her out, and when she came to herself and opened her eyes, he showed her the dragon torn to pieces, and said she was now safe forever. She rejoiced at the sight and said, "Now you will be my husband, for my father has promised me to him who should kill the dragon."

So saying, she took off her necklace of coral and divided it among the beasts for a reward, the lion having the gold snap for his share. But her handkerchief, on which her name was marked, she presented to the huntsman, who cut the tongues from the dragon's seven mouths and, wrapping them in the handkerchief, kept them with great care.

All this being done, the hunter felt so wearied by the battle with the dragon and the fire that he said to the princess, "Since we are both so tired, let us sleep awhile." They lay down on the ground, and the hunter bade the lion watch them.

Soon they were sound asleep, and the lion, who was also weary with fighting, said to the bear, "Do you lie down near me, for I must sleep a bit; but wake me if anyone comes." So the bear did as he was bidden, but soon getting tired, he asked the wolf to watch for him. Before long the wolf called the fox, and said: "Do watch for me a little while; I want to have a nap. You can call me if anyone comes."

The fox lay down beside the wolf, but soon felt so tired himself that he called the hare and asked him to take his place and watch while he slept a little. The hare came and, lying down too, soon felt very sleepy; but he had no one to call in his place, and he soon fell asleep and began to snore. Here, then, were sleeping the princess, the huntsman, the lion, the bear, the wolf, the fox, and the hare; and all were very sound

asleep.

The marshal, who had been set to watch below, had not seen the dragon fly away with the princess, and all seemed so very quiet that he took heart and climbed the mountain.

There lay the dragon on the ground, torn to pieces, and not far off the king's daughter and the huntsman with his beasts, all in a deep sleep.

Now the marshal was very wicked, and with his sword he cut off the head of the huntsman, and taking the maiden under his arm carried her down the mountain. At this she awoke in great fright, and the marshal cried to her, "You are in my hands; you must say that it was I who killed the dragon."

"That I cannot," she replied, "for a hunter and his animals did it."

Then he drew his sword and told her he would kill her if she did not obey. He then brought her before the king, who went almost beside himself with joy at again seeing his dear daughter.

The marshal told the king that he had killed the dragon and freed the princess and the whole kingdom, and he must have her for a wife, as it had been promised.

The king asked his daughter if it were true.

"Ah, yes," she replied, "it must be so; but the wedding shall not take place for a year and a day." For she thought to herself that perhaps in that time she might hear some news of her dear huntsman.

On the dragon's mountain the animals still lay asleep beside their dead master, when a great bee came and settled on the hare's nose, but he lifted his paw and brushed it off. The bee came a second time, but the hare brushed it off again and went to sleep. For the third time the bee settled, and stung the hare's nose so that he woke. As soon as he had risen and shaken himself he awoke the fox, the fox awoke the wolf, the wolf awoke the bear, and the bear awoke the lion.

As soon as the lion got up and saw that the maiden was

gone and his dear master dead, he began to roar fearfully, and asked: "Who has done this? Bear, why did you not wake me?" The bear asked the wolf, "Why did you not wake me?" the wolf asked the fox, "Why did you not wake me?" and the fox asked the hare, "Why did you not wake me?" The poor hare alone had nothing to answer, and the blame was laid upon him. The others would have fallen upon him, but he begged for his life, saying: "Do not kill me and I will restore our dear master to life. I know a hill where grows a root that will heal all diseases and wounds. But this hill lies two hundred hours' journey from here."

The lion said, "You must go and return in four and twenty hours, bringing the root with you."

The hare ran off and in four and twenty hours came back with the root in his mouth. Now the lion put the huntsman's head again to his body, while the hare applied the root to the wound; and the huntsman began to revive, his heart beat, and life returned.

The huntsman now awoke, and seeing that the maiden was no longer with him, he thought to himself, "While I slept, perhaps she ran away to get rid of me."

In his haste the lion had set his master's head on the wrong way; but the hunter, thinking so much about the princess, did not find it out till midday, when he wanted to eat. Then, when he wished to help himself, he found his head was turned to his back, and he asked the animals what had happened in his sleep, for he remembered nothing.

The lion told him that from weariness they had all gone to sleep, and that on awaking they had found him dead, with his head cut off; that the hare had fetched the life-root, but in his great haste he had turned his master's head the wrong way, but that he would make it all right again in no time. So saying, the lion cut off the huntsman's head and turned it round, while the hare healed the wound with the root.

After this the hunter became very dull, and went about

from place to place letting his animals dance to the people for show.

A year passed, and he came again into the same town where he had saved the princess from the dragon, and this time it was hung all over with scarlet cloth.

He asked the landlord of the inn: "What means this? A year ago the city was hung with black crape, and today it is all in red!"

The landlord replied, "A year ago our king's daughter was given to the dragon, but our marshal fought with it and slew it, now they are to be married. Before, the town was hung with crape in token of grief, but today it is hung with scarlet cloth to show our joy."

When the wedding was to take place, the huntsman said to the landlord, "Believe it or not, mine host, but today I shall eat bread at the same table with the king!"

Then, calling the hare, he said, "Go, dear jumper, and bring me a bit of bread such as the king eats."

Now the hare was the smallest, and could not trust his business to anyone else, but was obliged to make himself ready to go. "Oh!" thought he, "if I jump along the streets alone, the dogs will come out after me."

While he stood thinking, the dogs came behind and were about to seize him for a choice morsel, but he made a spring (had you but seen it!) and ran into a sentry box without the knowledge of the soldier. The dogs came and tried to hunt him out, but the soldier beat them off with a club, so that they ran howling and barking away.

As soon as the hare saw the coast clear, he ran up to the castle and into the room where the princess was and, getting under her stool, began to scratch her foot.

The princess said impatiently, "Will you be quiet?" thinking it was her dog.

Then the hare scratched her foot a second time, and she said again, "Will you be quiet?" but the hare would not leave

off, and a third time he scratched her foot; and now she peeped down and knew the hare by his necklace. She took him up in her arms and carried him into her chamber, saying, "Dear hare, what do you want?"

The hare replied, "My master, who killed the dragon, is here, and sent me. I am come for a piece of bread such as the king eats."

At these words the princess became very glad, and bade her servant bring her a piece of bread such as the king had. When it was brought, the hare said, "The baker must carry it for me, or the dogs will seize it." So the baker carried it to the door of the inn, where the hare got upon his hind legs, took the bread in his forepaws, and carried it to his master.

The landlord wondered very much, but the huntsman said further, "Yes, I have got the king's bread, and now I will have some of his meat." And calling the fox, he said, "My dear fox, go and fetch me some of the meat which the king is to eat today."

The fox, who was more cunning than the hare, went through the lanes and alleys, without seeing a dog, straight to the royal palace and into the room of the princess, under whose stool he crept.

Presently he scratched her foot, and the princess, looking down, knew the fox by her necklace, so she asked, "What do you want, dear fox?"

The fox replied, "My master, who killed the dragon, is here, and sent me to beg a piece of meat such as the king will eat today."

The princess called the cook and made him prepare a dish of meat like the king's, and when it was ready she bade him carry it for the fox to the door of the inn. There the fox took the dish himself, and, first driving the flies away with a whisk of his tail, carried it to the hunter.

"See here, master landlord," said the hunter; "here are the bread and meat. Now I will have the same fruit as the king

eats."

He called the wolf, and said, "Dear wolf, go and fetch me some fruit the same as the king eats today."

The wolf went straight to the castle, like a person who feared nobody, and when he came into the princess's chamber he plucked at her clothes so that she looked round. The maiden knew the wolf by his necklace, and took him with her into her room and said, "Dear wolf, what do you want?"

The beast replied, "My master, who killed the dragon, is here, and has sent me for some fruit like that the king eats today."

Then she bade the cook prepare a dish of fruit the same as the king's and carry it to the inn door for the wolf, who took it of her and bore it in to his master.

The hunter said, "See here, my host; now I have bread, meat, and fruit the same as the king's, but I will also have the same sweetmeats."

Then he called to the bear, "Dear bear, go and fetch me some sweetmeats like those the king has for his dinner today, for you like sweet things."

The bear rolled along up to the castle, while everyone got out of his way; but when he came to the guard, the guard pointed his gun at him and would not let him pass into the royal rooms. The bear, however, got up on his hind legs and gave the guard a box on the ears with his paw, which knocked him down; and then he went straight to the room of the princess and, getting behind her, growled slightly.

She looked round and saw the bear, whom she took into her own chamber and asked him what he came for.

"My master, who slew the dragon, is here," said he, "and has sent me for some sweetmeats such as the king eats."

The princess called the sugar-baker and bade him prepare sweetmeats like those the king had and carry them for the bear to the inn. There the bear took charge of them and, first licking off the sugar which had boiled over, took them in to

his master.

"See here, friend landlord," said the huntsman; "now I have bread, meat, fruit, and sweetmeats from the table of the king, but I mean also to drink his wine."

He called the lion and said, "Dear lion, go and fetch me wine like that the king drinks.

The lion strode through the town, where all the people made way for him. At the castle the watchmen tried to stop him at the gates; but he gave a little bit of a roar, and they were so frightened that they all ran away. He walked on to the royal chamber and knocked with his tail at the door. When the princess opened it she was at first frightened to see a lion; but, soon knowing him by the gold snap of her necklace which he wore, she took him into her room and asked, "Dear lion, what do you wish?"

The lion replied, "My master, who killed the dragon, is here, and has sent me for wine like that the king drinks at his own table."

The princess called the butler and told him to give the lion wine such as the king drank. But the lion said, "I will go down with you and see that I have the right kind."

When they found the wine he bade the butler fill six bottles with it, and the lion, taking the basket in his mouth, carried it to his master.

The hunter called the landlord, and said, "See here! now I have bread, meat, fruit, sweetmeats, and wine, the very same as the king will himself eat today, and so I will make my dinner with my animals."

They sat down and ate, for the hunter gave the hare, the fox, the wolf, the bear, and the lion their share of the good things, and he was very happy, for he felt that the king's daughter still loved him.

When he had finished his meal he said to the landlord, "Now, as I have eaten and drunk the same things as the king, I will even go to the royal palace and marry the princess."

The landlord said, "How can that be, for she is to marry the marshal today?"

Then the hunter drew out the handkerchief which the king's daughter had given him on the dragon's mountain, and wherein the seven tongues of the dragon's seven heads were wrapped, and said, "This shall help me to do it."

The landlord looked at the handkerchief and said, "If I believe all that has been done, still I cannot believe that."

Meantime the king asked his daughter, "What do all these wild beasts mean who have come to you today and passed in and out of my castle?"

She replied, "I dare not tell you, but send and let the master of these beasts be brought, and you will do well."

The king sent a servant to the inn to invite the strange man to come.

Then said the hunter, "See, mine host, the king even sends a servant to invite me to come, but I do not go yet." And to the servant he said, "I beg that the king will send me royal clothes, and a carriage with six horses, and servants to wait on me."

When the king heard this answer he said to his daughter, "What shall I do?"

"Do as he desires, and you will do well," she replied.

So the king sent a suit of royal clothes, a carriage with six horses, and servants to wait upon the man.

When the hunter saw them coming he said to the landlord, "See here, I am treated just as I desired to be," and putting on the royal clothes he took the handkerchief with him and drove to the king.

When the king saw the hunter coming he asked his daughter how he should receive him, and she said, "Go out to meet him, and you will do well."

So the king met the hunter and led him into the palace, the animals following. The king showed him a seat near himself and his daughter, and the marshal sat upon the other side.

Now, against the wall was placed the seven-headed dragon, stuffed as if it were yet alive; and the king said, "The seven heads of that dragon were cut off by our marshal."

Then the hunter rose up, and opening the seven jaws of the dragon asked where were the seven tongues. This frightened the marshal, and he turned pale as death, but at last he said, "Dragons have no tongues."

The hunter replied, "*Liars* should have none, but the dragon's tongues are the trophies of the dragon-slayer." So saying, he unwrapped the handkerchief, and there lay the seven tongues. He put one into each mouth of the monster, and they fitted exactly. Then he took the handkerchief, upon which the princess's name was marked, and showed it to her and asked her to whom she had given it, and she replied, "To him who slew the dragon."

Then he called his beasts, and taking from each the necklace, and from the lion the golden snap, he put them together and, showing them also to the princess, asked to whom they belonged.

The princess said, "The necklace and the snap were mine, and I shared it among the animals who helped to conquer the dragon."

Then the huntsman said: "When I was sleeping after the fight the marshal came and cut off my head, and then took away the princess, and gave out that it was he who killed the dragon. I show these tongues, this necklace, and this handkerchief for proofs that he has lied."

He told how the beasts had cured him with a wonderful root, and that for a year he had wandered, and at last had come back when he had learned from the innkeeper of the marshal's deceit.

The king then asked his daughter, "Is it true that this man killed the dragon?"

"Yes," she replied, "it is true; but I dared not tell the wicked deeds of the marshal, because he said if I did he would

kill me at once."

After these words the king called twelve wise men to judge the marshal, and these agreed that he should be banished.

Then the king gave his daughter to the huntsman.

The wedding was a joyful one, and the young king caused his father and his foster father to be brought to him and loaded them with presents.

The young king and queen were now very happy. The young king often went out hunting, and the faithful animals always went with him.

There was a forest close by which was said to be haunted, and if one entered it he did not easily get out again. The young king took a great fancy to hunt in it.

One day he rode with a great company of knights and gentlemen, and as he came near the forest he saw a snow-white doe going into it; so, telling his men to await his return, he rode off among the trees, only his faithful beasts going with him.

The men of the court waited and waited until evening, but the young king did not return; so they rode home and told the young queen that her husband had ridden into the forest in pursuit of a white doe and had not come out again. The news made her very anxious about him.

The young king, however, had ridden farther and farther into the wood after the beautiful animal without catching it. When he thought it was within range of his gun, with one spring it got away, till at last it went quite out of sight.

Then, for the first time, he saw how deeply he had plunged into the thicket; and taking his horn he blew a blast on it, but there was no answer, for his people could not hear it. Soon night began to close in; and, seeing that he could not get home that day, he built a fire and made ready to pass the night there.

While he sat by the fire, with his beasts lying near him, he

thought he heard a human voice, but on looking round he could see nobody. Soon after, he heard a groan as if from a box and, looking up, saw an old woman sitting in a tree, who was groaning and crying, "Oh, oh, oh, how I do freeze!"

The young king called out, "Come down and warm yourself if you freeze."

But the old woman said, "No; your beasts will bite me."

The young king replied, "They will not harm you, my good lady, if you come down. There is nothing to fear."

But she was a witch, and said, "I will throw you down a twig, with which, if you beat upon their backs, they can then do me no harm."

The young king did as she asked, and the animals lay down quietly enough, for they were changed into stones.

Now when the old woman was safe from the animals, she sprang down, and touching the young king with a twig, turned him also into a stone. Then she laughed to herself, and buried him and his beasts in a grave.

Meantime the young queen grew more and more anxious and sad because her husband did not return.

Just at this time the other brother came into her kingdom. He had been seeking and had found no service to enter, and was therefore traveling through the country, making his animals dance for a living.

Once he thought he would go and look for the knife which they had stuck in a tree, in order to see how his brother fared. When he looked at it, lo! his brother's side was half rusty and half bright, and he thought his brother had fallen into some great trouble; but he hoped yet to save him, since one half of the knife was bright.

So he went with his beasts toward the west; and as he came to the city the watch went out to him and asked if he should tell the queen that he had come, for she had for two days been in great sorrow and distress at his absence and feared he had been killed in the enchanted wood.

The watchman thought he was none other than the young king, he was so much like him and had also the same wild beasts with him.

The huntsman saw that the man was speaking of his brother, but thought it was for the best that he should give himself out as his brother, for so, perhaps, he might more easily save him.

He went with the watchman into the castle, and was received with great joy, for the young queen also thought he was the king, and asked him where he had stayed so long. He said he had been lost in a wood and could not find his way out any earlier.

He rested at home a few days, but was always asking about the enchanted wood. At last he said, "I must hunt there again."

The king and the young queen begged him not to go, but he went with a great number of servants

As soon as he got into the wood he saw a white hind. He told his people to wait where they were while he hunted the wild animal, and he rode off, his beasts following him. But he could not catch the hind any more than his brother could; and he went so deep into the wood that he had to pass the night there.

As soon as he had made a fire he heard someone groaning, and saying, "Oh, oh, oh, how I do freeze!"

Then he looked up, and there sat the same old witch in the tree, and he said to her, "If you freeze, old woman, why don't you come down and warm yourself?"

The old woman replied, "Because your beasts would bite me; but if you will beat them with a twig which I will throw down to you, they can do me no harm."

When the hunter heard this he doubted the old woman, and said to her, "I do not beat my beasts; so come down, or I will fetch you."

But the old woman called out: "What are you thinking of?

You can do nothing to me."

The hunter answered, "Come down, or I will shoot you."

The old woman laughed, and said: "Shoot away! I am not afraid of your bullets!"

The hunter knelt down and shot, but the old woman was bullet-proof; and, laughing, she called out, "You cannot catch me."

However, the hunter knew a trick or two, and tearing three silver buttons from his coat, he loaded his gun with them. While he was ramming them down, the old witch threw herself from the tree with a loud shriek, for she was not proof against such shot. The hunter placed his foot upon her neck and said, "Old witch, if you do not tell me quickly where my brother is, I will tie your hands together and throw you into the fire!"

She begged for mercy and said, "He is turned into stone and lies in the grave with his beasts."

Then the hunter forced her to go with him, saying: "You old wretch! Now turn my brother and all the creatures which lie here into their proper forms, or I will throw you into the fire!"

The old witch took a twig and turned the stones back to what they formerly were; and there before the huntsman stood his brother and the beasts, as well as many merchants, workpeople, and shepherds, who, delighted with their freedom, returned home. But the twin brothers, when they saw each other again, kissed and embraced and were very happy.

They seized the old witch, bound her, and laid her on the fire. When she was burned, the forest itself sank into the earth, and all was clear and free from trees, so that one could see the royal palace, only three miles distant.

Now the two brothers went home together, and the younger brother said: "You see that we both have on royal robes, and both have the same beasts following us. We will therefore enter the city at opposite gates and arrive at the

same time before the king."

Then they parted; and at the same moment a watchman from each gate came to the king and told him that the young king, with the beasts, had returned from the hunt.

The king said, "It is not possible, for your two gates are a mile apart!"

But in the meantime the two brothers had arrived in the castle yard and began to mount the stairs.

When they entered, the king said to his daughter, "Tell me which is your husband, for one appears to me the same as the other, and I cannot tell."

The young queen was in great trouble, for she could not tell which was which. At last she bethought herself of the necklace which she had given to the beasts, and she looked and found on one of the lions her golden snap, and then she cried, "He to whom this lion belongs is my rightful husband."

Then the young king laughed and said, "Yes, that is right." And they sat down together at table, and ate and drank and were very merry.

The Old Man and His Grandson

There was once an old man whose eyes had become very dim, his limbs trembled so that he stumbled as he walked, and when he sat at table his hands shook so that he sometimes spilled his food on the cloth.

This so vexed the old man's son and daughter-in-law that finally they would not have him at the table with the family, but obliged him to sit in a corner and eat his soup from a bowl. Sometimes tears filled his eyes as he looked longingly at the group surrounding the table, especially at his little grandson, who ate soup with a spoon, while he must drink his from a coarse bowl.

One day the old man was so weak and trembling that he dropped the bowl on the floor, and it was broken into many pieces. The next day he was given a wooden bowl, with unkind words about his not being fit to be trusted with earthenware.

His little grandson heard all this, but said not a word, either to his mother or to his grandfather. But the next day the little boy was very busy gathering bits of board and trying to nail them together.

His father said, "What are you trying to make, my son?" and the child answered, "I am making a trough for you and mother to eat from when you are old like grandfather and I am as big as you are. See what a fine trough it is."

The husband and wife looked at each other in astonishment, while tears filled their eyes, and at the next meal grandfather and grandson were seated beside each other at the family table. Never again was the old man rebuked for spilling his broth or dropping his spoon.

The Six Swans

There was a king who had seven children, six boys and a girl, whom he loved above everything else in the world. He became afraid that some great evil might happen to them, so he took them away to a lonely castle which stood in the midst of a forest.

This castle was so hidden that he himself could not have found it if a wise woman had not given him a ball of cotton which unrolled when he threw it before him, showing him the right path.

The king went so often to see his dear children that an evil person wished to know why he went to the forest. So she gave his servants money, and they told her the secret, and also told her of the ball of cotton which alone could show her the way.

The woman had now no peace until she found this ball. Then she made some fine silken shirts and sewed within each one a charm. One day soon after, when the king had gone out hunting, she took the little shirts and went into the forest, and the cotton showed her the path.

The children, seeing someone coming in the distance, thought it was their dear father, and ran out toward her full of joy. Then she threw over each of them a shirt, which, as it touched their bodies, changed them into swans, which flew away over the forest. Happily the little girl had remained in the castle, and so she was not changed.

The next day the king went to visit his children, but he found only the maiden.

"Where are your brothers?" asked he.

"Ah, dear father," she replied, "they have gone away and

left me alone." And she told him how she had looked out of the window and had seen them changed into swans, which had flown over the forest; and then she showed him some feathers which they had dropped in the yard, for she had saved every one.

The king was much grieved, and feared the girl might also be stolen away, so he took her with him.

The poor maiden thought to herself, "This is no longer my place; I will go and seek my brothers." And when night came she went deep into the wood.

She walked all night and most of the next day, until her feet were so sore that she could go no further. Just then she saw a rude hut. She walked in and found a room with six little beds. She dared not get into one, but crept under, and lying down upon the hard earth thought she would pass the night there. Just as the sun was setting she heard a rustling and saw six white swans come flying in at the window.

The swans settled on the ground and began blowing one another until they had blown all their feathers off, and their swan's-down dropped off like a shirt. Then the maiden knew them at once for her brothers, and gladly crept out from under the bed, and the brothers were not less glad to see their sister.

"But here you must not stay," said they; "this is a robbers' hiding-place."

"Can you not protect me, then?" asked the sister.

"No," they replied; "we can lay aside our swan's feathers for only a quarter of an hour each evening. For that time we regain our human form, but afterwards we are again changed into swans."

Their sister then asked them, with tears, "Can you not be my brothers again?"

"Oh, no," replied they. "The task is too hard. For six long years you must neither speak nor laugh, and during that time you must sew for us six little shirts of star-flowers. Should there fall a single word from your lips all your labor will be

vain."

Just as the brothers said this the quarter of an hour came to an end, and they all flew out of the window again as swans.

The little sister made a solemn promise to herself that she would save her brothers, or die in the attempt. So she left the cottage and, going deep into the forest, passed the night in the branches of a tree. The next morning she went out and gathered the star-flowers to sew.

She had no one to talk with, and she had no spirits for laughing, so there in the tree she sat, intent upon her work. After she had passed some time thus, the king of that country, who was hunting in the forest with his men, came under the tree in which the maiden sat.

They called to her and asked, "Who art thou?" But she gave no answer. "Come down to us; we will do thee no harm." She simply shook her head, and when they pressed her further with questions she threw down to them her gold necklace, hoping they would go away.

But they did not leave her. Then she threw down her girdle, but in vain.

At last one of the hunters climbed the tree, brought down the maiden, and took her before the king.

The king asked: "Who art thou? What doest thou in that tree?" But she did not answer.

The maiden was so beautiful that the king's heart was touched, and he put his cloak around her and, placing her before him on his horse, took her to his castle. There he had rich clothing made for her. Although her beauty shone as the sunbeams, not a word would she speak. The king kept her by his side, and her gentle manners so won him that he said, "This maiden will I marry, and no other."

Now the king had wicked subjects who spoke evil of the young queen.

"Who knows whence she comes?" said they. "She who cannot speak is not worthy of a king." Much evil was said of

her, but the king would not believe it. At last her enemies became so many because she would not tell the secret of her sewing in constant silence that even the king's power could not save her from harm, and it was decreed that she should be put to death.

When the time came for the queen to die, it happened that the very day had come when her brothers should be freed. The shirts were ready, all but the last, which lacked the left sleeve. As she was led to the scaffold she placed them upon her arm. Just as she mounted it, and the fire was about to be kindled, she saw six swans come flying through the air.

Her heart leaped for joy as she saw her brothers coming. Soon the swans alighted so near that she was able to throw over them the shirts, which caused their feathers to fall off, and the brothers stood up alive and well; but the youngest had a swan's wing instead of his left arm.

The queen could defend herself now, and the people believed her innocent as soon as they saw the swans changed into six noblemen by the work she had done in silence at the risk of her life.

The Three Languages

In Switzerland there lived an old count who had an only son who was thought to be quite stupid and seemed never to learn anything. One day the father said: "My son, listen to what I have to say. Do all I may I can knock nothing into your head; now you shall go away, and a wise master shall try his hand with you."

So the youth was sent to a foreign city and remained a whole year with his master. At the end of that time he returned.

His father asked him at once what he had learned, and he replied, "My father, I have learned what the dogs bark."

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed the father, "is this all you have learned? I will send you to some other city, to another master."

So the youth went away a second time, and after remaining a year with his master he came home again.

His father asked him, as before, what he had learned, and he replied, "I have learned what the birds sing."

This answer put the father in a passion, and he exclaimed: "Oh, you prodigal! Has all this precious time passed, and have you learned nothing? Are you not ashamed to come into my presence? Once more, I will send you to a third master; but if you learn nothing this time, I will no longer be a father to you."

With this third master the boy remained, as before, a twelvemonth, and when he came back to his father he told him that he had learned the language that the frogs croak.

At this the father flew into a great rage and, calling his people together, said: "This youth is no longer my son. I cast

him off, and command that you lead him into the forest and take away his life."

The servants led the youth away into the forest, but they had not the heart to kill him, so they let him go.

The young man wandered about, and after some time came to a castle, where he asked for a night's lodging.

The lord of the castle said: "Yes, if you will sleep down below. There is the tower. You may go, but I warn you that it is very perilous, for it is full of wild dogs which bark and howl at everyone, and at certain hours a man must be thrown to them, whom they devour."

Now on account of these dogs the whole country round was in terror and sorrow, for no one could prevent their ravages; but the youth, being afraid of nothing, said: "Only let me in to these barking hounds, and give me something to throw to them. They will not harm me."

Since he himself wished it, they gave him some meat for the wild hounds and let him into the tower. As soon as he entered, the dogs ran about him quite in a friendly way, wagging their tails and never once barking. They ate the meat he brought and did not attempt to do him the least injury.

The next morning, to the astonishment of everyone, he came forth unharmed and told the lord of the castle:

"The hounds have informed me in their language why they thus waste and bring terror upon the land. They have the guardianship of a large treasure beneath the tower, and till that is raised they have no rest. In what way and manner this is to be done I have also understood from them."

At these words everyone rejoiced. The task was soon accomplished, the wild hounds disappeared, and the country was freed from that plague.

After some time the youth got into a carriage and set out on the road to Rome. On the way he passed a swamp where the frogs sat croaking. The young count listened, and when he heard what they said he became thoughtful and sad, but

he told no one the secret of his sorrow.

At last he arrived at Rome and found that a great ruler had just died, and there was a contention among the people as to who should be his successor. They at length resolved that he on whom some miraculous sign should be shown should be elected.

Just as they had thus resolved, the young count stepped into the church, and suddenly two snow-white doves flew down, one on each of his shoulders, and remained perched there. The people recognized in this the sign they required, and asked him on the spot whether he would be their ruler.

The young count was undecided and knew not whether he was worthy; but the doves whispered to him that he might take the honor, and so he consented.

Then he was anointed and consecrated; and so was fulfilled what the frogs had prophesied and which had so disturbed him—that he should become the ruler of a great country. Upon his election he had to sing a sacred song of which he knew nothing, but the two doves sitting upon his shoulders told him both the words and the music.

The Woodcutter's Child

Once upon a time, near a large forest, there dwelt a woodcutter and his wife who had only one child, a little girl three years old. They were so poor that they had scarcely food enough for every day in the week, and often they did not know what they should get to eat.

One morning the woodcutter, with his heart full of care, went into the woods to work; and as he chopped the trees there stood before him a tall and beautiful woman having a crown of shining stars upon her head, who thus spoke: "I am the Guardian Angel of every good child. Thou art poor and needy; bring me thy child, and I will take her with me. I will be her mother, and she shall be under my care."

The woodcutter, calling his child, gave her to the angel, who carried her to the land of Happiness.

There she ate sweet bread and drank pure milk; her clothes were of gold, and her playmates were beautiful children. When she had been there a long time the Guardian Angel called her to her side and said: "My dear child, I have a long journey for thee. Take these keys of the thirteen doors of the land of Happiness; twelve of them thou mayest open and behold the glories therein, but the thirteenth, to which this little key belongs, thou art forbidden to open. Beware! if thou dost disobey, harm will befall thee which would make me sad."

The maiden promised to obey, and when the Guardian Angel was gone she began her visits to the mansions of Happiness. A little girl went with her, and every day one door was unclosed until they had seen all the twelve. In each mansion there sat an angel in a bright light.

Now the forbidden door was yet locked, and the maiden said, "I will not quite open it, nor will I go in, but I will only unlock the door, so that we may peep through the chink."

"No, no," said the child; "that will be a sin. The Guardian Angel has forbidden it, and evil would soon fall upon us."

At this the maiden was silent, but she still so wished in her heart to unlock the door that she had no peace.

One day all the children were away, and she thought, "Now I am alone and can peep in; no one will know what I do." So she found the keys and, taking them in her hand, placed the right one in the lock and turned it around.

The door sprang open, and she saw three angels sitting on a throne, a great light shining around them. The maiden stood a little while, and then putting her finger in the light she drew it back and found it covered with gold. Then great alarm seized her and, shutting the door hastily, she ran away. But her fear became more and more, and her heart beat so that she thought it would burst. The gold also on her finger would not come off, although she washed it and rubbed it with all her strength.

Not long afterwards the Guardian Angel came back from her journey and, calling the maiden to her, asked for the keys of the mansion. As she gave them up the angel looked in her face and asked, "Hast thou opened the thirteenth door?"

"No," answered the maiden.

Then the angel laid her hand upon the maiden's heart and felt how it was beating, and she knew that the child had opened the door. Then she asked again, "Hast thou opened the thirteenth door?"

"No," said the maiden, for the second time.

Then the angel saw that the child's finger had become golden from touching the light, and she knew that the child was guilty. She asked her for the third time, "Hast thou opened the thirteenth door?"

"No," said the maiden, again.

Then the Guardian Angel said, "Thou hast not obeyed me; thou art no longer worthy to remain among good children."

And the maiden sank down into a deep sleep, and when she awoke she found herself in the midst of a forest. She wished to call out, but she had lost her voice. Then she sprang up and tried to run away, but wherever she turned thick bushes held her back, so that she could not escape.

In the lonely spot in which she was now shut there stood an old hollow tree. This was her house. In this place she slept by night, and when it rained and blew she found shelter within it. Roots and wild berries were her food. In the autumn she picked up the fallen leaves and laid them in her hollow tree, and when the frost and snow of winter came she clothed herself with them, for her clothes had dropped into rags. But during the sunshine she sat outside the tree, and her long hair fell down on all sides and covered her like a mantle. Thus she lived a long time in misery.

But once, when the trees had become green again, the king of the country was hunting in the forest, and as a bird flew into the bushes he cut a path through them with his sword. When he had at last made his way through, he saw a beautiful maiden, who was clothed from head to foot with her own golden locks, sitting under the tree.

He stood in silence and looked at her for some time. At last he said, "Child, how came you in this forest?"

But the maiden answered not, for she had become dumb.

Then the king asked, "Will you go with me to my castle?"

At that she nodded her head, and the king, taking her in his arms, put her on his horse and rode away home. Then he gave her beautiful clothing and all else that she needed. Still she could not speak; but her beauty was so great and so won the king's heart that after a little while he married her.

After a time she had a little baby, and then the Guardian Angel appeared to her and said: "Wilt thou tell the truth and

confess that thou didst unlock the forbidden door? For then will I open thy mouth and give thee again the power of speech; but if thou wilt not, then will I take from thee thy newborn babe."

And the power to answer was given to her, but her heart was hard, and she said, "No, I did not open the door."

At these words the Guardian Angel took the child out of her arms and went away with him.

The next morning, when the child was not to be seen, a murmur arose among the people that their queen had destroyed her only son; but although she heard everything, she could say nothing. The king did not believe the ill report because of his great love for her.

Another son was born, and on the night of his birth the Guardian Angel again appeared and asked: "Wilt thou confess that thou didst open the forbidden door? Then will I restore to thee thy son and give thee the power of speech; but if not, then will I take this newborn babe also with me."

Then the queen answered again, "No, I did not open the door." So the angel took the second child out of her arms and bore him away.

On the morrow, when the infant could not be found, the people said openly that the queen had slain him, and the king's men advised that she should be brought to trial. But the king would not believe it, and commanded his men never again to mention the report on pain of death.

The next year a beautiful little girl was born, and for the third time the Guardian Angel appeared and said to the queen, "Follow me"; and taking her by the hand she led her to the kingdom of Happiness and showed to her the two other children, who were playing merrily.

The queen rejoiced at the sight, and the angel said: "Is thy heart not yet softened? If thou wilt confess that thou didst unlock the forbidden door, then will I restore to thee both thy sons."

But the queen answered again, "No, I did not open it," and at these words she sank upon the earth, and her third child was taken from her.

When this was told the next day, all the people cried, "The queen is a murderess!" and as the king could not prove her innocent she was condemned to die.

Wood was brought, she was bound to the stake, and a fire was lighted around her.

Then the iron pride of her heart began to soften, and she thought, "Could I but now, before my death, confess that I opened the door!" And her tongue was loosened, and she cried aloud, "Thou good angel, I confess."

At these words the rain fell from heaven and put out the fire. Then a great light shone above, and the angel appeared upon the earth, and by her side were the queen's two sons, one on her right hand and the other on her left, and in her arms she bore the newborn babe.

The angel gave to the queen her three children and, loosening her tongue, promised her a happy future, and said, "Whoever will repent and confess sin shall be forgiven."

The Elfin Grove

As an honest woodman was sitting one evening, after his work was done, talking with his wife, he said: "I hope the children will not run into that grove by the side of the river. It looks more gloomy than ever. The old oak tree is sadly blasted and torn; and some odd folks, I am sure, are lurking about there, but who they are nobody knows." The woodman, however, could not say that they brought ill luck, whatever they were; for everyone said that the village had thriven more than ever of late, that the fields looked gayer and greener, that even the sky was of a deeper blue, and that the moon and stars shed a brighter light. So, not knowing what to think, the good people very wisely let the newcomers alone, and, in truth, seldom said or thought anything at all about them.

That very evening the woodman's daughter, Roseken, and her playfellow, Martin, ran out to have a game of hide and seek. Roseken began the game by being the first to cover her eyes. After counting one hundred, which gave Martin time to hide, she began the search for him. She looked behind a rock near the river; he was not there. She peeped under a tangle of vines that made a green tent over some shrubs; neither was he there.

"Where can he be hidden?" said she, thinking to make him laugh and so reveal his hiding-place. Just then she was surprised and delighted to see a little dog leaping and frisking about, as if to lead her to her playfellow. Of course she followed the dog, quite forgetting the gloom of the grove into which he ran.

She followed the frisky creature up the bank and to the side of an old oak tree as if she were bewitched. Once beside

the oak Roseken was overjoyed to see a beautiful meadow where flowers and shrubs of every kind grew upon turf of the softest green, gay butterflies flew about, birds sang sweetly, and, what was strangest of all, the prettiest of little children played about on all sides, some making wreaths and others dancing in rings upon the smooth grass. In the midst of the grove, instead of the hovels of which Roseken had heard, she saw a wonderful, shining palace that dazzled her eyes with its brightness.

For a while she gazed on the fairy scene, till at last one of the little dancers ran up to her, and said: "And so, pretty Roseken, you are come at last to see us? We have often seen you play about, and wished to have you with us." Then she plucked some of the fruit that grew near, and Roseken at the first taste forgot her home, and wished only to see and know more of her fairy friends. So she jumped down from the bank and joined the merry dance.

They led her about with them and showed her all their sports. For a while they danced by moonlight on the primrose banks; at another time they skipped from bough to bough among the trees that hung over the cooling streams, for they moved as lightly and easily through the air as on the ground. And Roseken went with them everywhere, for they bore her in their arms wherever they wished to go. Sometimes they would throw seeds on the turf, and little trees would spring up; and then they would set their feet upon the branches and rise as the trees grew under them, till they danced upon the boughs in the air, wherever the breezes carried them, singing merry songs.

At other times they would go and visit the palace of their queen. There the richest food was spread before them and the softest music was heard; and all around grew flowers which were always changing their hues, from scarlet to purple and yellow and emerald. Sometimes they went to look at the heaps of treasure which were piled up in the royal stores, for

little dwarfs were always employed in searching the earth for gold. Small as this fairyland looked from without, it seemed within to have no end; a mist hung around it to shield it from the eyes of men, and some of the little elves sat perched upon the outermost trees to keep watch lest the step of man should break in and spoil the charm.

"And who are you?" said Roseken one day.

"We are what are called elves in your world," replied one whose name was Gossamer and who had become her dearest friend. "We are told that you talk a great deal about us. Some of our tribes like to work you mischief, but we who live here seek only to be happy. We meddle little with mankind, and when we do come among them it is to do them good."

"And where is your queen?" asked Roseken.

"Hush! hush! you cannot see or know her. You must leave us before she comes back, which will be now very soon, for mortal step cannot come where she is. But you will know that she is here when you see the meadows gayer, the rivers more sparkling, and the sun brighter."

Soon afterwards Gossamer told Roseken the time was come to bid her farewell, and she gave her a ring in token of their friendship and led her to the edge of the grove. "Think of me," said she; "but beware how you tell what you have seen or try to visit any of us again, for if you do, we shall quit this grove and come back no more."

Turning back, Roseken saw nothing but the old oak and the gloomy grove she had known before. "How frightened my father and mother will be!" thought she, as she looked at the sun, which had risen some time before. "They will wonder where I have been all night, and yet I must not tell them what I have seen."

Then she hastened homewards, wondering, however, as she went, to see that the leaves, which were yesterday so fresh and green, were now falling dry and yellow around her. The cottage, too, seemed changed; and when she went in, there

sat her father, looking some years older than when she saw him last, and her mother, whom she hardly knew, was by his side. Close by was a young man.

"Father," said Roseken, "who is this?"

"Who are you that call me father?" said he. "Are you—no, you cannot be—our long-lost Roseken?"

But they soon saw that it was their Roseken; and the young man, who was her old friend and playfellow Martin, said: "No wonder you had forgotten me in seven years. Do not you remember how we parted, seven years ago, while playing in the field? We thought you were quite lost, but I am glad to see that someone has taken care of you and brought you home at last."

Roseken said nothing, for she could not tell all; but she wondered at the strange tale and felt gloomy at the change from fairyland to her father's cottage.

Little by little she came to herself, thought of her story as a mere dream, and soon became Martin's bride. Everything seemed to thrive around them; and Roseken thought of her friends, and so she called her first little girl Elfie. The little child was loved by everyone.

She was pretty and very good-tempered. Roseken thought that she was very like a little elf; and all, without knowing why, called her the fairy child.

One day, while Roseken was dressing her little Elfie, she found a piece of gold hanging round her neck by a silken thread, and knew it to be of the same sort as she had seen in the hands of the fairy dwarfs. Elfie seemed sorry that it was seen, and said that she had found it in the garden. But Roseken watched her, and soon found that she went every afternoon to sit by herself in a shady place behind the house. So one day she hid herself to see what the child did there, and to her great wonder Gossamer was sitting by her side.

"Dear Elfie," she was saying, "your mother and I used to sit thus when she was young and lived among us. Oh, if you

could but come and do so, too, but since our queen came to us it cannot be. Yet I will come and see you and talk to you whilst you are a child; when you grow up we must part forever." Then she plucked one of the roses that grew around them and breathed gently upon it, saying: "Take this for my sake! It will now keep fresh for a whole year."

Then Roseken loved her little Elfie more than ever. When she found that her child spent some hours of almost every day with the elf, Roseken used to hide herself and watch them without being seen. One day, when Gossamer was bearing her little friend through the air from tree to tree, Roseken was so frightened lest her child should fall that she could not help screaming out.

Gossamer set Elfie gently on the ground, and seemed angry as she flew away. But still she used sometimes to come and play with her little friend, and would have done so the same as before had not Roseken one day told her husband the whole story, for she could not bear to hear him always wondering and laughing at their little child's odd ways and saying he was sure that there was something in the grove that brought them no good. So, to show him that all she said was true, she took him to see Elfie and the fairy, but no sooner did Gossamer know that he was there than she changed herself into a raven and flew off into the grove.

Roseken burst into tears, and so did Elfie, for she knew that she should see her dear friend no more; but Martin was restless and bent upon following up his search after the fairies, so when night came he stole away toward the grove.

When he came to it nothing was to be seen but the old oak and the gloomy grove and the hovels. The thunder rolled and the wind whistled. It seemed that all about him was angry, so he turned homeward, frightened at what he had done.

In the morning all the neighbors flocked around, asking one another what the noise and bustle of the last night could

mean. When they looked about them their trees seemed blighted and the meadows parched, the streams were dried up, and everything looked gloomy and sad.

But yet they all thought that somehow or other the grove had not nearly so forbidding a look as it used to have. Strange stories were told: how one had heard flutterings in the air, another had seen the grove seemingly alive with little beings that flew away from it. Each neighbor told his tale, and all wondered what could have happened. But Roseken and her husband knew what was the matter and bewailed their folly, for they foresaw that their kind neighbors, to whom they owed all their luck, were gone forever.

Among the bystanders none told a wilder story than the old ferryman who plied across the river at the foot of the grove. He told how at midnight his boat was carried away, and how hundreds of little beings seemed to load it with treasures; how a strange piece of gold was left for him in the boat as his fare; how the air seemed full of fairy forms fluttering around; and how at last a great number of them passed over that seemed to be guiding their leaders to the meadows on the other side, while he heard soft music floating around and sweet voices singing as they hovered overhead:

"Fairy queen!
Fairy queen!
Mortal steps are on the green;
Come away!
Haste away!
Fairies, guard your queen!
Hither, hither, fairy queen,
Lest thy silvery wing be seen;
O'er the sky,
Fly, fly, fly!
Fairies, guard your queen!
"Fairy queen!

Fairy queen!
Mortal steps no more are seen;
Now we may
Down and play
O'er the daisied green.
Lightly, lightly, fairy queen,
Trip it gently o'er the green.
Fairies gay,
Trip away,
Round about your lady queen!
Fairies gay,
Trip away,
Round about your queen!"

Poor Elfie mourned the loss of the fairies the most and spent whole hours in looking upon the rose that her playfellow had given her and singing over it the pretty airs she had taught her, till at length, when the year's charm had passed away and it began to fade, she planted the stalk in her garden, and there it grew to a bush so tall that she could sit under its shade and think of her friend Gossamer.

The Three Luck-Children

There was once upon a time a father who called his three sons to him and gave the first a cock, the second a scythe, and the third a cat. Then he said: "I am very old, and my end draws near, but I wish to show my care for you before I die. Money I have not, and what I now give you seems of little worth; but do not think that, for if each uses his gift with care, and seeks some country where such a thing is not known, his fortune will be made."

Soon after that the father died, and the eldest son set out on his travels with his cock, but wherever he came such a creature was already well known.

In the towns he saw it from afar sitting on the church steeples and turning itself round with the wind; and in the villages he heard more than one of them crow, and nobody troubled himself about another, so that it did not seem as if he would ever make his fortune by it.

At last, however, it fell out that he came to an island where the people knew nothing about cocks, nor even how to divide their time. They knew when it was evening and morning, but at night they could not tell the time.

"See," said the eldest brother to them, "what a proud creature it is, what a fine red crown it wears on its head, and it has spurs like a knight! Thrice during the night it will crow at certain hours, and the third time it calls you may know the sun will soon rise; but if it crows by day, you may then prepare for a change in the weather."

The good people were well pleased, and the whole night they lay awake and listened to the cock, which crowed loudly and clearly at two, four, and six o'clock. The next day they

asked if the creature were for sale and how much the owner asked.

He replied, "As much gold as an ass can bear."

"A small sum," said they, "for such a creature!" and readily gave him what he asked.

When he went home with his money his brothers were surprised, and the second said he would also go out and see what luck his scythe would bring him. But at first it did not seem likely that fortune would favor him, for all the men he met carried good scythes upon their shoulders.

At last, however, he also came to an island whose people did not know the use of scythes. When a field of corn was ripe they shot it down with cannons. They often shot quite over it; others hit the ears instead of the stalks and shot them quite away, so that much corn was wasted. But when our hero came he mowed away so silently and quickly that the people held their breath with wonder and gave him what he asked, which was a horse laden with as much gold as it could carry.

On his return the third brother set out with his cat to try his luck, but as long as he kept on the old roads he met with no place which did not already boast its cat.

At last he went to an island where cats were unknown animals, and yet there were so many mice that they danced upon the tables and chairs, even when the master of the house was at home. The king himself did not know how to rid the country of mice, for in every corner they were swarming, and spoiled what they could not carry away in their teeth.

As soon as the cat came it began a grand hunt, and cleared a couple of rooms of mice so quickly that the people begged the king to buy it for the use of his kingdom. The king willingly gave the price that was asked for the wonderful animal, and the third brother returned home with a still larger treasure, in the shape of a mule laden with gold.

The cat now had capital sport in the royal palace with the mice. At last she became very thirsty and, raising her head,

cried, "Mew! mew!"

At the strange sound the king and all his court were much frightened and ran in terror out of the castle.

There they held a council, and decided to send a page to the cat to demand that it should quit the castle, or force would be used to make it. "For," said the people, "we would rather be plagued by the mice than give ourselves a prey to this beast."

Therefore the page was sent to the cat to ask if it would quit the castle in peace, but the cat said nothing but "Mew! mew!" The page thought it said "No! no!" The people then agreed that the cat should feel their power, and cannons were brought out and fired, so that the castle was soon in flames. But the cat sprang out of a window and went back to her former master.

The Water of Life

Long before we were born there reigned a king in a far-away country. This monarch had three sons. His sons were once deeply grieved because their father had become so ill that no one thought he could ever recover.

One day while the king was in great pain the princes walked in the palace garden mournfully talking of their trouble. As they walked along, their heads bowed with sorrow, a little old man met them and asked why they were so sad. They told him all about their father's illness, saying they feared that nothing they could do would save his life.

"I know what would restore him to life and health," said the little old man. "Could he have but one taste of the Water of Life he would be well. But it is very hard to get."

The oldest son said eagerly, "I will soon find it." So he went to the king at once and begged that he might go in search of this wonderful water, as it was the only thing which could possibly cure the king.

"No," said the king, "I had rather die than place you in such peril as you must meet on such a journey." But the prince begged so earnestly that the king gave him permission to go.

Now the prince said to himself, "If I bring my father this water, he will make me sole heir to the kingdom," and so saying he set out upon his travels.

He had not gone far when he came to a deep valley overhung with rocks and trees. Looking around he saw an ugly little dwarf, with a sugar-loaf cap and scarlet cloak, perched upon a rock.

The dwarf called to him, "Prince, whither away so fast?"

"What is that to thee, you ugly imp?" the prince haughtily

replied, and rode on.

The dwarf, angered by such rudeness, avenged himself by laying a fairy spell of ill luck upon the prince, so that as he rode onward the mountain pass became narrower and narrower, until at last he could go no further, and when he tried to turn his horse to go back the way he had come a loud laugh echoed from all the rocks around and above him. Then he saw that every path was closed so that his horse had not room enough to go in any direction. He tried to dismount and make his way on foot, but again that weird laugh rang in his ears, and to his dismay he was forced to stand there spellbound.

Meanwhile the old king lingered on, hoping daily for his son's return.

At last the second son said, "Father, I will go in search of the Water of Life," for he secretly thought that his brother was surely dead and that the kingdom would fall to him if he succeeded in finding the precious water.

The king was at first unwilling to let him go, but at last yielded to his wish.

So the prince set out, following the same road by which his brother had gone, and met the same little elf, who stopped him at the same spot in the mountains, saying as before, "Prince, prince, whither away so fast?"

"Mind your own affairs, busybody!" answered the haughty, ill-bred prince, and rode scornfully forward.

But the dwarf put the same spell upon him as he had put upon the elder brother, and he, too, was obliged to take up his abode in the heart of the mountains.

When the second prince had been gone a long time the youngest son proposed to go in search of the Water of Life, trusting he should be able to make his father well.

So, as the others had done, he set out on the journey. The dwarf met him at the same spot in the lonely valley between great mountains, and asked the same question, "Prince, prince, whither away so fast?"

The prince answered: "I am going in search of the Water of Life for my father, who is likely to die unless this remedy can be found. Pray, will you help me? Be kind and aid me if you can! I would give my life for it."

"Do you know where it is to be found?" asked the dwarf.

"Alas! I do not know where to look for it. Do tell me the way if you can."

"Then since you have spoken kindly to me and are wise enough to ask advice, I will tell you just where and how to go. The water you seek springs from a well in an enchanted castle. And that you may be able to reach it in safety I will give you an iron wand and two small loaves of bread. Strike the iron door of the castle three times with the wand, and it will open to you. Two hungry lions will be lying inside the door, waiting for prey, but if you throw them the bread, they will let you pass unhurt. Then make haste to the well and take some of the Water of Life before the clock strikes twelve, for if you tarry beyond that hour, the door will be shut, never to open for you."

The prince thanked the dwarf courteously, took the rod and the loaves, and set forth on his journey.

On reaching the castle he found all just as the dwarf had told him. At the third knock the gate flew open, and when he had pacified the lions with the bread he walked unharmed into the castle. There he found a number of enchanted princes. Beside one of them lay a sword and a loaf, which he took, thinking he might need them. On passing into the next room he found a beautiful maiden, who rejoiced to see him, saying he had saved her from the spell that had been cast upon all the people there. She promised him that she would marry him and share her kingdom with him if he would come back at the end of the year. She also told him where to find the fountain of enchanted water, but implored him to quit the castle before the clock struck twelve.

The prince went on his way through this beautiful castle,

until his feet were weary and his eyes heavy with sleep. Seeing a bed freshly made he was tempted to lie down, and no sooner did he stretch himself upon the soft bed than he was sound asleep.

When he awoke the great castle clock was striking a quarter of twelve o'clock. You may be sure he sprang up in great fright and ran to the fountain as fast as his legs could carry him. How glad he was to see the fountain, and how quickly he took some of the water, you may imagine. The clock was on the stroke of twelve when he dashed through the gate, which banged so quickly behind him that it took a bit of his heel.

Going back to his own country he passed the dwarf, who, when he saw the sword and the loaf, said: "Those things will be of much service to you. See that you do not lose them. With that sword you will be able to strike down whole armies, and the loaf will never fail to satisfy hunger."

Now the prince begged the dwarf to tell him where he could find his brothers, so that they might all go home together.

The dwarf told him that his brothers were in a mountain gorge, where he had cast a spell upon them because of their pride. The prince begged so piteously for their release that the dwarf yielded, after charging the generous young prince to beware of his brothers, for their hearts were bad.

The prince made haste to go to the narrow mountain pass, where he was rejoiced to find his brothers just set free from the spell which had been cast upon them.

They rode away together, and as they rode the prince told them all that had happened to him—how he had found the Water of Life and brought away a goblet full, so that their father would be restored to health, and how he had relieved an enchanted princess, who would marry him and give him half her kingdom as soon as he could return to her.

As they rode they came to a land where famine and war

were raging. The king of the country was himself reduced to destitution.

The young prince, filled with pity, gave the strange king some of the loaf, which fed and satisfied the whole nation, and he lent his sword, which at one stroke destroyed all the king's enemies, after which he and his people lived in peace and quiet.

This done, the prince took his sword and loaf, and the three brothers rode on. But they had to pass through two more countries before reaching their own. The prince saved these also from war and famine with his magic sword and loaf.

After this the brothers had to take a ship, and when they were out at sea the two elder brothers began to plot against the youngest. They said to each other, "He found the Water of Life, and we did not, so our father will give him the kingdom."

The more they talked together the more envious they grew, until their minds were made up to do an evil deed. While the young prince slept they emptied the Water of Life from his goblet into one of their own and filled his precious cup with salt sea-water.

As soon as they got home the young prince hurried to give his father a draft of the wonderful water which was to make him well, but after tasting a few drops of the bitter sea water the king became worse than ever. As he was bewailing this the two elder sons came in and accused their brother of trying to poison the king. They said that they had the real Water of Life. No sooner had the king tasted this than he was as strong and well as when he was but a youth.

Then the two brothers mocked the young prince, saying: "It was you who found the Water of Life. You had the trouble, but we have the reward. You should have been wiser. We admit that you did well in getting it, but you were too stupid to keep what you got, and we are going to take advantage of all your weak trust in us. One of us will go and marry your

princess. If you betray us now we will not hesitate to put you out of our way. Our father would not believe you if you told him, so you had better keep still—your silence is all that can save your life."

As they intended, the king was very angry with his youngest son, believing that he had tried to take his life. So he called his court together to pronounce judgment upon the would-be murderer.

It was decided that such a monster must be secretly put out of the way, and one day when the prince was going out to hunt, the king's huntsman was ordered to go with him.

Seeing the huntsman look sad, the prince said to him, "My good huntsman, what is your trouble?"

The huntsman answered, "I can't bear to tell you, and yet I must."

"Say it out, my man; whatever it is I will forgive you."

"Alas!" said the huntsman, "the king has ordered me to shoot you dead. I must obey the king's command."

The prince was horror-stricken and said: "Dear huntsman, do not kill me. Let me have your dress, and you shall have my royal robes."

So they changed clothes, and the huntsman went home, but the prince wandered away into the forest.

After a time loads of gold and precious stones came to the king for his youngest son. They were gifts from the kings whom the prince had saved by his sword and loaf.

Then the old king thought: "What if my youngest son was innocent? I am sorry I was so hasty. If only he were alive! I wish I had not ordered his death!"

"He is still alive," said the huntsman. "I had not the heart to carry out your orders," and he told the king what had taken place.

A load fell from the king's heart. He sent out a proclamation to all parts of his kingdom that his son was to come home, where he would be received with favor.

In the meantime the princess, freed from enchantment, had ordered a road to be made of pure gold leading to her castle. She told her people that whoever came riding straight along this road would be her true bridegroom and should be admitted to the castle, but anyone who rode at one side or the other of this road should be turned away.

When the year had nearly passed, the eldest prince thought he would hurry to the princess, telling her that he was her deliverer, and thereby gain both wife and kingdom.

He rode away until he came to the golden road, which he thought too good to be ridden over, so he turned aside and approached the castle from the right hand of the shining path. When he reached the gate the keepers told him that he was not the true bridegroom and that he must go away.

Soon afterwards the second prince came, and seeing the golden road thought it too beautiful for his horse to tread upon, so he turned to the left of it. On reaching the gate he was turned away as his brother had been.

When the year had come to its end the third prince came, thinking only of his lady and with no care for the sort of road over which he was passing. He cantered his horse directly toward the gate, which was instantly flung open.

As he entered the palace the princess greeted him joyfully as her deliverer and the lord of her kingdom.

Their marriage was celebrated without delay, and the bride told him that the king had sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom, forgiving the prince, asking him to return to his rightful place.

So the prince and his bride journeyed to the king and told him the wrong which the elder brothers had done.

The old king would have had them punished, but the knaves had escaped to a country from which no word of them has ever been heard.

The Fox and the Cat

Once upon a time a cat met a fox in a wood, and thinking him clever and wise in the ways of the world she spoke kindly to him and said: "Good day, dear Mr. Fox. How do you do, how do you get on, and how do you find your living in these hard times?"

The fox looked at the cat from head to foot with all the pride in his nature, and for a time did not answer. At last he said, "O you poor cat! You silly cat! You hungry mouse-hunter! what has put it into your head to ask me how I fare? What have you learned? How many arts do you know?"

"I know but a single one," replied the cat.

"And what sort of an art is that?" asked the fox.

"To climb up a tree when the dogs pursue me, and so save myself," said the cat.

"Oh, is that all?" said the fox. "Why, I know a hundred arts and have a sackful of cunning! I pity you! Come with me and I will show you how to escape the hounds."

Soon a hunter came riding along with four dogs. The cat ran nimbly up a tree and perched herself upon its highest point, where the branches and leaves hid her, calling to the fox: "Open your sack, Mr. Fox! Open your sack!" But the hounds had already caught the fox, and held him tight.

"Oh, Mr. Fox," cried the cat, when she saw the end, "you are come to grief in spite of your hundred arts. Now could you have crept up a tree like me you would have been safe."

The Twelve Hunters

Long, long ago a certain king's son was secretly betrothed to a fair maiden whom he loved very much.

Once, while he was sitting by her side, happy and contented, news came that his father was very ill and desired to see him before his end.

The prince said to his beloved: "I must go away and leave you. I will give you this ring for a memorial. When I become king I will return and take you home with me."

So saying he rode off to the palace, where he found his father at the point of death.

The old king said to him, "My dearest son, I have desired to see you once more before I died that I may have your promise to marry according to my wishes," and he named to him a certain princess whom he was to make his bride.

The young prince was so grieved that he did not know what he was saying, and so promised his father that he would fulfill his wish. Soon afterwards the old king closed his eyes in death.

When the time of mourning for the late king was over, the young prince, who had succeeded to the throne, was called upon to fulfill the promise which he had given to his father, and the princess accordingly was betrothed to him.

By chance the maiden heard of this, and grieved so much about the faithlessness of her lover that she fast faded away. Then her father said to her: "My dear child, why are you sad? Whatever you wish you shall have."

For a few minutes she considered, and at last said, "Dear father, I wish for eleven maidens exactly like myself in figure and stature."

Her father told her that if it were possible her wish should be carried out, and he ordered a search to be made in his country until eleven maidens were found exactly resembling his daughter in figure and stature.

When they came to the maiden she had twelve dresses made alike, and each of the maidens had to put on one, while she herself drew on the twelfth.

Thereupon she took leave of her father and rode away with her companions to the court of her former betrothed, whom she loved so much. There she inquired if he needed any huntsmen, and if he would take them all into his service. The king looked at her without recognizing her, and as they were such handsome people he consented to take them, and so they became the twelve royal huntsmen.

The king, however, possessed a lion, who was such a wonderful beast that he knew all hidden and secret affairs. One evening he said to the king, "Do you suppose that you have got twelve huntsmen?"

"Yes," replied the king, "twelve huntsmen."

"You are mistaken there," replied the lion; "they are twelve maidens."

"That can never be true," said the king. "How will you prove it to me?"

"Order some peas to be strewn in your anteroom," said the lion, "and you will at once see; for men have a firm tread when walking on peas and do not slip, but maidens trip and stumble and slide and make the peas roll about."

This advice pleased the king, and he ordered peas to be strewn.

Now, there was a butterfly which had followed the maiden from the time that the young prince had placed the ring on her finger, and when he heard that the maidens were to be put to this trial he told her all that had passed, and that the lion wished to show the king that they were maidens.

The maiden thanked the butterfly and told her

companions to compel themselves to tread firmly on the peas. Therefore, when the king summoned the twelve hunters the next morning, and they came into the anteroom, they trod firmly upon the peas, with steps so sturdy that not one rolled or moved in the least. Afterwards, when they had left the room, the king said to the lion: "You have deceived me. They walk like men!"

The lion replied: "They knew that they were to be put to the proof, and so summoned all their strength. Let twelve spinning-wheels be now brought into the anteroom, and when they come to pass them they will be pleased at the sight thereof as no man could be."

This advice also pleased the king, and he caused the twelve spinning-wheels to be placed in the room.

But the butterfly who was kind to the maiden disclosed the plan to her, and she told her eleven attendants to take no notice whatever of the spinning-wheels.

The following morning the king summoned his hunters, and they passed through the anteroom without once looking round at the spinning-wheels.

So the king said to the lion again: "You have deceived me. These are men, for they have not noticed the wheels."

The lion replied as before, "They knew that they would be put on trial, and they have behaved accordingly"; but the king would believe the lion no more.

After this the twelve hunters followed the king daily in his sports, and the longer he had them the more he seemed to like them.

Now it happened that once, as they were going out to the hunt, news came that the princess who had been betrothed to the young king was on her way to his court.

As soon as the true betrothed heard this she was so much overcome that she fell to the ground.

The king saw that something had happened to his best huntsman, and ran to help him just as his glove was drawn

off. He then saw the ring which he had given to his first love, and as he looked in the face of the huntsman he recognized her and kissed her. As she opened her eyes he said, "You are mine and I am yours, and no power on earth shall part us."

The king then sent a messenger to the princess, begging her to return to her own country, for he already had a bride.

This was joyful news to the princess, who was going only in obedience to the law, for she loved a nobleman of her own country and was glad to return to him.

Soon afterwards the wedding was celebrated, and the lion came again into favor because, after all, he had spoken the truth.

The Seven Crows

There was once a man who had seven sons, but never a daughter, although he wished very much for one.

At last a daughter was born, and great was the happiness of the seven brothers.

The child was so weak and small that on account of her delicate health she had to be baptized immediately.

The father sent one of his sons hastily to a spring in order to fetch some water, but the other six ran as well; and as each strove to be first to fill the pitcher, between them all it fell into the water. They stood by, not knowing what to do, and none of them dared to go home.

As they did not return the father became impatient, saying, "They have forgotten all about it in their play." Soon he became anxious lest the child should die unbaptized, and in his haste he exclaimed, "I would my sons were all changed into crows!"

Scarcely were the words out of his mouth when he heard a whirring over his head and, looking up, saw seven coal-black crows flying over the house.

The parents could not recall their curse, and grieved very much for their lost sons, but they comforted themselves in some measure with their dear daughter, who soon grew strong and became more and more beautiful every day.

For a long time she did not know she had had any brothers, for her parents were careful not to mention them; but one day she accidentally overheard some people talking about her and saying, "She is certainly very beautiful, but still the guilt of her seven brothers rests on her head." This made her very sad, and she went to her parents to ask whether she had

any brothers, and whither they were gone. The old people dared no longer keep their secret, but said it was the decree of heaven, and her birth had been the unhappy cause.

Now the maiden daily accused herself and wondered how she could deliver her brothers. She had neither rest nor quiet, until she at last set out secretly and journeyed into the wide world to seek her brothers and to free them, wherever they were, cost what it might. She took nothing with her but a ring of her parents' for a remembrance, a loaf of bread for hunger's sake, a bottle of water for thirst's sake, and a little stool for weariness.

On and on went the maiden, further and further, even to the world's end. Then she came to the sun, but he was too hot and fearful. So she ran hastily away to the moon, but she was too cold. She ran away quickly to the stars, who were friendly and kind to her, each one sitting upon his own little seat. But the morning star was standing up, and he gave her a crooked bone, saying, "If you have not this bone, you cannot unlock the glass castle where your brothers are."

The maiden took the bone and wrapped it in a handkerchief. Then on she went again till she came at last to the glass castle. The door was closed, and she looked therefore for the little bone; but when she unwrapped her handkerchief it was empty—she had lost the present of the good star. What was she to do now? She wished to save her brothers, but she had no key to the glass castle.

The good little sister bent her little finger, and put it in the keyhole, and luckily it unlocked the door. As soon as she entered a little dwarf came toward her and said, "My child, what do you seek?"

"I seek my brothers, the seven crows," she replied.

The dwarf answered, "My lord crows are not at home, but if you wish to wait their return, come in and sit down."

Thereupon the dwarf carried in the food of the seven crows upon seven dishes and in seven cups, and the maiden

ate a little piece from each dish and drank a little out of every cup. But in the last cup she dropped the ring which she had brought with her.

All at once she heard a whirring and cawing in the air, and the dwarf said, "My lord crows are now flying home."

They came in to eat and drink, each seeking his own dishes. Then one said, "Who has been eating from my dish? Who has been drinking from my cup? A human mouth has been here!"

When the seventh came to the bottom of his cup the little ring rolled out. He looked at it and recognized it as a ring of his parents. He said, "God grant that our sister be here; then are we saved."

As the maiden, who had stood behind the door watching, heard these words she came forward, and immediately all the crows received again their human forms and embraced and kissed their sister. Then they all went joyfully home.

The Straw, the Coal, and the Bean

In a village there dwelt a poor old woman who had gathered a dish of beans which she wished to cook. So she made a fire upon the hearth and, that it might burn the quicker, lighted it with a handful of straw.

As she shook the beans up in the saucepan, one fell upon the ground, near a straw. Soon after a glowing coal burst out of the fire and fell just by these two.

Then the straw said, "My dear friend, whence do you come?"

The coal replied, "By good luck I have sprung out of the fire, and if I had not jumped away by force, I should have been reduced to ashes."

The bean continued, "I also have escaped with a whole skin, but had the old woman put me in the pot with the others I should have been boiled to pieces, as my comrades are."

"Would a better fate have fallen to my share?" asked the straw. "The old woman has suffocated in fire and smoke all my brothers. Sixty has she put on at once and deprived of life. Happily I slipped between her fingers."

"But what shall we do now?" asked the coal.

"I think," answered the bean, "since we have so luckily escaped death, we should join in partnership and keep together like good companions. Lest a new misfortune overtake us, let us wander forth and travel into a strange country."

The coal and the straw were pleased, so they set out together on their travels. Presently they came to a little stream, over which there was no bridge nor path, and they did not know how they should get over. The straw gave good advice, and said, "I will lay myself across, so that you may pass over

upon me, as upon a bridge."

So the straw stretched itself from one bank to the other, and the coal, which was of a fiery nature, tripped lightly upon the newly built bridge. But when it came to the middle of it, and heard the water running along beneath, it was frightened and stood still, not daring to go further. The straw, however, beginning to burn, broke in two and fell into the stream, and the coal, slipping after, hissed as it reached the water and went to the bottom.

The bean, which had remained upon the shore, was forced to laugh at this accident, and, the joke being so good, it laughed until it burst itself.

Now they would all have been done for alike, if a tailor, who was out on his wanderings, had not just then, by great good luck, sat himself down near the stream. Having a kind heart he took out needle and thread and sewed the bean together. The bean thanked him; but the tailor used black thread, and that accounts for the black seam which you often see on beans.

The Boots Made of Buffalo Leather

A soldier who is afraid of nothing cares for nothing. Now such an one had received his discharge. He had learned no trade, and so he wandered about hither and thither. Over his shoulders hung an old weatherproof cloak, and he had still left a pair of buffalo leather boots.

One day, thus equipped, he went on walking through the fields without attending to the guideposts, and at last he came to an immense forest. He did not know where he was, but he saw a man sitting upon the trunk of a tree, who was well dressed in a green huntsman's coat.

The soldier held out his hand to him, and then laying himself down on the grass stretched out his legs.

"I see you have a pair of fine, shining boots," said he to the huntsman; "but if you had to walk about as much as I, they would not last you very long. Look at mine! They are made of buffalo leather, and although they have served me a long time they would still go through thick and thin."

The huntsman made no answer, and after awhile the soldier got up and said: "I can stop here no longer; hunger urges me forward. But pray, Brother Thin Boots, where does this path lead to?"

"I do not know myself," replied the huntsman; "I have lost myself in this forest."

"Then you are in the same plight as I," returned the soldier. "Like and like please one another; let us remain together and seek the way."

The huntsman only laughed, but they set out together and kept on till nightfall.

"We shall not get out of this forest tonight," exclaimed

the soldier at last; "but I can see a light glimmering in the distance, where they will give us something to eat."

It was a stone cottage, and when they knocked at the door an old woman opened it.

"We are seeking a night's lodging," said the soldier to her, "and some fodder for our stomachs, for mine is as empty as my purse."

"You cannot stop here," answered the old woman. "This is a robbers' house, and unless you go away before they return you will be lost."

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

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

The old woman pitied them, and told them to creep behind the stove; when the robbers were satisfied and slept she would give them something to eat.

Scarcely had they hidden snugly in the corner when in came the twelve robbers and, placing themselves around the table, with harsh language demanded their supper.

The old woman brought in an immense dish of baked meat, and the robbers prepared to eat. Soon the smell of the savory mess reached the soldier's nose, and he said to the huntsman: "I can hold out no longer. I must sit down at the table and take a share!"

"You will lose your life!" whispered the huntsman, holding him fast by the arm.

The soldier began to cough loudly, and as soon as the robbers heard this they threw aside their knives and forks and, rising hastily from the table, discovered the pair behind the stove.

"Aha, you rascals!" they called; "what are you sitting there in that corner for? Are you sent as spies? Just wait a bit,

and you shall learn how to fly on a bare branch!"

"Oh! have some manners, if you please!" returned the soldier. "Give us something to eat first, and afterwards you shall do what you like with us!"

The robbers were astonished to hear such bold words, and the captain said: "Good! I see you are not afraid. Eat you shall, but afterwards you shall die."

"We shall see!" muttered the soldier, and, sitting down at the table, he began to cut and eat in earnest.

"Brother Thin Boots," he exclaimed to the huntsman, "come and eat. You are hungry, as well as I, and a better joint than this you could not have at home."

The huntsman, however, refused; and the robbers, looking at the soldier, said to one another, "This fellow makes no ceremony."

When the soldier had done eating he asked for something to drink, saying, "Well! the meat was good enough; now let us have a good draft of wine."

The captain was in a good humor, and told the old woman to fetch a bottle of the very best wine. When it was brought, the soldier drew out the cork so that it made a great noise; and then going to the huntsman he whispered to him, "Pay attention, my brother, and you shall see a grand wonder; I will now drink the health of the whole company!" So saying, he swung the bottle over the heads of the robbers, at the same time shouting, "You shall all live, but with your mouths open and your right hands uplifted!"

Scarcely were the words out of his mouth when the robbers all sat motionless, as if they were made of stone, their mouths open and their right arms stretched up.

"I see," said the huntsman to the soldier, "you can play any other trick you please. But, come now, let us go home."

"Oh, no, Brother Thin Boots!" replied the soldier, "it is too early to march away. We have beaten the enemy, and now we must take the booty. Come now, eat and drink what you

like."

So they stopped there three days. The fourth day the soldier said to his companion, "It is time now to break the spell, but that we may have a short march the old woman shall show us the nearest road."

As soon as they arrived at the town the soldier went to his old comrades and told them that he had found in the forest a nest of thieves, and if they wished he would show them where.

They agreed to go, and the soldier persuaded the huntsman to accompany him again, and see how the robbers behaved when they were caught. So first he placed the soldiers around the robbers in a circle, and then drinking a draft of wine out of a bottle, he swung it over them and exclaimed, "You shall all live."

In a moment the robbers had the power of motion again, but they were soon thrown down and bound hand and foot with ropes. Then they were thrown like sacks upon a wagon, and the soldier bade his comrades drive it away to the prison. But the huntsman, taking aside one of the soldiers, gave him a commission and sent him off to the town.

They walked on, and by and by, as they approached the town, the soldier perceived an immense crowd of men rushing out at the gates, hurrahing loudly and waving green branches of trees in the air.

He soon saw that it was the bodyguards of the king who were approaching them, and, turning to the huntsman, he asked, "What does this mean?"

"Do you not know," replied the huntsman, "that the king has been absent from his kingdom for a length of time? Today he returns, and these are coming out to meet him."

"But where is the king? I do not see him," said the soldier.

"Here he is," answered the huntsman. "I am the king, and I caused my return to be proclaimed." With these words he opened his hunting-coat and showed his royal dress.

The soldier was frightened and, falling on his knees,

begged the king's pardon for having treated him so unceremoniously.

The king held out his hand and said to him: "You are a brave soldier, and you have saved my life. You shall suffer poverty no longer; I will care for you, and if at any time you want a piece of meat as good as we had in the forest, come to my palace and dine with me."

Little One-Eye, Little Two-Eyes, and Little Three-Eyes

Once upon a time there was a woman who had three daughters, the eldest of whom was called One-Eye because she had but a single eye, and that placed in the middle of her forehead; the second was called Two-Eyes because she was like other mortals; and the third was called Three-Eyes because she had three eyes, one of them being in the center of her forehead, like her eldest sister. But because the second sister had nothing out of the common in her appearance, her companions looked down upon her. "You are no better than common folks," they would say.

Once it happened that Two-Eyes had to go into the forest to tend the goat. She was very hungry, because her sisters had given her but little to eat that morning.

She sat down upon a hillock and cried so much that her tears flowed out of her eyes almost like rivers. By and by she looked up and saw a woman standing by, who asked, "Why are you weeping, Two-Eyes?"

"Because I have two eyes like ordinary people," replied the maiden, "and therefore I am disliked and even half starved."

"Dry your eyes," said the wise woman. "I will tell you something which will prevent you from being hungry again. You must say to your goat:

'Little kid, milk!
Table, appear!'

and immediately a well-filled table will stand before you with delicate food upon it, of which you can eat as much as you

please. And when you are satisfied, and have done with the table, you must say:

'Little kid, milk!
Table, depart!'

and it will disappear directly."

With these words the wise woman went away, and little Two-Eyes thought to herself she would find out at once if what the woman said were true, for she felt very hungry indeed. So she said:

"Little kid, milk!
Table, appear!"

and immediately a table covered with a white cloth stood before her, with a knife and fork and a silver spoon; and the most delicate dishes were arranged in order upon it, and all as warm as if they had been just taken from the fire.

Two-Eyes said a short grace, and then began to eat. When she had finished she pronounced the words which the wise woman had told her:

"Little kid, milk!
Table, depart!"

and directly the table and all that was on it quickly disappeared.

"This is capital housekeeping," said the maiden, in high glee; and at evening she went home with her goat, and found an earthen dish which her sisters had left her filled with their pickings, which she did not touch.

The next morning she went off again, without taking the meager breakfast which was left out for her. The first and second times she did this the sisters thought nothing of it; but when she did the same the third morning their attention was roused, and they said: "All is not right with Two-Eyes, for she has left her meals twice and has touched nothing of what was

left for her. She must have found some other way of living." So they agreed that One-Eye should go with the maiden when she drove the goat to the meadow, and pay attention to what passed and observe whether anyone brought her food or drink.

When Two-Eyes, therefore, was about to set off, One-Eye told her she was going with her to see whether she took proper care of the goat and fed her enough. Two-Eyes, however, divined her sister's object, and drove the goat where the grass was finest, and then said, "Come, One-Eye, let us sit down, and I will sing to you."

So One-Eye sat down, for she was quite tired with her unusual walk and the heat of the sun.

"Are you awake or asleep, One-Eye?
Are you awake or asleep?"

sang Two-Eyes, until her sister really went to sleep.

As soon as she was sound asleep the maiden had her table out, and ate and drank all she needed. By the time One-Eye awoke again the table had disappeared, and the maiden said to her sister: "Come, we will go home now. While you have been sleeping the goat might have run about all over the world." So they went home, and after Two-Eyes had left her meal untouched, One-Eye was obliged to confess that she had fallen asleep.

The following morning Three-Eyes told her sister that she was going with her that morning to see if she took care of the goat and fed her well; but Two-Eyes saw through her design, and drove the goat again to the best feeding-place. Then she told her sister to sit down and she would sing to her, and Three-Eyes did so, for she was very tired with her long walk in the heat of the sun. Two-Eyes began to sing as before,

"Are you awake, Three-Eyes?"

but instead of continuing, as she should have done,

"Are you asleep, Three-Eyes?"

she said by mistake,

"Are you asleep, *Two*-Eyes?"

and so went on singing:

"Are you awake, Three-Eyes?
Are you asleep, Two-Eyes?"

By and by Three-Eyes closed two of her eyes and went to sleep with them; but the third eye, which was not spoken to, kept open. Three-Eyes, however, cunningly shut it, too, and pretended to be asleep, while she was really watching; and soon Two-Eyes, thinking all safe, repeated the words:

"Little kid, milk!
Table, appear!"

and as soon as she was satisfied, she said the old words:

"Little kid, milk!
Table, depart!"

Three-Eyes watched all these proceedings; and presently Two-Eyes came and awoke her, saying, "Ah, sister! you are a good watcher; but come, let us go home now."

When they reached home Two-Eyes again ate nothing, and her sister declared that she knew now why the haughty child would not eat their food. "When she is out in the meadow," said Three-Eyes, "she says:

'Little kid, milk!
Table, appear!'

and directly a table comes up laid out with meat and wine and everything of the best, much better than we have; and as soon as she has had enough, she says:

'Little kid, milk!
Table, depart!'

and all goes away directly, as I clearly saw. She put to sleep two of my eyes, but the one in the middle of my forehead luckily kept awake!"

So the sisters agreed to kill the goat.

When they had done this cruel thing Two-Eyes went out very sorrowfully to the old spot and sat down to weep bitterly.

All at once the wise woman stood in front of her again and asked why she was crying.

"Must I not cry," replied Two-Eyes, "when the goat which used to furnish me every day with a dinner, according to your promise, has been killed, and I am again suffering hunger and thirst?"

"Two-Eyes," said the wise woman, "I will give you a piece of advice. Beg your sisters to give you the entrails of the goat. Bury them in the earth before the house door, and your fortune will be made."

So saying, she disappeared, and Two-Eyes went home, and said to her sisters:

"Dear sisters, do give me some part of the slain kid. I desire nothing else; let me have the entrails."

The sisters laughed and readily gave the entrails to her. She buried them secretly before the threshold of the door, as the wise woman had bidden her.

The following morning they found in front of the house a wonderfully beautiful tree, with leaves of silver and fruits of gold hanging from the boughs. The two elder sisters were quite ignorant how the tree came there; but Two-Eyes perceived that it was produced by the goat's entrails, for it stood on the exact spot where she had buried them.

As soon as the mother saw the tree she told One-Eye to break off some of the fruit. One-Eye went up to the tree and pulled a bough toward her, to pluck off the fruit, but the

bough flew directly out of her hands. And it did so every time she took hold of it, till she was forced to give up, for she could not obtain a single golden apple in spite of all her efforts.

Then the mother said to Three-Eyes, "Do you climb up, for you can see better with your three eyes than your sister with her one."

Three-Eyes, however, was not more fortunate than her sister, for the golden apples flew back as soon as she touched them.

At last the mother got so impatient that she climbed the tree herself; but she met with no more success than either of her daughters, and grasped only the air when she thought she had the fruit.

Two-Eyes now thought she would try, and said to her sisters: "Let me get up. Perhaps I may be successful."

"Oh, you are very likely to indeed," said they, "with your two eyes. You will see better, no doubt!"

So Two-Eyes climbed the tree, and as soon as she touched the boughs the golden apples fell into her hands, so that she plucked them as fast as she could, and quickly filled her apron before she went down.

The two sisters, instead of treating Two-Eyes better than they had done, were only the more envious of her because she alone could gather the fruits; in fact, they treated her worse.

One morning, not long after the appearance of the apple tree, the three sisters were all standing together beneath it, when in the distance a young knight was seen riding toward them.

"Make haste, Two-Eyes!" exclaimed the two elder sisters; "make haste and creep out of our way that we may not be ashamed of you"; and so saying they put over her in great haste an empty cask which stood near.

Soon the knight came up to the tree, and the sisters saw that he was a very handsome man. He stopped to admire the fine silver leaves and golden fruit, and presently asked to

whom the tree belonged, for he should like to have a branch of it.

One-Eye and Three-Eyes replied that the tree belonged to them, and they tried to pluck a branch for the knight. They had their trouble for nothing, however, for the boughs and fruit flew back as soon as they touched them.

"This is very wonderful," cried the knight, "that this tree should belong to you, and yet you cannot pluck the fruit!"

The sisters, however, maintained that it was theirs; but while they spoke, Two-Eyes rolled a golden apple from underneath the cask, so that it traveled to the feet of the knight, for she was angry because her eldest sisters had not spoken the truth.

When the knight saw the apple he was astonished, and asked where it came from. One-Eye and Three-Eyes said they had another sister, but they dared not let her be seen, because she had only two eyes, like common folk!

The knight, however, would see her, and called, "Two-Eyes, come here!"

As she made her appearance from under the cask the knight was bewildered by her beauty, and said, "You, Two-Eyes, can surely break off a bough of this tree for me."

"Yes," she replied, "I will, for it is my property." And climbing up she easily broke off a branch with silver leaves and golden fruit, which she handed to the knight.

"What can I give you in return, Two-Eyes?" asked the knight.

"Alas! if you will take me with you I shall be happy, for now I suffer hunger and thirst and am in trouble and grief from early morning to late evening. Take me and save me!"

Thereupon the knight raised Two-Eyes upon his saddle and took her home to his father's castle. He gave her beautiful clothes and all she wished to eat or to drink; and afterwards, because his love for her had become so great, he married her, and a very happy wedding they had.

Her two sisters meanwhile were very jealous when Two-Eyes was carried off by the knight; but they consoled themselves by saying: "The wonderful tree still remains; and even if we cannot get the fruit, everybody will stop to look at and praise it to us. Who knows where our harvest may bloom?"

The morning after, however, the tree disappeared. But when Two-Eyes looked out of her window, behold, the tree stood before it, and there remained!

For a long time after this Two-Eyes lived in the greatest happiness.

One morning two poor women came to the palace and begged an alms. Two-Eyes, after looking at their faces, recognized her sisters, One-Eye and Three-Eyes, who had come to such poverty that they were forced to wander, daily begging food. Two-Eyes, however, bade them welcome, invited them in, and took care of them, till they repented of the evil which they had done.

The Spindle, the Shuttle and the Needle

There was once upon a time a little girl whose father and mother died when she was quite young. At the end of the village where she lived her godmother dwelt in a small cottage, earning her living by spinning, weaving, and sewing, and she took the poor child as her own, teaching her to work and to study.

When the girl had reached the age of fifteen the godmother fell ill. She called the girl to her bedside, and said to her: "My dear daughter, I feel my end is near. I leave you this cottage, where you will be protected from wind and weather, and also this spindle, shuttle, and needle, with which you may earn your living." With these words she laid her hands on the girl's head and blessed her, saying, "So long as you remember God, everything will prosper with you."

The little girl now lived alone in her cottage, spinning, weaving, and sewing, and upon all that she did rested the blessing of God. It seemed as if the flax in her room increased by itself; and when she wove a piece of cloth or carpet, or hemmed a shirt, she always found someone ready to buy it who paid her so well that she had enough for herself and could spare a little for others who were poorer.

Now about this time the son of the king of this country was looking about him for a bride, and as he was not allowed to marry a poor wife he would not have a rich one. So he said, "She shall be my bride who is at once the richest and the poorest."

When he came to the village where the maiden dwelt, he asked, as was his custom, who was the richest and the poorest maiden in the place. The people first named the richest, and

then told him that the poorest was the maiden who dwelt in the cottage at the end of the village.

The young prince therefore went first to the rich maiden, and found her sitting before her door beautifully dressed; but as soon as she saw him coming she got up and made him a very low bow. He looked at her once and then, without speaking a word, rode away to the house of the poor maiden, whom he found sitting in her kitchen at work instead of waiting idly at her door.

He stopped his horse, and, looking through the window, into the kitchen, he saw how brightly the sun shone into it and how busy the girl was at her spinning-wheel. She looked up, but as soon as she saw the prince peeping at her she blushed as red as a rose and looked down again, turning her wheel round and round. Whether the thread just then was quite even or not I do not know, but the maiden kept on spinning until the prince rode away. Then she stepped to the window and opened it, saying, "It is very warm in this kitchen!" and she stood at the window, looking out as long as she could see the white feathers upon the prince's hat.

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

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

Scarcely had she spoken the words when the spindle sprang from her hands and out of the door, and as she ran to look after it she saw it merrily dancing along over the field, leaving a golden thread behind it. In a short time it was out of sight, and then the maiden, having no other spindle, took the shuttle in her hand and began to weave.

Meanwhile the spindle still danced on, and as the thread came to an end it reached the king's son.

"What do I see?" exclaimed he; "the spindle showing me

the way!" and turning his horse's head he rode back, guided by the golden thread. At the same time the girl, sitting at work, sang:

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

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

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

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

As soon as she had said this the needle flew out of her fingers and sprang all about the room like a flash of lightning. It seemed as if unseen spirits were at work, for in a few minutes the table and the bench were covered with green cloths, the chairs with velvet, and on the walls were hung silken curtains. And scarcely had the needle put the last stitch to them when the maiden saw through the window the white feathers on the hat of the prince, who was coming toward her cottage drawn by the golden thread of the spindle. He entered the room, and there stood the maiden in her shabby clothes glowing like a rose.

"You are the poorest, and yet the richest maiden," said the prince to her. "Come with me, and you shall be my bride."

The maiden said nothing, but held out her hand, which the prince took; and, giving her a kiss, he led her out of the

cottage and seated her behind him on his horse. He took her to the king's castle, where they were married; and afterwards the spindle, the shuttle, and the needle were placed in the treasure chamber and held in great esteem.

The Goose-Girl at the Well

There was once upon a time a very, very old lady who dwelt with her flock of geese on a common in a waste place between two hills, where she had a small cottage. The common was surrounded by a large forest, into which this old woman hobbled every morning on crutches. There she was more active than one could have believed. She gathered grass for her geese and all the wild fruit she could reach, and carried it home on her back.

One would have thought so heavy a burden would have bowed her down to the ground, but she always reached home safe and sound. If anyone met her, she greeted him kindly, and would say: "Good day to you, my dear countryman. What beautiful weather it is! Ah! you wonder how I get over the ground, but everyone must bear his own burden!" People at last grew afraid to meet her, and took a bypath; and if a father passed near with his children, he would say to them: "Beware of that old woman! She has mischief behind her ears; she is a witch."

One morning a lively young fellow passed through the wood. The sun was shining brightly, the birds were singing, a gentle breeze was blowing among the trees, and everything seemed gay and pleasant. Still he had met nobody till he saw the old woman kneeling on the ground cutting grass with a sickle.

She had already placed a large heap in her handkerchief, and by her side stood two baskets filled with apples and wild berries.

"Ah! my good woman," said the youth, "how shall you carry all that?"

"I must carry it, my good master," she replied, "but rich people's children do not want to do such things. Will you not help me? You have a straight back yet, and young legs; it will be easy for you. My house is not far from here. It stands on yonder hill."

The youth took pity on the old woman, and replied to her: "Certainly. My father is no peasant, but a rich count; still, that you may see it is not only the peasants who carry burdens, I will take your bundle."

"If you will try it," said the old woman, "I shall be much obliged to you; but there are the apples and berries which you must carry too. It is but an hour's walk which you will have to take, but it will seem much less to you."

The old woman packed the handkerchief of grass on the young man's back and hung the two baskets on his arms. "See how light it is," said she.

"No, it is not at all light," answered the young count; "the bundle weighs as heavily as if it were full of big stones, and the apples and berries seem like lead. I can scarcely breathe."

So saying, he would have liked to lay the bundle down again, but the old woman would not permit it.

"Just see," she cried in scorn, "the young lord cannot carry what an old woman like me has so often borne. You people are very ready with your fair words, but when it comes to working, you are equally ready with your excuses. Why do you stand trembling there?" she continued. "Come, pick up your legs; nobody will take your bundle off again."

Now so long as the young count walked on level ground he did pretty well, but when he came to the hill and began to climb it, the stones rolled under his feet as if they were alive, and his strength began to fail. Drops of sweat stood upon his brow and ran down his back, now hot and now cold.

"My good woman," said he, "I can go no further till I have rested awhile."

"Not here, not here," answered the old woman. "When

we arrive at my house you can rest, but now we must keep on. Who knows what good it may do you!"

"You are unkind and ungrateful!" cried the youth, trying to throw away the bundle, but in vain; it stuck as fast to his back as if it had grown there. He turned and twisted, but with no effect; he could not get rid of the bundle, and the old woman only laughed, and danced around him on her crutches.

"Don't put yourself in a passion, my dear lord," she said. "You are getting as red in the face as a turkey cock. Bear your burden patiently. When we arrive at home I will give you a good draft to refresh you."

What could he do but patiently follow the old woman, who became more and more active as his burden grew heavier. All at once she made a spring and jumped on the top of the bundle, where she sat down; and thin and withered as she was, her weight was yet more than that of a strong man. The youth's knees trembled and shook, but the old woman beat him with a strap and stinging nettles. He at last reached the old woman's cottage, just when he was ready to drop.

As soon as the geese saw the old woman they stretched out their wings and their necks, and ran toward her crying, "Wulle! wulle!"

Behind the flock walked a middle-aged woman with a stick in her hand, who was big and strong and ugly. "My mother," said she to the old woman, "why have you been out so long?"

"Never fear, my dear daughter," replied the old woman, "nothing evil has met me; in fact, the young count there has carried my bundle for me. Only think! when I was tired he took me also on his back! The road has not been too long either, for we have been merry!" At length the old woman ceased talking and took the bundle off the youth's back and the baskets from his arms, and then looking at him cheerfully she said to him, "Sit down on the bench by the door and rest yourself; you have honestly earned your reward, and it shall

not be overlooked." She turned to the goose-girl and said, "Go into the house, my daughter; this young man might fall in love with you."

The young count did not know whether to laugh or cry. "Such a beauty!" he thought to himself. "Why, even if she were thirty years younger, my heart would not be touched!"

Meanwhile the old woman petted her geese, as if they were children, and at last went into the house with her daughter.

The youth stretched himself on the bench beneath an apple tree, where the breeze blew softly and gently; while around him was spread a green meadow covered with primroses, wild thyme, and a thousand other flowers. In the middle of it flowed a clear stream, on which the sun shone; and the white geese kept passing up and down, or paddling in the water. "It is quite lovely here," the youth said to himself; "but I am so tired that I cannot keep my eyes open; so I will sleep awhile, if no wind comes and blows my legs from my body, for they are as tender as tinder!"

After he had slept some time the old woman came and shook him till he awoke.

"Stand up," she said; "you cannot stop here. I did treat you rather shabbily, but it has not cost you your life. Now I will give you your reward. It will be neither money nor property, but something better." With these words she placed in his hands a small book cut out of a single emerald, saying, "Keep it well, and it will bring you good luck."

The count jumped up, and felt himself quite strong and refreshed; so he thanked the old woman for her present, and set off on his journey without once looking back for the beautiful daughter. And when he had walked a long way he could still hear the loud cackling of the geese in the distance.

The young count had to wander three days in the forest before he could find his way out, and then he came to a large city, where, because nobody knew him, he was led to the royal

palace, where the king and queen sat on their thrones.

There the count sank down upon his knees, drew forth the emerald book, and laid it at the feet of the queen. She bade him arise and hand the book to her, but scarcely had she opened it and looked at its contents than she fell as if dead upon the ground.

Then the count was seized by the king's servants, and would have been led off to prison had not the queen opened her eyes and begged that he might be set at liberty, commanding everyone to leave the room that she might speak with him alone.

As soon as the courtiers were gone the queen began to weep bitterly and to say: "Of what use is all this honor which surrounds me, when every morning I give way to grief and sorrow! I once had three daughters, the youngest of whom was so beautiful that all the world thought her a wonder. She was as white, and her hair was like the shining of a sunbeam. If she cried, her tears were like pearls and gems falling from her eyes.

"When she was fifteen her father caused her and her sisters to come before his throne; and you should have seen how the people opened their eyes when she came in, for she was beautiful as the dawn. The king then said to them, 'My daughters, I know not when my last day will arrive, and therefore today I will appoint what each shall do at my death. You love me, but the one who loves me best shall have the best portion.'

"Each said she loved him best; and the king then asked them whether they could not express in words how much they loved him, so that he would be able to judge. The eldest said that she loved him as the sweetest sugar, the second that she loved her father as her smartest dress, but the youngest was silent.

"'My dear child, how do you love me?' asked the king.

"'I do not know,' she replied; 'and I can compare my love

with nothing.'

"Her father, however, pressed her to say something, and at length she said, 'The most delicate food is tasteless to me without salt, and therefore I love you, father, like salt.'

"At this reply the king became very angry, and said, 'If you love me like salt you shall be rewarded with salt.' So he divided the kingdom between the two eldest daughters; but he caused a sack of salt to be bound on the shoulders of his youngest child, and two slaves had to lead her into the wild forest.

"We wept and prayed for her to the king, but his anger was not to be turned away. When she left us she wept so that the whole path was strewn with the pearls which fell from her eyes! Afterwards, however, the king did repent of his great harshness, and caused a search to be made in the forest for the poor child, but without success.

"And now, when I think that the wild beasts may have devoured her, I know not what to do for grief; but many a time I try to comfort myself with the idea that she may be living in some cave, or under the kind care of someone who found her. But imagine my feelings when, on opening your emerald book, I saw a pearl lying therein of the same kind as used to drop from my daughter's eyes. Think how my heart was moved at the sight. Now you shall tell me how you came by the pearl."

The young count then told the queen that he had received it from an old woman who seemed to be a witch, for she lived in a haunted wood and behaved in a strange manner; but of the queen's child he had neither seen nor heard anything.

The king and queen went in search of this old woman, for they thought that where the pearl had been, there they should also obtain news of their daughter.

The old woman sat in her house in the wilderness, spinning at her wheel. It was almost dark, and a fagot, which

burned on the hearth below, gave a feeble light. All at once there was a noise outside; the geese were coming home from the meadow, and they cackled with all their might.

Soon afterwards the daughter stepped in, but the old woman scarcely spoke to her, and only shook her head. The daughter sat down, and, taking her wheel, spun the thread as quickly as a young girl. Thus they sat for two hours, without speaking to one another, till at length something rattled at the window, and two fiery eyes glared in from the outside. It was a night owl, which screeched thrice. Then the old woman, looking up from her work, said, "Now is the time, my daughter, for you to go out and do your work."

The daughter got up and went away over the meadows, deep into a valley beyond. By and by she came to a brook near which stood three oak trees. At the same time the moon rose round and full above the mountain, and shone so brightly that one might have picked up a needle by its light. She drew off the mask which covered her face, and then, stepping into the brook, began to wash herself.

As soon as she had done that she dipped the mask also in the water, and then laid it again on the meadow to dry and bleach in the moonshine. How the maiden was changed! Her golden hair fell down like sunbeams, and when she removed the cap which confined it, it covered her whole form. Only her eyes could be seen peeping through the tresses like the stars in heaven, and her cheeks blooming like the soft red of the apple blossoms.

But the fair maiden was sad, and she sat down and wept bitterly. One tear after another flowed from her eyes and rolled to the ground; and thus she would have sat for a long time had she not been disturbed by a rustling noise in the branches of one of the trees. She jumped up and sprang away like a fawn disturbed by the gun of the hunter. At the same moment a black cloud obscured the moon, under cover of which the maiden slipped on her old mask and disappeared

like a light blown out by the wind.

She ran home trembling like an aspen leaf, and found the old woman standing before the door; but when she was about to relate what had happened to her, the old woman laughed and said she knew about it already. Her mother then led the maiden into the room and lighted a fresh fagot; but, instead of sitting down to her wheel, she fetched a broom and began to sweep and dust. "It must all be clean," said she to the maiden.

"But, mother," replied she, "why do you begin at this late hour? What is the matter?"

"Do you then know what hour it is?" inquired the mother.

"Not quite midnight, but past eleven," returned the daughter.

"Do you not remember, then," continued the old woman, "that today you have been with me three years? We can remain together no longer!"

"Alas! dear mother, you will not drive me out," said the maiden in alarm. "Where shall I go? I have neither home nor friends, and whither could I turn? I have ever done all you bade, and you have been pleased with me. Send me not away!"

The woman would not, however, tell the maiden what was coming, but said, instead: "My dwelling is no longer here; but since the house and this room must be clean when I leave, hinder me not in my work, and cease to care on your own account. You shall find a roof under which to dwell, and with the reward which I shall give you, you will also be contented."

"But do tell me what is coming," entreated the maiden.

"I tell you a second time, do not disturb me in my work. Speak not a word more, but go into your own room and pull off the mask from your face, and put on the beautiful dress which you wore when you came to me, and then remain where you are till I call you."

And now I must tell you what befell the king and queen,

who were preparing, when we last heard of them, to go in search of the old woman in the wilderness. First of all, the count was sent by night to the forest alone, and for two days he wandered before he found the right road. Along this he went till darkness overtook him, and then he climbed a tree to pass the night, for he feared he might lose his way in the dark. As soon as the moon rose he saw a figure coming across the mountain, and although she had no rod in her hand, he could not doubt but that it was the goose-girl whom he had seen with the old woman.

"Oho!" he exclaimed to himself; "here comes one witch, and when I have her I will soon catch the other!" But how astonished he was when, stepping up to the brook, she laid aside her mask, and he saw her golden hair fall down and cover her whole figure, rendering her more beautiful than anyone he had ever before seen! He scarcely dared to breathe, but he stretched out his neck as far as he could and looked at her with fixed eyes. He bent over too far, and the bough cracked beneath his weight. At the same instant the maiden disappeared in a dark cloud, and when the moon shone again she was out of sight.

The young count made haste down from the tree and ran after the maiden with rapid strides, but before he had gone very far he saw two figures wandering over the meadows in the twilight. They were the king and queen, who had seen at a distance the light in the old woman's cottage and were going toward it.

The count told them what strange things he had seen by the brook, and they felt no doubt but that he had seen their lost daughter. Full of joy they went on till they came to the cottage, around which sat the geese, with their heads under their wings. None stirred at their approach. The three peeped in at the window and saw the old woman spinning silently, without raising her eyes from her work, but simply nodding her head now and then.

The room was as perfectly clean as if the cloud men, who carry no dust on their feet, lived in it, and for some minutes they observed the whole scene in silence; but at last plucking up courage, they knocked at the window lightly.

The old woman got up and, looking at them kindly as if she had expected them, called out: "Come in. I know who you are."

As soon as the king, queen, and count came into the room, the old woman said: "You might have spared yourselves this long journey if you had not driven away your child, who was so affectionate and so beautiful. She has come to no harm, and for these three years past she has tended my geese; neither has she learned any evil, but has kept her heart pure and spotless. But you have been rightly punished by the sorrow and trouble which you have suffered." With these words she went to the chamber door and called to the daughter to come out, and as soon as the princess appeared, dressed in her silk gown, with her golden hair and bright eyes, it seemed like the entrance of an angel into the room.

She went up to her father and mother and fell on their necks and kissed them, which made them both cry with joy. But when she saw the young count standing by them she blushed as red as a moss rose without knowing why.

"My dear child," said the king to her, "what shall I give you, for I have parted my kingdom already?"

"She needs nothing," said the old woman, "for I present her with the tears which she has wept, which are in reality pearls more beautiful than any that can be found in the sea, and of more value than your entire kingdom. And for a further reward for her services to me I give her this house."

As soon as the old woman had said this she disappeared, and after a little knocking at the walls, the house became a noble palace, and the room in which they stood became a hall, in the midst of which a princely table was set, with many servants hastening to and fro.

The Seven Swabians

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There were once seven Swabians in company, the first of whom was named Schulz, the second Jacky, the third Marli, the fourth Jergli, the fifth Michael, the sixth Hans, and the seventh Veitli. They were traveling in search of adventures and for the purpose of doing valiant deeds.

In order to protect themselves they carried with them a very long and strong pole. To this the seven held; in front walked Schulz, the boldest and most courageous man, while the others followed, Veitli being last.

One day in July, after they had traveled some distance and were near the village where they intended to pass the night, a hornet or dragon fly flew out from behind a bush and hummed about the travelers in a warlike manner.

Schulz was so frightened that he almost let go the pole, and the perspiration stood all over his body from terror. "Listen, listen!" he cried to his companions; "I hear a trumpeting!"

Hans, who was last but one in the row, exclaimed, "I smell brimstone and powder!"

At these words Schulz sprang over a hedge in his haste to escape, and, as he happened to alight on the prongs of a rake, which was left in the field by the haymakers, the handle sprung up and gave him a blow on the forehead. "Oh! oh! oh! woe is me!" he cried. "Take me prisoner. I give myself up; I surrender!"

The six others thereupon jumped over the hedge and likewise cried, "We surrender if you surrender! We surrender if you surrender!"

At length, when no enemy came to bind and take them

away, they saw that they were deceived, and in order that the tale might not be told of them among the villagers, who would laugh at them and mock them, they took an oath among themselves never to say anything about it unless one of them should open his mouth unawares.

After this adventure they went further, but the second danger they met with cannot be compared with the first. For after several days had elapsed their road chanced to lead them through an unplowed field where a hare was lying asleep in the sun.

The seven Swabians were terribly frightened at the sight of this ferocious little animal, and they took counsel together what would be the least dangerous plan to adopt. If they fled, it was to be feared that the monster would pursue them and cut them to pieces. So they resolved to stand and have a great battle, for, said they, "Bravely dared is half won!"

All seven, therefore, grasped hold of their pole, Schulz being foremost and Veitli hindmost. But Schulz wanted to have the pole himself, whereupon Veitli flew into a passion and broke away.

Then the rest advanced together upon the dragon, but Schulz was very fearful and cried in great terror: "Han! hurlehau! han! hauhel!" This awoke the hare, who sprang away quite frightened, and when Schulz saw it flee he jumped for joy and shouted:

"Zounds, Veitli, what fools we are!
The monster after all is but a hare!"

After they had recovered from their fright the seven Swabians sought new adventures. By and by they arrived at the river Moselle, a smooth and deep water, over which there are not many bridges, so one must cross to the other side in boats. The seven Swabians, however, were ignorant of this, and they therefore shouted to a man who was working on the other side of the river, and asked him how they were to cross.

On account of the distance and his ignorance of their language the man did not understand what they said, and so he asked in his dialect, "Wat? wat?" Schulz imagined the man said "Wade, wade"; and being foremost on the bank he jumped into the river and began to walk across. Soon he got out of his depth and sank in the deep, driving current; but his hat was carried by the wind to the opposite shore. As it reached there a frog perched himself on it, and croaked "Wat! wat! wat!" The six other Swabians heard this noise and said to each other: "Listen! Does not Schulz call us? Well, if he could wade across, so can we."

With these words each one jumped into the river, but they all sank. So it happened that one little frog caused the death of six brave Swabians, for nobody has heard of or seen them since.

How Six Traveled Through the World

There was once a man who understood a variety of arts. He had served in the army, where he had behaved very bravely; but when the war came to an end he received his discharge and only three dollars for his services.

"Wait a bit! This does not please me," said he. "If I find the right people to help me, I will make the king give me the treasures of his whole kingdom." Thereupon, inflamed with anger, he went into a forest, where he found a man who had just uprooted six trees as if they were straw, and he asked him whether he would be his servant and travel with him.

"Yes," replied the man; "but I will first take this firewood to my mother." And taking up one of the trees he wound it around the other five, and raising the bundle upon his shoulder bore it away. Soon he returned, and said to his master, "We two shall travel well through the world!"

They had not gone far before they came up with a hunter who was kneeling upon one knee, preparing to take aim with his gun. The master asked what he was going to shoot, and he replied, "Two miles from here sits a fly upon the branch of an oak tree, whose left eye I wish to shoot out."

"Oh, go with me!" said the man; "for if we three are together, we must pass easily through the world."

The huntsman consented and went with him, and soon they arrived at seven windmills, whose sails were going round at a rattling pace, although right or left there was no wind and not a leaf stirring.

At this sight the man said, "I wonder what drives these mills, for there is no breeze!" and they went on. But they had not proceeded more than two miles when they saw a man

sitting up in a tree, whistling.

"My good fellow, what are you doing up there?"

"Did you not see," replied the man, "two miles from here seven windmills? It is those which I am blowing, that the sails may go round."

"Oh, then come with me," said our hero; "for if four people like us travel together, we shall soon get through the world."

So the blower went with him, and in a short while they met with another man, standing upon one leg, with the other leg unbuckled and lying by his side. The leader of the others said, "You have done this, no doubt, to rest yourself?"

"Yes," replied the man, "I am a runner, and in order that I may not spring along too quickly I have unbuckled one of my legs, for when I wear both I go as fast as a bird can fly."

"Well, then, come with me," said our hero; "five such fellows as we are will soon get through the world."

The five heroes went on together, and soon met a man who had on a hat which he wore quite over one ear. The captain of the others said to him: "Manners! manners! Don't hang your hat on one side like that. You look like a simpleton!"

"I dare not change it," replied the other; "for if I set my hat straight, there will come so sharp a frost that the birds in the sky will freeze and fall dead upon the ground."

"Then come with me," said our hero; "for it is odd if six fellows like us cannot travel quickly through the world."

These six new companions went into a city where the king had proclaimed that whoever should run a race with his daughter and bear away the prize should become her husband; but if he lost the race, he should also lose his head.

This was mentioned to our hero, who said that he would have his servant run for him. But the king told him that in that case he must agree that his servant's life, as well as his own, should be sacrificed if the wager were lost. To this he

agreed and swore, and then he bade his runner buckle on his other leg, and told him to be careful and to make sure of winning. The wager was that whoever first brought back water from a distant spring should be victor.

Accordingly the runner and the princess each received a cup, and they both began to run at the same moment; but the princess had not proceeded many steps before the runner was quite out of sight, and it seemed as if but a puff of wind had passed.

In a short time he came to the spring, filled his cup, and turned back again. But he had not gone very far before, feeling tired, he set his cup on the ground and lay down to take a nap. He made his pillow of a stick of wood, thinking, from its being hard, that he would soon awake.

Meantime the princess, who was a better runner than many of the men at court, had arrived at the spring and was returning with her cup of water when she perceived her opponent lying asleep.

In great joy she exclaimed, "My enemy is given into my own hands!" and, emptying his cup, she ran on faster still.

All would now have been lost if, by good luck, the huntsman had not been standing on the castle, looking afar with his sharp eyes. When he saw that the princess was gaining the advantage he loaded his gun and shot so cleverly that he carried away the hard pillow under the runner's head without doing the man any injury.

This awoke him, and, jumping up, he found his cup empty and the princess far in advance. However, he did not lose courage, but ran back to the spring, filled his cup, and returned home ten minutes earlier than his opponent. "See, you," said he, "now I have used my legs and shown you how to run, and I should like the prize you promised."

The king was disgusted, and his daughter not less, that a common soldier should carry off the prize, and they consulted together how they should get rid of him and his companions.

At last the king said, "Do not distress yourself, my dear. I have found a way to prevent their return."

Then he called to the six travelers, and, saying to them, "You must now eat and drink and be merry," he led them into a room with a floor of iron, doors of iron, and the windows guarded with iron bars. In the room was a table set with choice delicacies, and the king invited them to enter and refresh themselves, and as soon as they were inside he locked and bolted all the doors.

That done, he summoned the cook and commanded him to keep a fire lighted beneath till the iron was red-hot. The cook obeyed, and the six champions, sitting at table, soon began to feel warm, and at first thought it arose from eating; but as it kept getting warmer and warmer they rose to leave the room and found the doors and windows all fast.

Then they perceived that the king had some wicked design in mind, and wished to suffocate them.

"But he shall not succeed!" cried the man with the hat. "I will summon such a frost as shall put out this fire." So saying, he put his hat on straight and immediately such a frost fell that all the heat disappeared, and even the meats upon the dishes began to freeze.

When two hours had passed the king thought the six travelers would be stifled, and he caused the door to be opened and went in himself to look at them. But as soon as the door was opened there stood all six, fresh and lively. They requested permission to come out to warm themselves, for the cold in the room had been so intense that all the dishes were frozen!

In a great passion the king went down to the cook and scolded him, and asked why he had not obeyed his instructions.

The cook, however, pointing to the fire, said, "There is heat enough there, I should think." And the king was obliged to own there was, and he saw clearly that he should not be

able to get rid of his visitors in that way. He now began to think afresh how he could free himself, and he caused the master to be summoned, and said: "Will you not take money and give up your right to my daughter? If so, you shall have as much as you wish."

"Well, my lord king," replied the man, "just give me as much as my servant can carry, and you are welcome to keep your daughter."

This answer pleased the king very much, and our hero said that he would come and fetch the sum in fourteen days.

During that time he collected all the tailors in the kingdom and made them sew him a sack, which took all that time. As soon as it was ready the strong man who had uprooted the trees took the sack upon his shoulder and carried it to the king.

At the sight of him the king said, "What a powerful fellow this must be to carry this great sack upon his shoulders!" and, sorely frightened, he wondered how much gold he would slip in.

The king, first of all, caused a ton of gold to be brought, which required sixteen ordinary men to lift; but the strong man, taking it up with one hand, shoved it into the sack, saying: "Why do you not bring more at a time? This scarcely covers the bottom of the sack."

Then by degrees the king caused all his treasures to be brought, which the strong man put in, and yet they did not half fill his sack. "Bring more, more!" said he. "These are only a couple of crumbs."

Then they were obliged to bring seven thousand wagons laden with gold, and all these the man pushed into his sack—gold, wagons, oxen, and all. Still it was not full, and the strong man offered to take whatever they brought, if they would but fill his sack.

When everything that they could find was put in, the man said, "Well, I must make an end to this; and, besides, if one's

sack is not quite full, why it can be tied up so much the easier!" So saying, he hoisted it upon his back and went away, and his companions with him.

When the king saw this one man bearing away all the riches of his kingdom, he flew into a tremendous passion and ordered his cavalry to pursue the six men, and at all risks to bring back the strong man with the sack.

Two regiments accordingly pursued the men quickly, and shouted out to them: "You are our prisoners! Lay down the sack of gold, or you will be hewn to pieces!"

"What is that you are saying?" asked the blower; "you will make us prisoners? But first you shall have a dance in the air!" So saying, he blew the two regiments right away into the blue sky, so that one flew over the hills on the right side and the other on the left.

One sergeant begged for mercy. He had nine wounds, and was a brave fellow, undeserving of such disgrace. So the blower sent after him a gentle puff which brought him back without harming him, and then sent him back to the king with a message that, whatever number of knights he might yet send, all would be blown into the air like the first lot.

When the king heard this message, he said: "Let the fellows go! They will meet with their deserts!"

So the six companions took home the wealth of that kingdom and, sharing it with one another, lived contentedly all the rest of their days.

The Old Woman in the Wood

Once upon a time a poor girl was traveling through a wood. Just as she got to the middle of it she found herself in the power of a ferocious band of robbers. All at once they sprang out of the brushwood and came toward her, but she jumped out of her cart in terror and hid herself behind a tree.

As soon as the robbers had disappeared with their booty she came from her hiding-place and, seeing her great misfortune, began to cry bitterly and said to herself: "What shall I do now, a poor girl like me? I cannot find my way out of the wood. Nobody lives here, and I must perish with hunger." She looked about for a road, but could not find one. When evening came she sat down under a tree and, commending herself to God, determined to remain where she was, whatever might happen.

She had not sat there long before a little white pigeon came flying toward her, carrying in his beak a small golden key. The bird put the key into the girl's hand and said: "Do you see yon great tree? Within it is a cupboard which is opened with this key, and there you will find food enough, so that you need not suffer hunger any longer."

The girl went to the tree and, unlocking it, found pure milk in a jug and white bread to break into it. Of these she made a good meal. When she had finished, she said to herself, "At home now the cocks and hens are gone to roost, and I am so tired I should like to go to bed myself."

In a moment the pigeon flew up, bringing another gold key in his bill, and said: "Do you see yon tree? Open it and you will find a bed within!"

The girl opened the tree, and there stood a little white

bed. After saying her prayers and asking God's protection during the night, she went to sleep.

In the morning the pigeon came for the third time, bringing another key, with which he told the girl to open a certain tree, and there she would find plenty of clothes. When she did so she found dresses of all kinds ornamented with gold and precious stones, as beautiful as any princess could desire.

And here in this place the maiden dwelt for a time. Every day the pigeon brought her what she needed, and it was a very quiet and peaceful life.

One day, however, the pigeon came and asked the maiden whether she would do an act of love for him.

"With all my heart!" was her reply.

"I wish you, then," said the pigeon, "to come with me to a little cottage, and to go into it. There on the hearth you will see an old woman, who will say, 'Good day!' But for my sake give her no answer, let her do what she will; but go past her right hand, and you will see a door, which you must open, and pass into a room, where upon a table will lie a number of rings of all descriptions, among them several with glittering stones. Leave them alone, and look for a plain one which will be there, and bring it to me as quickly as possible."

The maiden thereupon went to the cottage and stepped in. There sat an old woman, who made a wry face when she saw her, but said, "Good day, my child!"

The maiden made no answer, but went toward the door.

"Whither are you going?" cried the woman; "that is my house, and nobody shall enter it unless I wish!" and she tried to detain the maiden by catching hold of her dress. But the maiden silently loosened herself and went into the room, and saw the heap of rings upon the table, which glittered and shone before her eyes. She threw them aside and searched for the plain ring, but could not find it; and while she searched she saw the woman slip in and take up a bird cage, with which she made off.

The maid pursued her, and took the bird cage away from her. As she looked at it she saw the ring in the bill of the bird which was in the cage. She took the ring and ran home, joyfully expecting the white pigeon would come and fetch the ring, but he did not. So she leaned back against the tree and waited for the bird; but presently the tree became weak and yielding, and its branches began to droop.

All at once the boughs bent round and became two arms; and as the maiden turned, the tree became a handsome man, who embraced and kissed her, saying: "You have saved me from the power of the old woman, who is an evil witch. She changed me into a tree long ago, and every day I became a white pigeon for a couple of hours; but so long as she had possession of the ring I could not regain my human form."

Thereupon his servants and horses recovered also from the enchantment, for they likewise had been changed into trees! And once more they accompanied their master to his kingdom (for he was a king's son), and there he married the maiden, and they lived happily ever afterwards.

The Presents of the Little Folk

A tailor and a goldsmith were walking one evening, and when the sun had sunk behind the hills they heard the sound of distant music, which became clearer and clearer. The music was so bright and lively that, forgetting their weariness, the two walked on and on.

The moon had risen when they arrived at a hillock, on which they saw a number of little men and women, who had joined hands and were whirling round in a dance with great spirit and delight, singing in the sweetest manner possible, and making the music which the travelers had heard.

In the middle stood an old man, taller than the others, who wore a coat of many colors and had an iron-gray beard that reached down to his waist.

The two stopped, full of wonder, and were looking at the dancers, when the old man beckoned to them to join the circle, which opened readily to receive them. The goldsmith stepped in; but the tailor feeling shy at first, held back, till, seeing how merry the circle was, he took heart and also joined in the dance.

The circle closed again directly, and the little folk began to sing and dance in the wildest manner, while the old man, taking a broad-bladed knife which hung at his girdle, sharpened it, and when it was fit looked round at the strangers.

They became frightened, but they had no time to consider; for the old man, seizing the goldsmith and then the tailor, quickly shaved off both their beards and hair.

They were no longer afraid when the old man, having done his work, tapped them both on the shoulder in a friendly manner, as much as to say that he was pleased with them.

Then he pointed with his finger toward a heap of coals which stood on one side, and showed them by signs that they should fill their pockets with them. Both obeyed, though neither of them could see of what service the coals would be to them. Then they went on to find a night's lodging.

As they came to the next valley a church clock struck twelve, and at the same moment the singing ceased, the hill lay alone in the moonshine, and the little men and women sank out of sight.

The two found a shelter, and, making a straw couch, each of them covered himself with his coat, but they forgot to take the coals out of their pockets. A heavy weight pressed upon their limbs more than usual, and when they awoke in the morning and emptied their pockets, they could not trust their eyes, for they saw that they were filled not with coals but with pure gold. Their hair and beards had also grown to their former length during the night.

They were now quite rich, but the goldsmith was half again as rich as the tailor, because he was greedy and had put more coals in his pockets.

Now the more a miserly man gets, the more he wants, and so the goldsmith, after a day or two, asked the tailor to go with him and get more gold from the old man of the mountain.

The tailor refused, saying, "I have enough, and am satisfied. Now I will marry, and be a happy man."

In the evening the goldsmith took two bags and set out on his road to the hillock. He found the little folk singing and dancing, as before. The old man, looking at him with a smile, treated him the same as before, and pointed to the heap of coals.

The goldsmith made haste to fill his pockets, and then went home in high glee and went to bed covered with his coat. "Although the gold is very heavy," said he to himself, "I will bear it patiently," and so he went to sleep in the sweet belief that in the morning he would awake a rich man.

Judge, therefore, his surprise, when, in the morning, he searched in his pockets and drew out only black coals! He ran to the pile of gold he had been given on his first visit to the little old man, and was filled with rage on finding it also turned to coal. He beat his forehead with his dirty hands, and then found out that his whole head was bald and smooth!

The good tailor, who then awoke, comforted the unhappy man as much as he could, and told him that since he had been his companion during his travels he would share his treasure and remain with him.

The tailor kept his word; but the poor goldsmith never had any money of his own again, and for the rest of his life he had to cover his bald head with a wig.

The Wolf and the Man

A fox once told a wolf many tales of the wonderful strength of men, because of which no beasts could stand against them, but were obliged to use cunning.

The wolf replied, "If I ever happen to meet a man, I will fly at him."

"Well," replied the fox, "I can help you to that; only come with me early tomorrow morning, and I will show you one."

Early the next day the wolf appeared, and the fox took him to the road which the hunters passed every day. First came an old discharged soldier.

"Is that a man?" asked the wolf.

"No," replied the fox; "he has been one."

Next came a boy going to school.

"Is that a man?" asked the wolf.

"No," said the fox; "he will be one."

Then came a hunter, his gun upon his back, and his wood-knife by his side.

The fox said to the wolf, "See, here comes a man upon whom you must spring; but I will first take myself off into my hole."

The wolf made a spring at the hunter, who, when he saw it, said to himself, "It is a pity I did not load with ball." But he took aim and shot at the beast's head. The wolf made a very wry face, but still went boldly forward, and the hunter fired another shot. The wolf, suppressing the pain, now rushed on the hunter, who drew his long sharp wood-knife and gave the beast a couple of cuts right and left, so that he fell over and lay howling on the ground, where the hunter left him.

Soon the fox came. "Now, Brother Wolf," said the fox,

"how have you fared with a man?"

"Oh," replied the wolf, "the man himself did not hurt me, but he took a stick from his shoulder and blew into it, and out flew something in my face which tickled it. Then he puffed again into this stick, and there came in my face a shower like hail and lightning; and as I drew quite near, he drew out a naked bone from his body and beat me with it till I fell, as if dead, before him."

"Ah," said the fox, "what a boaster you are! You know very little about men, although you have had such an opportunity to learn."

The Fisherman and His Wife

There were once a fisherman and his wife who lived in a hut close by the sea.

The man was fishing one day when, to his surprise, a large fish spoke to him as he was trying to take it from the hook.

"Put me back into the water, I beg," said the fish. "Do not kill me. I am not a flounder, as you suppose, but a prince who is under an evil enchantment."

"Oho!" said the fisherman, "You need not make so many words about it I do not care to catch talking fish, so swim away as fast as you like."

The fish darted out of sight in a moment, and the man went home to tell his wife all about the strange affair.

"Did you not ask him for something before you let him go?" asked the wife, who was a greedy woman.

"No," answered the husband; "pray what should I ask of a fish, or a prince, whichever he might be?"

"Oh!" said his wife, "here we live in this wretched hovel, and you never thought to ask him for a cottage. Prince or flounder, he would have given you that to be freed from the hook. Go back at once and see if you can catch him again, and if you do, tell him we want a cottage."

The fisherman did not like such business, but it was of no use to oppose his wife, so he went back to the edge of the water and called:

"O Man of the Sea,
Prithee, hearken to me!
My wife, Ilsabill,
Must have her own will

And sends me to beg a boon of thee."

The fish swam to the edge of the water and asked, "What is your wife's wish?"

"Oh," replied the fisherman, "she says that when I caught you I should have asked for something before I let you go, and then I need not have bothered you to come back. I have come to tell you that she does not like the place where we are living. She wants a neat little cottage."

The fish said at once: "You may go home. She already has a cottage."

And, true enough, when the fisherman went home his wife stood in the door of a tidy cottage.

"Come in, come in," said Ilsabill. "Here are a parlor, a bedchamber, and a kitchen. Come this way and see the garden, with all sorts of fruit and flowers, and back of the garden there is a yard full of ducks and chickens."

"That is good," said the husband. "We shall live happily now."

"We will try to make the best of the place, such as it is," answered the wife. And for two weeks the woman made little complaint, but one morning she said: "Husband, you must see that we have too little room here. The garden, the court, the parlor—everything is too small for comfort. I want a large stone castle. Go again to that talking fish and tell him he must give us what we need."

"I do not like to go to him again. He may be angry with us, and I myself think we ought to be happy in this pretty cottage."

"Nonsense," said Ilsabill. "He will grant our request quite willingly and esteem us the more highly because of our good taste. Now go along and try it, anyway."

With a heavy heart the husband set forth once more to ask a favor of the fish.

While he waited at the edge of the water he noticed that

the waves were dark instead of sparkling as on the day he caught the flounder, but he had not waited long before the fish came in sight, although a long way off. He called, however:

"O Man of the Sea,
Prithee, hearken to me!
My wife, Ilsabill, must have her own way,
Whatever I will, whatever I say."

"Now, what do you want?" asked the fish.

"Alas," said the husband, "my wife asks for a big stone castle."

"Go home again," said the fish. "She is already at the door of her castle."

Then the man went away, fearing in his heart that he would find no home, but when he walked up the path, there his wife stood on the steps of a handsome stone castle.

Together they entered a great hall paved with marble. Servants stood waiting to open doors into large rooms, the walls of which were hung with many colored tapestries. Tables and chairs of shining gold stood about on floors covered with velvet carpets. Glittering chandeliers hung from the ceilings, and in the great dining-hall tables were spread with every kind of dainty food. Outside the castle there was a park in which deer and antelopes ran about unafraid.

"Now," said the proud woman, "is not this worth having?"

"Oh, yes," said her husband. "Now we will live in this palace and be contented."

"We will think about that," answered the wife.

Their bedroom was more gorgeous than anything they had ever seen. In the morning, while her husband still slept, Ilsabill looked about with displeasure. Calling her husband, she said: "Just peep out at that window. All that we can see is ours. You might be king of this whole land."

"I do not wish to be king," answered the weary fisherman.

"Ah," said Ilsabill, "if thou wilt not be king, then I must reign alone. Go at once to that flounder and tell him my wish."

"Alas! wife, why dost thou wish to be queen?" asked her husband.

"Why not? Go thou must, and at once, for I will be queen."

The fisherman was very unhappy, but he went to do his wife's bidding. When he reached the sea it was very dark, rough, and angry looking, but he stood at the edge of the water and called:

"O Man of the Sea,
Prithee, hearken to me!
My wife, Ilsabill, must have her own way,
Whatever I do or whatever I say."

"What does she want now?" asked the flounder.

"Woe is me!" answered the fisherman. "She wants to be queen."

"Go back to her. She is already queen," replied the flounder.

The man went back, but when he reached the palace it had grown so much larger that he thought he was dreaming. A sentry stood at the door; soldiers were marching about beating drums and blowing trumpets. Everything inside the palace was more gorgeous than the castle—marble pillars, velvet hangings with gold fringe, servitors to obey every command! What wonder that the man stood in amazement, until the doors of the grand salon were opened? There sat his wife on a lofty throne of gold. She wore a crown of gold, and held a scepter of gold in her hand. On each side of the throne stood rows of beautiful maidens. All this pomp caused the husband to stand abashed before royalty. At last he found voice to say, "Alas! wife, art thou queen?"

"Yes," she replied haughtily; "now I am queen."

Her husband was speechless for a moment before saying: "It is a fine thing for you to be queen. Now we need wish for nothing more."

"Nay," she answered wearily. "I find time hangs heavily on my hands. It would be better for me to be empress! Go thou to that flounder and say that to be queen is not enough. I must be empress."

"Alas! wife, why dost thou wish to be empress?"

"It is enough that I wish it. Go thou to the flounder with my message."

The man had to go, although he was frightened, and as he went slowly along he thought: "This cannot end well. The flounder will be so angry that he will punish us."

When he arrived at the shore he found the sea looking very angry, heaving great dark waves and tossing to and fro as the keen wind blew over it. But fearing his wife more than any ocean storm, he plucked up his courage and called as before:

"O Man of the Sea,
Prithee, hearken to me!
My wife, Ilsabill, will have her own way,
Whatever I do or whatever I say."

"What does she want now?" asked the flounder.

"Alas! my wife wishes to be empress."

"Go back," answered the flounder. "She is empress."

So the fisherman returned and found a palace built of polished marble. Alabaster figures and golden decorations were on every side. Soldiers marched about beating drums and blowing trumpets. Within the spacious halls counts, barons, dukes, and princes waited for uniformed attendants to usher them into the presence of the empress.

The dazed fisherman followed the crowd of lords and ladies and, as if in a dream, saw his wife seated upon a throne made of gold. On her head was a golden crown set with diamonds and other precious stones. In one hand she held the

scepter of royalty, while in the other rested the ball of empire. Gentlemen-at-arms stood in rows on both sides of the throne. Although princes and dukes surrounded the woman, her husband pressed forward and ventured to ask, "Wife, art thou indeed empress?"

"Yes," said she; "now I am empress."

"And art thou better off for being empress?" her husband meekly asked.

The woman spoke more peevishly than became one of such rank, "Certainly being empress is finer than being only a queen, but I have further wishes."

"I hoped thou would'st be contented now," responded her husband.

"I will think about that," said the haughty woman.

Next morning, when the dawn reddened the sky, the fisherman's wife—now empress—looked out of the palace window. Seeing the sun just rising, she exclaimed: "Why should I not be lord of the universe? I will have the sun and moon rise at my bidding." Whereupon she shook the fisherman out of his sleep, saying: "Wake this instant and go to that flounder and say I will be lord of the universe. Make haste! make haste! I cannot wait another hour."

Her husband fell on his knees before her and begged her to control herself, but his hesitation only angered her and she shrieked: "Go! do my will! I shall not have a minute's happiness until the sun, moon, and stars are mine to command."

So the fisherman went out into the storm. Houses and trees fell before the hurricane. Mountains reeled, rocks tumbled into the sea. The sky became black as pitch, thunder crashed, lightning blazed and tore the clouds asunder, the sea cast its waves upon the shore like platoons of charging armies, but the fisherman dared not return to his wife with her commands disobeyed. So he braced himself as well as he could and called:

"O Man of the Sea,
Prithee, hearken to me!
My wife, Ilsabill,
Must have her own will,
Whatever I do and whatever I say.
I must beg a boon of thee."

"What does she want now?" asked the flounder, as he was borne upon the crest of a great wave.

"I'm sorry to ask such a boon," answered the trembling fisherman, "but she demands the control of the universe."

"Enough," replied the flounder. "Return to her. She is in the hovel, where she belongs."

And there she is to this day, without doubt.

Hans in Luck

Hans had served his master seven years, and at the end of that time he said to him, "Master, since my time is up, I should like to go home to my mother; so give me my wages, if you please."

His master replied, "You have served me truly and honestly, Hans, and as your service was good your reward shall be great." With these words he gave him a lump of gold as big as his head.

Hans took his handkerchief out of his pocket and, wrapping the gold in it, threw it over his shoulder and set out on the road toward his native village. As he went along, carefully setting one foot to the ground before the other, a horseman came in sight, trotting gayly and briskly along upon a beautiful animal.

"Ah," said Hans aloud, "what a fine thing that riding is. One is seated, as it were, upon a stool, kicks against no stones, spares one's shoes, and gets along without any trouble!"

The rider, overhearing Hans making these reflections, stopped and said, "Why, then, do you travel on foot, my fine fellow?"

"Because I am forced to," replied Hans, "for I have got a bit of a lump to carry home. It certainly is gold, but then I can't carry my head straight, and it hurts my shoulder."

"If you like we will exchange," said the rider. "I will give you my horse, and you can give me your lump of gold."

"With all my heart," cried Hans; "but I tell you fairly you undertake a very heavy burden."

The man dismounted, took the gold, helped Hans onto the horse, and, giving the reins into his hands, said, "Now,

when you want to go faster you must chuckle with your tongue and cry, 'Gee up! gee up!'"

Hans was delighted indeed when he found himself on a horse, riding along so freely and gayly. After a while he thought he should like to go rather quicker, and so he cried, "Gee up! gee up!" as the man had told him. The horse soon set off at a hard trot, and before Hans knew what he was about he was thrown over head and heels into a ditch which divided the fields from the road. Having accomplished this feat, the horse would have bolted off if he had not been stopped by a peasant who was coming that way, driving a cow before him.

Hans soon picked himself up on his legs, but he was terribly put out, and said to the countryman: "That is bad sport, that riding, especially when one mounts such a beast as this, which stumbles and throws one off so as nearly to break one's neck. I will never ride the animal again. Give me your cow. One may walk behind her without any discomfort, and besides one has milk, butter, and cheese every day. Ah! what would I not give for such a cow!"

"Well," said the peasant, "such an advantage you may soon enjoy. I will exchange my cow for your horse."

To this Hans consented with a thousand thanks, and the peasant, swinging himself upon the horse, rode off in a hurry.

Hans now drove his cow off steadily before him, thinking of his lucky bargain in this wise: "I have a bit of bread, and I can, as often as I please, eat with it butter and cheese; and when I am thirsty I can milk my cow and have a draft. What more can I desire?"

As soon, then, as he came to an inn he halted, and ate with great satisfaction all the bread he had brought with him for his noonday and evening meals, and washed it down with a glass of beer, to buy which he spent his last two farthings. This over, he drove his cow farther, but still in the direction of his mother's village.

The heat, meantime, became more and more oppressive

as noon approached, and just then Hans came to a common which was an hour's journey across. Here he got into such a state of heat that his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, and he thought to himself, "This will never do; I will milk my cow, and refresh myself." He therefore tied the cow to a stump of a tree, and, having no pail, placed his leathern cap below and set to work, but not a drop of milk could he squeeze out. He had placed himself, too, very awkwardly, and at last the impatient cow gave him such a kick on the head that he tumbled over on the ground, and for a long time knew not where he was.

Fortunately, not many hours after, a butcher passed by, trundling a young pig along upon a wheelbarrow.

"What trick is this?" exclaimed he, helping up poor Hans; and Hans told him all that had passed.

The butcher then handed him his flask and said: "There, take a drink. It will revive you. Your cow might well give no milk; she is an old beast and worth nothing at the best but for the plow or the butcher!"

"Eh! eh!" said Hans, pulling his hair over his eyes, "who would have thought it? It is all very well when one can kill a beast like that at home and make a profit of the flesh. But for my part I have no relish for cow's flesh; it is too tough for me! Ah! a young pig like yours is the thing that tastes best, let alone the sausages!"

"Well now, for love of you," said the butcher, "I will make an exchange and let you have my pig for your cow."

"Heaven reward you for your kindness!" cried Hans; and, giving up the cow, he untied the pig from the barrow it and took into his hand the string with which it was tied.

Hans walked on again, considering how everything had happened just as he wished, and how all his vexations had turned out for the best after all!

Presently a boy carrying a fine white goose under his arm overtook him, and after they had said "Good day" to each

other Hans began to talk about his luck and what profitable exchanges he had made. The boy on his part told Hans that he was carrying the goose to a christening feast.

"Just lift it," said he to Hans, holding it up by its wings; "just feel how heavy it is. Why, it has been fattened up for the last eight weeks, and whoever bites it when it is cooked will have to wipe the grease from each side of his mouth!"

"Yes," said Hans, weighing it with one hand, "it is weighty, but my pig is no trifle either."

While he was speaking the boy kept looking about on all sides and shaking his head suspiciously, and at length he broke out: "I am afraid it is not all right about your pig. In the village, through which I have just come, one has been stolen, and I am very much afraid you have it now in your hand! They have sent out several people, and it would be a bad job for you if they found you with the pig. The best thing you can do is to hide it in some dark corner!"

Honest Hans was thunderstruck and exclaimed: "Ah, heaven help me in this fresh trouble! You know the neighborhood better than I do. You take my pig and let me have your goose," said he to the boy.

"I shall have to hazard something at that game," replied the boy, "but still I do not wish to be the cause of your meeting with misfortune." So saying, he took the rope into his own hand and drove the pig off quickly by a side path, while Hans, lightened of his cares, walked on homewards with the goose under his arm.

"If I judge rightly," thought he to himself, "I have gained even by this exchange. First, there is the good roast; then the quantity of fat which will drip out will make goose broth for a quarter of a year; and then there are the fine white feathers—when once I have put them into my pillow I warrant I shall sleep well. What pleasure my mother will have!"

As he came to the last village on his road there stood a knife-grinder, with his barrow by the hedge, whirling his

wheel round and singing:

"Scissors and razors and suchlike I grind,
And gayly my rags are flying behind."

Hans stopped and looked at him, and at last he said, "You appear to have a good business, if I may judge by your merry song."

"Yes," answered the grinder, "this business has a golden bottom! A true knife-grinder is a man who as often as he puts his hand into his pocket feels money in it! But what a fine goose you have. Where did you buy it?"

"I did not buy it at all," said Hans, "but took it in exchange for my pig."

"And the pig?"

"I exchanged for my cow."

"And the cow?"

"I exchanged a horse for her."

"And the horse?"

"For him I gave a lump of gold as big as my head."

"And the gold?"

"That was my wages for seven years' servitude."

"And I see you have known how to benefit yourself each time," said the grinder; "but could you now manage to hear the money rattling in your pocket as you walked, your fortune would be made."

"Well! how shall I manage that?" said Hans.

"You must become a grinder like me. To this trade nothing peculiar belongs but a grindstone; the other necessaries find themselves. Here is one which is a little worn, certainly, and so I will not ask anything more for it than your goose. Are you agreeable?"

"How can you ask me?" said Hans. "Why, I shall be the luckiest man in the world. Having money as often as I dip my hand into my pocket, what have I to care about any longer?" So saying he handed over the goose and received the

grindstone in exchange.

"Now," said the grinder, picking up an ordinary big flint stone which lay near; "now, there you have a capital stone, upon which only beat them long enough and you may straighten all your old nails. Take it and use it carefully!"

Hans took the stone and walked on with a satisfied heart, his eyes glistening with joy. "I must have been born," said he, "to a heap of luck! Everything happens just as I wish, as if I were a Sunday child."

Soon, however, having been on his legs since daybreak, he began to feel very tired, and was plagued, too, with hunger, since he had eaten all his provision at once in his joy about the cow bargain. At last he felt quite unable to go farther, and was forced to halt every minute, for the stones encumbered him very much.

Just then the thought came to him, what a good thing it would be if he had no need to carry them any longer; and at the same moment he came to a stream. Here he resolved to rest and refresh himself with a drink, and so that the stones might not hurt him in kneeling he laid them carefully down by his side on the bank. This done, he stooped down to scoop up some water in his hand, and then it happened that he pushed one stone a little too far, so that both presently went plump into the water. As soon as Hans saw them sinking to the bottom he jumped up for joy, and then kneeled down and returned thanks, with tears in his eyes, that so mercifully, and without any act on his part, he had been delivered from the heavy stones, which alone hindered him from getting on.

"No other man under the sun," exclaimed Hans, "is so lucky as I am."

Then with a light heart, and free from every burden, he leaped gayly along until he reached his mother's house.

The Three Sluggards

The king of a country a long way off had three sons. He liked one as well as another, and did not know which to leave his kingdom to after his death; so when he was dying he called them all to him, and said, "Dear children, the laziest sluggard of the three shall be king after me."

"Then," said the eldest, "the kingdom is mine; for I am so lazy that when I lie down to sleep, if anything were to fall into my eyes so that I could not shut them, I should still go on sleeping."

The second said, "Father, the kingdom belongs to me; for I am so lazy that when I sit by the fire to warm myself, I would sooner have my toes burnt than take the trouble to draw my legs back."

The third said, "Father, the kingdom is mine; for I am so lazy that if I were going to be hanged, with the rope round my neck, and somebody were to put a sharp knife into my hands to cut it, I had rather be hanged than raise my hand to do it." When the father heard this, he said, "You shall be the king; for you are the fittest man."

Grimm's Fairy Tales

Edited by Frances Jenkins Olcott

Rapunzel

There was once a man and a woman, who had long in vain wished for a child. At length, the woman hoped that God was about to grant her desire.

These people had a little window at the back of their house from which a splendid garden could be seen. It was full of the most beautiful flowers and herbs. It was, however, surrounded by a high wall, and no one dared to go into it because it belonged to a Witch, who had great power and was dreaded by all the world.

One day, the woman was standing by this window and looking down into the garden, when she saw a bed which was planted with the most beautiful rampion (rapunzel), and it looked so fresh and green that she longed for it, and had the greatest desire to eat some.

This desire increased every day, and as she knew that she could not get any of it, she quite pined away, and looked pale and miserable.

Then her husband was alarmed, and asked, "What ails you, dear Wife?"

"Ah," she replied, "if I can't get some of the rampion to eat, which is in the garden behind our house, I shall die."

The man, who loved her, thought, "Sooner than let your wife die, bring her some of the rampion yourself, let it cost you what it will!"

In the twilight of evening, he clambered over the wall into the garden of the Witch, hastily clutched a handful of rampion, and took it to his wife. She at once made herself a salad of it, and ate it with much relish.

She, however, liked it so much—so very much—that the next day she longed for it three times as much as before. If he was to have any rest, her husband must once more descend into the garden. In the gloom of evening, therefore, he let himself down again. But when he had clambered down the wall he was terribly afraid, for he saw the Witch standing before him.

"How dare you," said she with angry look, "descend into my garden and steal my rampion like a thief? You shall suffer for it!"

"Ah," answered he, "let mercy take the place of justice! I had to do it out of necessity. My wife saw your rampion from the window, and felt such a longing for it that she would have died, if she had not got some to eat."

Then the Witch let her anger be softened, and said to him, "if the case be as you say, I will allow you to take away with you as much rampion as you will, only I make one condition, you must give me the child which your wife will bring into the world. It shall be well treated, and I will care for it like a mother."

The man in his terror consented to everything, and when the woman at last had a little daughter, the Witch appeared at once, gave the child the name of Rapunzel, and took it away with her.

Rapunzel grew into the most beautiful child beneath the sun. When she was twelve years old, the Witch shut her into a tower, which lay in a forest, and had neither stairs nor door. But quite at the top was a little window. When the Witch wanted to go in, she placed herself beneath this, and cried:

"Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
Let down thy hair."

Rapunzel had magnificent long hair, fine as spun gold, and when she heard the voice of the Witch, she unfastened her braided tresses and wound them round one of the hooks of

the window above. And then the hair fell twenty ells down, and the Witch climbed up by it.

After a year or two, it came to pass that the King's Son rode through the forest and went by the tower. Then he heard a song, which was so charming that he stood still and listened. This was Rapunzel, who in her solitude passed her time in letting her sweet voice resound.

The King's Son wanted to climb up to her, and looked for the door of the tower, but none was to be found. He rode home, but the singing had so deeply touched his heart, that every day he went out into the forest and listened to it.

Once when he was thus standing behind a tree, he saw that a Witch came there, and he heard how she cried:

"Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
Let down thy hair."

Then Rapunzel let down the braids of her hair, and the Witch climbed up to her.

"If that is the ladder by which one mounts, I will for once try my fortune," said he.

The next day when it began to grow dark, he went to the tower and cried:

"Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
Let down thy hair."

Immediately the hair fell down, and the King's Son climbed up.

At first Rapunzel was terribly frightened when a man, such as her eyes had never yet beheld, came to her. But the King's Son began to talk to her quite like a friend, and told her that his heart had been so stirred, that it had let him have no rest, so he had been forced to see her.

Then Rapunzel lost her fear, and when he asked her if she would take him for her husband, and she saw that he was young and handsome, she thought, "He will love me more

than old Dame Gothel does;" and she said yes, and laid her hand in his.

She said also, "I will willingly go away with you, but I do not know how to get down. Bring with you a skein of silk every time that you come, and I will weave a ladder with it. When that is ready I will descend, and you will take me on your horse."

They agreed that until that time, he should come to her every evening, for the old woman came by day. The Witch remarked nothing of this, until once Rapunzel said to her, "Tell me, Dame Gothel, how it happens that you are so much heavier for me to draw up, than the young King's Son—he is with me in a moment."

"Ah! you wicked Child!" cried the Witch. "What do I hear you say! I thought I had separated you from all the world, and yet you have deceived me!"

In her anger she clutched Rapunzel's beautiful tresses, wrapped them twice round her left hand, seized a pair of scissors with the right, and *snip, snap*, they were cut off, and the lovely braids lay on the ground. And she was so pitiless that she took poor Rapunzel into a desert, where she had to live in great grief and misery.

On the same day, however, that she cast out Rapunzel, the Witch, in the evening, fastened the braids of hair which she had cut off, to the hook of the window; and when the King's Son came and cried:

"Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
Let down thy hair,"

she let the hair down.

The King's Son ascended. He did not find his dearest Rapunzel above, but the Witch, who gazed at him with wicked and venomous looks.

"Aha!" she cried mockingly, "you would fetch your dearest! But the beautiful bird sits no longer singing in the nest.

The cat has got it, and will scratch out your eyes as well. Rapunzel is lost to you! You will never see her more!"

The King's Son was beside himself with grief and in his despair he leapt down from the tower. He escaped with his life, but the thorns into which he fell, pierced his eyes. Then he wandered quite blind about the forest, ate nothing but roots and berries, and did nothing but lament and weep over the loss of his dearest wife.

Thus he roamed about in misery for some years, and at length came to the desert where Rapunzel lived in wretchedness. He heard a voice, and it seemed so familiar to him that he went toward it. When he approached, Rapunzel knew him, and fell on his neck and wept. Two of her tears wetted his eyes and they grew clear again, and he could see with them as before.

He led her to his Kingdom where he was joyfully received, and they lived for a long time, happy and contented.

The Shoes That Were Danced to Pieces

There was once upon a time, a King who had twelve daughters, each one more beautiful than the other. They all slept together in one chamber, in which their beds stood side by side.

Every night, when they were in them, the King locked the door, and bolted it. But in the morning, when he unlocked the door, he saw that their shoes were worn out with dancing, and no one could find out how that had happened.

Then the King caused it to be proclaimed that whosoever could discover where they danced at night, should choose one of them for his wife and be King after his death. But that whosoever came forward and had not discovered it within three days and nights, should forfeit his life.

It was not long before a King's Son presented himself, and offered to undertake the enterprise. He was well received, and in the evening was led into a room adjoining the Princesses' sleeping-chamber. His bed was placed there, and he was to watch where they went and danced. And in order that they might do nothing secretly or go away to some other place, the door of their room was left open.

But the eyelids of the Prince grew heavy as lead, and he fell asleep.

When he awoke in the morning, all twelve had been to the dance, for their shoes were standing there with holes in the soles.

On the second and third nights it fell out just the same, and then his head was struck off without mercy. Many others came after this and undertook the enterprise, but all forfeited

their lives.

Now, it came to pass that a poor soldier, who had a wound, and could serve no longer, found himself on the road to the town where the King lived. There he met an Old Woman, who asked him where he was going.

"I hardly know myself," answered he, and added in jest, "I had half a mind to discover where the Princesses danced their shoes into holes, and thus become King."

"That is not so difficult," said the Old Woman, "you must not drink the wine which will be brought to you at night."

With that she gave him a little cloak, and said, "If you put on that, you will be invisible, and then you can steal after the twelve."

When the soldier had received this good advice, he took heart, went to the King, and announced himself as a suitor. He was as well received as the others, and royal garments were put upon him.

He was conducted that evening, at bedtime, into the outer-chamber, and as he was about to go to bed, the eldest came and brought him a cup of wine.

He lay down, but did not drink the wine.

The Twelve Princesses, in their chamber, laughed, and the eldest said, "He, too, might as well have saved his life."

With that they got up, opened wardrobes, presses, cupboards, and brought out pretty dresses; dressed themselves before the mirrors, sprang about, and rejoiced at the prospect of the dance.

Only the youngest said, "I know not how it is. You are very happy, but I feel strange. Some misfortune is certainly about to befall us."

"You are a goose, who are always frightened," said the eldest. "Have you forgotten how many King's Sons have already come here in vain? I had hardly any need to give the soldier a sleeping-draught. In any case, the clown would not have awakened."

When they were all ready, the eldest then went to her bed and tapped it.

It immediately sank into the earth; and one after the other they descended through the opening, the eldest going first.

The soldier, who had watched everything, tarried no longer, put on his little cloak, and went down last with the youngest. Half-way down the steps, he just trod a little on her dress.

She was terrified at that, and cried out, "What is that? who is pulling at my dress?"

"Don't be so silly!" said the eldest, "you have caught it on a nail."

Then they went all the way down, and when they were at the bottom, they were standing in a wonderfully pretty avenue of trees, all the leaves of which were of silver, and shone and glistened. The soldier thought, "I must carry a token away with me," and broke off a twig from one of them, on which the tree cracked with a loud report.

The youngest cried out again, "Something is wrong, did you hear the crack?"

But the eldest said, "It is a gun fired for joy, because we have got rid of our Prince so quickly."

After that they came into an avenue where all the leaves were of gold, and lastly into a third where they were of bright diamonds. He broke off a twig from each, which made such a crack each time that the youngest started back in terror, but the eldest still declared that they were salutes.

They went on and came to a great lake whereon stood twelve little boats, and in every boat sat a handsome Prince, all of whom were waiting for the Twelve Princesses. Each took one of them with him, but the soldier seated himself by the youngest.

Then her Prince said, "I can't tell why the boat is so much heavier to-day. I shall have to row with all my strength, if I am to get it across."

"What should cause that," said the youngest, "but the

warm weather? I feel very warm too."

On the opposite side of the lake stood a splendid, brightly-lit castle, from whence resounded the joyous music of trumpets and kettle-drums. They rowed thither, entered, and each Prince danced with the maiden he loved, but the soldier danced with them unseen. And when one of them had a cup of wine in her hand he drank it up, so that the cup was empty when she carried it to her mouth. The youngest was alarmed at this, but the eldest always made her be silent.

They danced there till three o'clock in the morning, when all the shoes were danced into holes, and they were forced to leave off. The Princes rowed them back again over the lake, and this time the soldier seated himself by the eldest. On the shore they took leave of their Princes, and promised to return the following night.

When they reached the stairs, the soldier ran on in front and lay down in his bed, and when the Twelve Princesses had come up slowly and wearily, he was already snoring so loudly that they could all hear him, and they said, "So far as he is concerned, we are safe."

They took off their beautiful dresses, laid them away, put the worn-out shoes under the bed, and lay down. Next morning, the soldier was resolved not to speak, but to watch the wonderful goings on, and that night again went with them. Then everything was done just as it had been done the first time, and they danced until their shoes were worn to pieces. But the third time, he took a cup away with him as a token.

When the hour had arrived for him to give his answer, he took the three twigs and the cup, and went to the King, but the Twelve Princesses stood behind the door, and listened for what he was going to say.

When the King put the question, "Where have my Twelve Daughters danced their shoes to pieces in the night?" he answered, "In an underground castle with Twelve Princes," and related how it had come to pass, and brought out

the tokens.

The King then summoned his daughters, and asked them if the soldier had told the truth, and when they saw that they were betrayed, and that falsehood would be of no avail, they were obliged to confess all.

Thereupon the King asked which of them he would have for his wife?

He answered, "I am no longer young, so give me the eldest."

Then the wedding was celebrated on the self-same day, and the kingdom was promised him after the King's death. But the Princes were bewitched for as many days more as they had danced nights with the Twelve.

The Nix of the Mill-Pond

There was once upon a time, a miller who lived with his wife in great contentment. They had money and land, and their prosperity increased year by year more and more. But ill-luck comes like a thief in the night, as their wealth had increased so did it again decrease, year by year.

At last the miller could hardly call the mill in which he lived his own. He was in great distress, and when he lay down after his day's work, found no rest, but full of care, tossed about in his bed.

One morning, he rose before daybreak and went out into the open air, thinking that perhaps there his heart might become lighter. As he was stepping over the mill-dam, the first sunbeam was just breaking forth, and he heard a rippling sound in the pond. He turned round and perceived a beautiful woman, rising slowly out of the water. Her long hair, which she was holding off her shoulders with her soft hands, fell down on both sides, and covered her white body.

He saw that she was the Nix of the Mill-pond, and in his fright did not know whether he should run away or stay where he was.

But the Nix made her sweet voice heard, called him by his name, and asked him why he was so sad? The miller was at first struck dumb, but when he heard her speak so kindly, he took heart, and told her how he had formerly lived in wealth and happiness, but that now he was so poor that he did not know what to do.

"Be easy," answered the Nix, "I will make you richer and happier than you have ever been before, only you must

promise to give me the young thing which has just been born in your house."

"What else can that be," thought the miller, "but a young puppy or kitten?" and he promised her what she desired.

The Nix descended into the water again, and he hurried back to his mill, consoled and in good spirits. He had not yet reached it, when the maid-servant came out of the house, and cried to him to rejoice, for his wife had a little boy. The miller stood as if struck by lightning. He saw very well that the cunning Nix had been aware of it, and had cheated him.

Hanging his head, he went up to his wife's bedside and when she said, "Why do you not rejoice over the fine boy?" he told her what had befallen him, and what kind of a promise he had given to the Nix. "Of what use to me are riches and prosperity?" he added, "if I am to lose my child; but what can I do?"

Even the relations, who had come thither to wish them joy, did not know what to say. In the meantime prosperity again returned to the miller's house. All that he undertook succeeded; it was as if presses and coffers filled themselves of their own accord, and as if money multiplied nightly in the cupboards. It was not long before his wealth was greater than it had ever been before. But he could not rejoice over it untroubled, the bargain which he had made with the Nix tormented his soul.

Whenever he passed the mill-pond, he feared she might ascend and remind him of his debt. He never let the boy himself go near the water. "Beware," he said to him, "if you do but touch the water, a hand will rise, seize you, and draw you down."

But as year after year went by, and the Nix did not show herself again, the miller began to feel at ease. The boy grew up to be a youth and was apprenticed to a huntsman. When he had learnt everything, and had become an excellent huntsman, the lord of the village took him into his service. In

the village lived a beautiful and true-hearted maiden, who pleased the huntsman. When his master perceived that, he gave him a little house, the two were married, lived peacefully and happily, and loved each other with all their hearts.

One day, the huntsman was chasing a roe. And when the animal turned aside from the forest into the open country, he pursued it and at last shot it. He did not notice that he was now in the neighborhood of the dangerous mill-pond, and went, after he had disembowelled the stag, to the water, in order to wash his blood-stained hands.

Scarcely, however, had he dipped them in than the Nix ascended, smilingly wound her dripping arms around him, and drew him quickly down under the waves, which closed over him.

When it was evening, and the huntsman did not return home, his wife grew alarmed. She went out to seek him, and as he had often told her that he had to be on his guard against the snares of the Nix, and dared not venture into the neighborhood of the mill-pond, she already suspected what had happened. She hastened to the water, and when she found his hunting-pouch lying on the shore, she could no longer have any doubt of the misfortune.

Lamenting her sorrow, and wringing her hands, she called on her beloved by name, but in vain. She hurried across to the other side of the pond, and called him anew. She reviled the Nix with harsh words, but no answer followed. The surface of the water remained calm, only the crescent moon stared steadily back at her. The poor woman did not leave the pond. With hasty steps, she paced round and round it, without resting a moment, sometimes in silence, sometimes uttering a loud cry, sometimes softly sobbing. At last her strength came to an end, she sank down to the ground and fell into a heavy sleep.

Presently a dream took possession of her. She was anxiously climbing upward between great masses of rock.

Thorns and briars caught her feet, the rain beat in her face, and the wind tossed her long hair about. When she had reached the summit, quite a different sight presented itself to her. The sky was blue, the air soft, the ground sloped gently downward, and on a green meadow, gay with flowers of every color, stood a pretty cottage. She went up to it and opened the door. There sat an Old Woman with white hair, who beckoned to her kindly.

At that very moment, the poor woman awoke, day had already dawned, and she at once resolved to act in accordance with her dream. She laboriously climbed the mountain. Everything was exactly as she had seen it in the night. The Old Woman received her kindly, and pointed out a chair on which she might sit. "You must have met with a misfortune," she said, "since you have sought out my lonely cottage."

With tears, the woman related what had befallen her.

"Be comforted," said the Old Woman, "I will help you. Here is a Golden Comb for you. Tarry till the full moon has risen, then go to the mill-pond, seat yourself on the shore, and comb your long black hair with this comb. When you have done, lay it down on the bank, and you will see what will happen."

The woman returned home, but the time till the full moon came, passed slowly. At last the shining disc appeared in the heavens, then she went out to the mill-pond, sat down and combed her long black hair with the Golden Comb. When she had finished, she laid it down at the water's edge.

It was not long before there was a movement in the depths, a wave rose, rolled to the shore, and bore the comb away with it.

In not more than the time necessary for the comb to sink to the bottom, the surface of the water parted, and the head of the huntsman arose. He did not speak, but looked at his wife with sorrowful glances. At the same instant, a second wave came rushing up, and covered the man's head. All had

vanished, the mill-pond lay peaceful as before, and nothing but the face of the full moon shone on it.

Full of sorrow, the woman went back, but again the dream showed her the cottage of the Old Woman. Next morning, she again set out and complained of her woes to the Wise Woman.

The Old Woman gave her a Golden Flute, and said, "Tarry till the full moon comes again, then take this flute. Play a beautiful air on it, and when you have finished, lay it on the sand. Then you will see what will happen."

The wife did as the old woman told her. No sooner was the flute lying on the sand, than there was a stirring in the depths, and a wave rushed up and bore the flute away with it.

Immediately afterward the water parted, and not only the head of the man, but half of his body also arose. He stretched out his arms longingly toward her. But a second wave came up, covered him, and drew him down again.

"Alas, what does it profit me?" said the unhappy woman, "that I should see my beloved, only to lose him again!"

Despair filled her heart anew, but the dream led her a third time to the house of the Old Woman. She set out, and the Wise Woman gave her a Golden Spinning-Wheel, consoled her and said, "All is not yet fulfilled, tarry until the time of the full moon. Then take the spinning-wheel, seat yourself on the shore, and spin the spool full. When you have done that, place the spinning-wheel near the water, and you will see what will happen."

The woman obeyed all she said exactly. As soon as the full moon showed itself, she carried the Golden Spinning-Wheel to the shore, and span industriously until the flax came to an end, and the spool was quite filled with the threads. No sooner was the wheel standing on the shore than there was a more violent movement than before in the depths of the pond, and a mighty wave rushed up, and bore the wheel away with it.

Immediately the head and the whole body of the man rose into the air, in a water-spout. He quickly sprang to the shore, caught his wife by the hand and fled.

But they had scarcely gone a very little distance, when the whole pond rose with a frightful roar, and streamed out over the open country. The fugitives already saw death before their eyes, when the woman in her terror implored the help of the Old Woman, and in an instant they were transformed, she into a Toad, he into a Frog.

The flood which had overtaken them could not destroy them, but it tore them apart and carried them far away.

When the water had dispersed and they both touched dry land again, they regained their human form, but neither knew where the other was. They found themselves among strange people, who did not know their native land. High mountains and deep valleys lay between them. In order to keep themselves alive, they were both obliged to tend sheep.

For many long years, they drove their flocks through field and forest and were full of sorrow and longing. When spring had once more broken forth on the earth, one day they both went out with their flocks, and as chance would have it, they drew near each other. They met in a valley, but did not recognize each other. Yet they rejoiced that they were no longer so lonely. Henceforth they every day drove their flocks to the same place. They did not speak much, but they felt comforted.

One evening when the full moon was shining in the sky, and the sheep were already at rest, the shepherd pulled the flute out of his pocket, and played on it a beautiful but sorrowful air. When he had finished, he saw that the shepherdess was weeping bitterly.

"Why are you weeping?" he asked.

"Alas," answered she, "thus shone the full moon when I played this air on the flute for the last time, and the head of my beloved rose out of the water."

He looked at her, and it seemed as if a veil fell from his eyes, and he recognized his dear wife. And when she looked at him, and the moon shone in his face she knew him also. They embraced and kissed each other, and no one need ask if they were happy.

Maid Maleen

There was once a King who had a son who asked in marriage the daughter of a mighty King. She was called Maid Maleen, and was very beautiful. As her father wished to give her to another, the Prince was rejected.

But since they both loved each other with all their hearts, they would not give each other up, and Maid Maleen said to her father, "I can and will take no other for my husband."

Then the King flew into a passion, and ordered a dark tower to be built, into which no ray of sunlight or moonlight should enter. When it was finished, he said, "Therein shall you be imprisoned for seven years, and then I will come and see if your perverse spirit is broken."

Meat and drink for the seven years were carried into the tower; and then she and her waiting-woman were led into it and walled up, and thus cut off from the sky and from the earth. There they sat in the darkness, and knew not when day or night began. The King's Son often went round and round the tower, and called their names, but no sound from without pierced through the thick walls. What else could they do but lament and complain?

Meanwhile, the time passed, and by the small amount of food and drink left they knew that the seven years were coming to an end. They thought the moment of their deliverance was come. But no stroke of the hammer was heard, no stone fell out of the wall, and it seemed to Maid Maleen that her father had forgotten her. As they had food for only a short time longer, and saw a miserable death awaiting them, Maid Maleen said, "We must try our last chance, and see if we can

break through the wall."

She took the bread-knife, and picked and bored at the mortar of a stone, and when she was tired, the waiting-maid took her turn. With great labor they succeeded in getting out one stone, then a second, and third. And when three days were over, the first ray of light fell on their darkness, and at last the opening was so large that they could look out.

The sky was blue, and a fresh breeze played on their faces; but how melancholy everything looked all around! Her father's castle lay in ruins, the town and the villages were, so far as could be seen, destroyed by fire, the fields far and wide laid to waste, and no human being was visible.

When the opening in the wall was large enough for them to slip through, the waiting-maid sprang down first, and then Maid Maleen followed. But where were they to go? The enemy had ravaged the whole kingdom, driven away the King, and slain all the inhabitants. They wandered forth to seek another country, but nowhere did they find a shelter, or a human being to give them a mouthful of bread. Their need was so great that they were forced to appease their hunger with nettle-plants.

When, after long journeying, they came into another country, they tried to get work everywhere. But wherever they knocked they were turned away, and no one would have pity on them.

At last they arrived in a large city and went to the royal palace. There also they were ordered to go away, but at last the cook said that they might stay in the kitchen and be scullions.

The King's Son in whose kingdom they were, was, however, the very man who had been betrothed to Maid Maleen. His father had chosen another Bride for him, whose face was as ugly as her heart was wicked. The wedding was fixed, and the girl had already arrived. Because of her great ugliness, however, she shut herself in her room, and allowed no one to

see her, and Maid Maleen had to take her her meals from the kitchen.

When the day came for the Bride and the Bridegroom to go to church, she was ashamed of her ugliness, and afraid that if she showed herself in the streets, she would be mocked and laughed at by the people. Then said she to Maid Maleen, "A great piece of luck has befallen you. I have sprained my foot, and cannot walk through the streets. You shall put on my wedding-clothes and take my place. A greater honor than that you cannot have!"

Maid Maleen, however, refused it, and said, "I wish for no honor which is not suitable for me."

It was in vain, too, that the Bride offered her gold. At last she said angrily, "If you do not obey me, it shall cost you your life. I have but to speak the word, and your head will lie at your feet."

Then she was forced to obey, and put on the Bride's magnificent clothes and all her jewels. When she entered the royal hall, every one was amazed at her great beauty, and the King said to his son, "This is the Bride whom I have chosen for you, and whom you must lead to church."

The Bridegroom was astonished, and thought, "She is like my Maid Maleen, and I should believe that it was she herself, but she has long been shut up in the tower or dead."

He took her by the hand and led her to church. On the way was a nettle-plant, and she said:

"Nettle-plant, Nettle-plant,
Nettle-plant so small!
What are you doing here,
Alone by the wall?
I have the time known,
When unroasted, unboiled,
I ate thee alone!"

"What are you saying?" asked the King's Son.

"Nothing," she replied, "I was only thinking of Maid Maleen."

He was surprised that she knew about her, but kept silence. When they came to the foot-plank into the churchyard, she said:

"Foot-bridge, break not,
I am not the true Bride."

"What are you saying there?" asked the King's Son.

"Nothing," she replied, "I was only thinking of Maid Maleen."

When they came to the church-door, she said once more:

"Church-door, break not,
I am not the true Bride."

"What are you saying there?" asked he.

"Ah," she answered, "I was only thinking of Maid Maleen."

Then he took out a precious chain, put it round her neck, and fastened the clasp. Thereupon they entered the church, and the priest joined their hands together before the altar, and married them. He led her home, but she did not speak a single word the whole way.

When they got back to the royal palace, she hurried into the Bride's chamber, put off the magnificent clothes and the jewels, dressed herself in her gray gown, and kept nothing but the jewel on her neck, which she had received from the Bridegroom.

When the night came, and the Bride was to be led into the apartment of the King's Son, she let her veil fall over her face, that he might not observe the deception.

As soon as every one had gone away, he said to her, "What did you say to the nettle-plant which was growing by the wayside?"

"To which nettle-plant?" asked she; "I don't talk to

nettle-plants."

"If you did not do it, then you are not the true Bride," said he.

So she bethought herself, and said:

"I must go my maid to see,
Who keeps my secret thoughts for me."

She went out and sought Maid Maleen. "Girl, what have you been saying to the nettle?"

"I said nothing but:

"Nettle-plant, Nettle-plant,
Nettle-plant so small!
What are you doing here,
Alone by the wall?
I have the time known,
When unroasted, unboiled,
I ate thee alone!"

The Bride ran back into the chamber, and said, "I know now what I said to the nettle," and she repeated the words which she had just heard.

"But what did you say to the foot-bridge when we went over it?" asked the King's Son.

"To the foot-bridge?" she answered. "I don't talk to foot-bridges."

"Then you are not the true Bride."

She again said:

"I must go my maid to see,
Who keeps my secret thoughts for me,"

and ran out and found Maid Maleen. "Girl, what did you say to the foot-bridge?"

"I said nothing but:

"Foot-bridge, break not,

I am not the true Bride."

"That costs you your life!" cried the Bride, but she hurried into the room, and said, "I know now what I said to the foot-bridge," and she repeated the words.

"But what did you say to the church-door?"

"To the church-door?" she replied; "I don't talk to church-doors."

"Then you are not the true Bride."

She went out and found Maid Maleen, and said, "Girl, what did you say to the church-door?"

"I said nothing but:

"Church-door, break not,
I am not the true Bride."

"That will break your neck for you!" cried the Bride, and flew into a terrible passion, but she hastened back into the room, and said, "I know now what I said to the church-door," and she repeated the words.

"But where have you the jewel which I gave you at the church-door?"

"What jewel?" she answered; "you did not give me any jewel."

"I myself put it round your neck, and I myself fastened it. If you do not know that, you are not the true Bride."

He drew the veil from her face, and when he saw her ugliness, he sprang back terrified, and said, "How come you here? Who are you?"

"I am your betrothed Bride, but because I feared lest the people should mock me when they saw me out of doors, I commanded the scullery-maid to dress herself in my clothes, and to go to church instead of me."

"Where is the girl?" said he; "I want to see her, go and bring her here."

She went out and told the servants that the scullery-maid

was an impostor, and that they must take her out into the courtyard and strike off her head.

The servants laid hold of Maid Maleen and wanted to drag her out, but she screamed so loudly for help, that the King's Son heard her voice, hurried out of his chamber and ordered them to set the maiden free.

Lights were brought, and then he saw on her neck the gold chain which he had given her at the church-door.

"You are the true Bride," said he, "who went with me to church. Come with me now to my room."

When they were both alone, he said, "On the way to the church you did name Maid Maleen, who was my betrothed Bride. If I could believe it possible, I should think she was standing before me—you are like her in every respect."

She answered, "I am Maid Maleen, who for your sake was imprisoned seven years in the darkness, who suffered hunger and thirst, and has lived so long in want and poverty. To-day, however, the sun is shining on me once more. I was married to you in the church, and I am your lawful wife."

Then they kissed each other, and were happy all the days of their lives.

The tower in which Maid Maleen had been imprisoned remained standing for a long time, and when the children passed by it, they sang:

"Kling, klang, gloria.
Who sits within this tower?
A King's Daughter, she sits within,
A sight of her I cannot win,
The wall it will not break,
The stone cannot be pierced.
Little Hans, with your coat so gay,
Follow me, follow me, fast as you may."

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