

Restoring the Art of Storytelling in the Home

HOW TO TELL STORIES · SAMPLER OF STORIES TO TELL

MARLENE PETERSON

Restoring the Art of
Storytelling
in the Home
(Revised)

Marlene Peterson

LIBRARIES OF HOPE

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Email: support@librariesofhope.com

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Dedicated to

The Greatest Generation

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Restoring the Art of Storytelling in the Home

Introduction

It only seems fitting to open a book on storytelling with a story. The story I know best is my own. I find myself on a wonderful journey with many unexpected detours and surprising destinations. The seeds of this book were planted in my heart many years ago when my mother told me a story of Jane Addams. When Jane was a little girl, she rode with her father in his carriage through neighborhoods of abject poverty. Children dressed in ragged clothes ran around trash strewn yards. Everywhere she looked she saw broken windows and broken doors dangling on their hinges. She sadly asked him why people lived that way. He said they didn't know anything better. When she grew up, she bought a big home right in the middle of a poor neighborhood and lined its walls with beautiful art and filled it with inspiring and ennobling ideas. Everyone was welcome in her home, where, with love and dedicated purpose, she lifted them to where they could see life from higher places. They, in turn, went home and cleaned up their own yards and swept their own porches.

I don't present myself as anyone other than who I am. I am not an expert in storytelling. I am a grandmother who has lived long enough to recognize that our world is heading in a dangerous direction and I have read enough history to know that its course can be corrected by holding to principles grounded in Truth and Light. Ideas and ideals, not war and

weapons, determine the destinies of civilizations.

My group of mentors and trainers is comprised of about twenty-five new storytelling friends of a hundred years ago. I carefully studied their writings and have tried to assimilate and pass along the wisdom I learned from them. Many of the ideas cannot be attributed to a single writer but rather to many of them. I suggest you conduct your own experiments to verify their words. Apply the principles learned and see from your own experience—your own story—if they are true and correct.

While storytelling has seen a new revival in the last thirty to forty years, it has yet to reach where it can do the most good—the home. Many of the storytelling festivals springing up nationwide don't include children under eight years old. Much of the training is aimed at professional storytellers or for using stories in business, education or healthcare. Yet, in times past, the art of storytelling yielded its greatest masterpieces by the fireside while the listener was held close to a mother's heart.

May there be a new revival in the art of storytelling among mothers and fathers, grandparents, aunts and uncles who have guardianship over the hearts of our rising generation. To that end, this book is dedicated. It is my sincere desire that new story groups will form for the intent of practicing and perfecting the art. Two things have been lacking—a beginner's guide to using the art at home, and access to simple stories that work well for telling. I hope this book can fill that need. The stories gathered in this book serve as a wonderful introductory tutorial. Soon, you will be finding, creating and adapting your own stories as you become an interpreter of life.

One of my new storytelling friends said she would rather be a teller of stories to children than be the Queen's favorite or serve in the King's court.

I wholeheartedly agree.

I hope your life and the lives of your families will be lifted to higher places through storytelling as it has lifted mine. I sign this introduction as many of my storytelling friends signed theirs,

Affectionately,
Your Friend,
Marlene Peterson
July 11, 2012

PART ONE

Restoring the Art of Storytelling in the Home

The Power of a Story

When my son-in-law deployed overseas for a year, I went with my daughter and their four little girls to see him off at the deployment ceremony. Six-year-old Kayleigh had been dreading the moment because she adores her daddy and couldn't imagine having him gone for a whole year. When it came time for him to leave, she put her arms around his neck and hugged him for a very long time. As he turned to board the bus, all the tears she had been fighting back broke free and she sobbed as though her little heart would break.

I watched her for a moment and then knelt down on the ground, put my arms around her and quietly whispered a little story into her ear. I told her of another little girl whose father had to go off to war. She hurt so much because she missed him and didn't know what she would do without him. But then she thought about how proud she was of her daddy; that he was brave and strong and loved his country so much, that he was willing to go. In fact, she was so proud of him that everywhere she went, she told people, "My daddy is a soldier." And then, one day he came home and put his arms around her and hugged her tightly and she was so happy.

That's all there was to the story. When I finished, Kayleigh wiped the tears off her face and stood up tall, waving at the bus until it was out of sight. When we got home, instinctively she stapled a few pieces of paper together to make a little book to work out the story of the day in drawings. On the cover, she drew a picture of herself with the little necklace her father gave her to think of him. She remembered that the wind was

blowing and so she drew her hair blowing off to the side. And just in case anyone was wondering, she designated, "This is a troo book."

On the next page was a drawing of the two of them facing each other. They both had tears on their faces. That page was followed with a picture of the bus with an arrow pointing to exactly where her dad was sitting. The dark clouds were hanging low in the sky and it had started to rain. Then she drew a picture of the bus driving off with its headlights on. The last picture was of her and two of her sisters dressed up as three little witches for the Halloween party that night. The baby was dressed up as a little black cat. It was her way of saying that life goes on.

I watched her over the next few days find opportunities to tell grownups, "You know what? My daddy is a soldier." They were always so warm and gracious that soon she didn't need to say it anymore.

This is the power of a story. Stories help us sort through raw emotion and make sense of life. With this simple story, Kayleigh was able to identify the emotion she was feeling as well as find comfort in the shared experience with another little girl. It suggested an action she could take and gave hope of a happy outcome. Without story, we remain trapped in emotions for which there is no release. Stories help us see clearly so we can find resolution to challenges we face.

Stories are also the means by which we carry facts and information from our minds into our hearts. If you tell a child that $2 + 2 = 4$, it doesn't mean anything by itself. But when you connect it to a story—"If you have two apples and I give you two more, how many apples will you have?"—the concept now makes perfect sense. Textbooks usually contain facts and information that have been stripped of all its stories. That's why you don't want to curl up in front of the fire with a good

textbook.

Most of the time in school is spent trying to get information to stick. Trying to get the mind to retain information that the heart doesn't care about is like pouring water over a duck's back. However, if you engage, inspire and ignite the heart first, you replace the duck feathers with a sponge that can't soak in enough information. I didn't care about any of the facts in my textbooks about the Civil War until I read *Gone With the Wind*. Reading the story about life during the war made the information and facts come alive and become relevant. The story provided something to which information could be attached.

Engaging the heart is the function of story.

We operate our lives from the stories that are stored in our hearts. If, on the first day of school, all your classmates run up to you on the playground and want to wear the same kind of shoes you are wearing because you are so cool, and they all pick you first to be on their teams, and the teacher can't stop gushing over what a brilliant student you are, those are stories that go into your story reservoir. On the other hand, if the moment you step on the playground all the kids call you Four Eyes and not only pick you last for their team, they moan and groan because they are stuck with you, and the teacher covers all your papers in red, those are also stories that go into your story reservoir. How excited you are to get up and go to school in the morning when your alarm clock goes off depends entirely upon which stories you are operating from.

If you happen to be the unfortunate second student, your mom or the teacher may try to reason with you and tell you how important school is and why you *should* be enjoying it. But those reasons fed to your mind are not going to be able to override the story playing out in your heart. Only a different

story can replace the story that's driving you.

It is our hearts that drive our actions, not our minds. If our minds were in control, we would always choose kale chips over chocolate chips. The Proverb doesn't say, "As a man thinketh, so is he," it says, "As he thinketh in *his heart*, so is he."

So if it's our hearts that see clearly and it's our hearts that drive our actions, and stories are what carry ideas into our hearts, we can start to see why one of the most powerful forces in the world is a story. Every conflict in the world today can be traced back to a belief in a story. Propaganda and gossip is storytelling gone bad and has brought down nations and ruined countless individual lives.

Jesus had just three brief years of an earthly ministry, yet he chose to spend his time telling stories of lost sheep and returning prodigal sons and good Samaritans; of friends laying down lives for friends and a kingdom not of this world where beauty, love and justice rule. From this small body of stories, Christianity spread throughout the world and became a force for good and hope among millions of people.

I heard of a professor who conducted an experiment on the influence of stories. He had spent many years as a therapist and was alarmed that children were having serious bouts of depression at younger and younger ages. He saw children as young as eight and nine years old contemplating suicide. In an effort to discover what may be influencing these disturbing thought patterns, he visited some local ninth grades and inquired what was on their required reading list. He found they were reading the typical ninth-grade fare—*Romeo and Juliet* and *Lord of the Flies*; not exactly feel-good books.

He proposed an experiment to the teachers where they would have half of their classes keep reading these books while the other half would read uplifting, inspirational books.

He asked that they make note of any differences between the two groups. Over the course of the next several weeks, the contrast between the two groups was remarkable. The teachers said the students who were reading the positive literature were more respectful of each other, more responsible in their school work and overall had happier attitudes.

A certain man had a friend who was a beekeeper. Upon visiting him one day, he found his friend in great despair. "I'm ruined," he said. "All my honey is bitter." The man thought for a moment and then suggested they get up early in the morning and follow the swarm of bees to see what they were feeding on, which they did. They found them at an old abandoned bottling factory where, out back were barrels of rotting, gooey, icky syrups from which the bees were filling their little pollen sacs and flying back to the hives. The man simply offered, "Change what your bees are feeding on and you will change the quality of your honey."

What stories are our children feeding on?

As I came to realize the power of stories, I started paying more attention to who the storytellers of the world are today. Moms and dads around the fireside have been replaced by makers of movies and video games and writers of books. The world my grandchildren are growing up in is not the same world I raised my children in. Traditional values of faith, freedom, patriotism, family, and virtue are disappearing from the mainstream. I don't find these values in the books on public library shelves anymore. They don't seem to take a prominent role in the public schools. If you believe they are worth holding on to, as I do, it is up to us to preserve them in our homes.

To that end, several years ago, I had an idea to create a small library of books for young people that would be filled with ideas that would give them hope. It was to be a "library of hope." I love to read biographies of great men and women.

A common thread in their lives was that at some point, usually when they were young, they had free access to a wonderful library of books filled with noble and inspiring ideas. More often than not, the library was in a home. There were no prescribed reading or study guides or questions. They just read and asked their own questions.

With millions of titles to choose from, I had no idea how I would begin to make selections for this little library. And who was I to even suggest titles? The idea seemed crazy. Nevertheless, I started searching and soon discovered a Golden Age of children's literature written between the years 1880 to 1920. If I had to choose just one word to describe these writers, it would be "inspired." I found so much wisdom woven into the stories they wrote for young people about history, science, great lives, nature, art and music—wisdom that would give great hope and make lives happier. I was excited to republish it and get it back into the hands of families.

But I ran into a problem. Many young people today aren't reading books, especially old books without pictures. The books they are willing to read need to be highly entertaining, even shocking. How could my old books compete with movies and video games and iPads? There just had to be a way to start bringing today's young people down from their sugar high where they could slow down and ponder and *feel*. I felt like I had a locked treasure chest and the key was missing.

Then one day when I was visiting out of town, I was heading out the door to go to dinner with my family when I felt an urgent pull to take a minute and look at something on the internet. I went downstairs and pulled up Internet Archives where I spend most of my time and said out loud, "I have no idea what I'm looking for." Immediately, a key word came to my mind which I entered and a list of books came up that I

started scrolling through. As I came to one title, it seemed to jump out at me. It's not the most exciting title I've ever seen—*The Use of Story in Religious Education* written by Margaret Eggleston in 1920—but as I opened it and started to read, I knew this was the key I had been looking for.

Before I went to bed that night, I discovered that a hundred years ago there had been a revival in the ageless and beautiful art of storytelling among mothers and teachers of young children. This revival wasn't about reading stories from books. It was about putting the book down and telling stories by heart. Storytelling has been used successfully all over the world and throughout history to pass along values, culture and life lessons from generation to generation because a story that is told reaches deeper in the heart than a story that is merely read.

Telling stories by heart is the gateway to reading.

With access to a plentiful supply of books in the early 1900s, the art of *telling* stories was disappearing. A wonderful circle of warm-hearted storytellers recognized the importance of restoring the art, in part, to keep a love of reading alive. Story groups were formed across the nation for the purpose of getting together and practicing the art. Many books of instructions were published along with stories to tell. Perhaps it is nothing more than coincidence, but what followed has come to be described as "The Greatest Generation."

We are living "in the best of times and the worst of times." Technological advances give us the possibility of achieving a level of learning never before dreamed of in the world. However, with so much to view and choose from, we are seeing a generation that skims information and glances at images at a lightning-fast pace. The term "scatterbrained" comes to mind.

Although the following observation was made a hundred years ago, it correctly identifies the fallout of our current

culture:

> "[It is] a grave mistake to permit a child to become dependent on being amused. Nervous, restless adults who cannot endure a moment alone are the product of these early years of over-excitement and of mental starvation. They have no richness of life within themselves, no reserve of thought-power, no dream-stuff out of which to build a world. They have not received their heritage of the spiritual thought of the race which is embodied in great literature."

Creating a reservoir of thought and dream-stuff and a "richness of life within" all starts with a story. As I immersed myself in the writings of my circle of new storytelling friends and caught the vision of the power of storytelling, I couldn't help but wonder:

What will happen if we restore the art of storytelling in our homes today?

1 - We will see a new generation of readers.

Our schools take the business of teaching reading very seriously, yet despite the hundreds of millions of dollars spent on developing reading programs and methodologies, reading scores continue to plummet. Not only can Johnny still not read, Johnny doesn't even *want* to read.

The educators of a hundred years ago understood you can't teach reading by starting with the mechanics of reading like we do today. They knew they had to prime the pump first; they had to engage, inspire and ignite the heart and the way to do that was through telling an abundance of stories.

As children listen to stories, several things are happening that prepare them for reading. Rather than providing images for them, listening to stories trains their minds to create their own images from words. The images we create for ourselves

are usually more satisfying than the images created by someone else. Think of how many times you have read a book and were disappointed by the movie. Stories help children become comfortable in the world of words and language. Their vocabulary increases. They start to build a pool of ideas to apply to future reading. Listening helps develop the critical habit of concentration and focus. In our world of Sesame-Street-size sound bites, our kids are losing the ability to sustain thought long enough to wrap their minds around a single idea.

One school district threw out all their Charles Dickens books because the sentences were too long and the words were too hard. Their students were no longer capable of reading them. While our children struggle to read *Little Bear* at age six, yesterday's children were reading—and loving—*Don Quixote*, *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Arabian Nights* at the same age.

The most important thing that happens when a child listens to stories is it makes him hungry to get at more stories. What the heart longs for, it finds a way to achieve. Among those whose childhoods are filled with stories is found a pattern of children who don't remember ever being taught how to read; they just start reading and they can't read enough. Perhaps learning to read is as natural as learning to speak for many children when we provide the right environment.

The greatest repository of stories is found in books. Through books, our children are able to see life through a thousand different eyes rather than the limited view of their own experiences. As they become familiar with the variety of stories from which people operate their lives, they develop greater empathy and understanding. They dream more of possibilities for their own lives. As Thomas Carlyle said, "All that mankind has done, thought, gained or been: it is lying as in magic preservation in the pages of books."

Storytelling unlocks the treasure.

2 - We will see a new generation filled with hope.

Hope is what keeps us moving forward. Hope is the assurance that, no matter how dismal the present may look, there are better things ahead. Each age faces its own set of challenges and we are no different. We need to raise a generation whose hearts will not fail in the middle of difficulties and who will keep focused on the possibilities ahead. Their ability to maintain hope will be in direct proportion to how broad and how deep their reservoir of stories is from which they can draw.

For example, I had worked long and hard to prepare a presentation. When it was over, I felt like I had failed to deliver the message I had hoped to give. Some people love to be in front of people; I'm not one of them. So when I came home, I wanted to curl up in a corner and hide from the world. I had serious thoughts of never accepting another speaking engagement. I threw myself a wonderful pity party for most of the afternoon.

But then the story of Verdi, the great Italian operatic composer, came to my mind. His magnificent talent was discovered while he was a young man and he was placed under contract to compose three operas. He was on top of the world. He had a wife whom he adored, two beautiful little children and the opportunity to earn his livelihood doing what he loved to do.

Within a period of two months, first one child died, then the other. Soon, even his beloved wife was gone. He fell into deep despair, yet he had an opera to write. He pushed through the grief, wrote the opera, and the opera bombed. He seriously entertained thoughts of never writing another note of music. It was said he returned to the village of his childhood and spent his time telling stories to the children which began to heal his heart. When he was approached about writing a new

opera, he hesitatingly agreed. This new opera became the first of a long string of brilliant successes.

Remembering this story had several effects on me, the immediate one being that just by realizing someone else shared my feelings of discouragement completely released the emotion. Thinking of his circumstances placed my own in proper perspective. I hadn't just lost my entire family. Why was I feeling so sorry for myself? And I was reminded once again how many great successes are preceded by a failure; that the darkest hour of the night is just before dawn. Thinking about these ideas gave me hope and a desire to try again. I woke up the next morning to a new idea that made me excited to move forward once more.

There's an old saying, "What's down in the well comes up in the bucket." You can't draw from a story that's not there. What happens when we try to operate our lives from a puddle of stories? We see the answer to that question every day in the news of people who take desperate measures because they find themselves locked in raw emotion for which there is no story to help find a way through.

The opposite of hope is fear. Fear is paralyzing and immobilizing. By giving our children an abundance of stories to draw from, no matter what life may throw at them—loss of a loved one, rejection, financial reverses, disabilities, betrayal, addictions—they will find a story to draw from to show them possibilities of how to overcome the difficulty. When they hear a story of someone who has overcome greater challenges than what they face, the response is often, "If they can do it, so can I."

And that's the promise of hope.

3 - We will see a new generation of strong moral courage.

Much of the suffering and heartache of today can be

traced to moral laws that have been broken. Corruption, greed, dishonesty, infidelity, selfishness and excessiveness are behind many of the problems we face as a nation and as a world. John Adams warned, "The only foundation of a free Constitution, is pure Virtue, and if this cannot be inspired into our People, in a greater measure than they have it now, they may change their Rulers, and the forms of Government, but they will not obtain a lasting Liberty." While many people in America are crying for a return to small government, we aren't hearing much of the other side of the equation—that only a people capable of governing themselves are capable of living in freedom.

Morality and virtue cannot be forced on anyone; it cannot be legislated; it cannot be instilled by a system of rewards and punishments. Virtue must be chosen by individual hearts. Stories allow the heart to clearly see behaviors from which to choose. If we want our children to grow up to be "good," we must show them what "good" looks like. And we need to make "good" look appealing.

As an example, many Native American tribes were remarkably successful in raising virtuous children. They never told their children to do anything without first telling a story to demonstrate why the behavior was important and desirable. Most of their stories were wrapped in nature so that everywhere they turned, they were reminded of the stories they had learned. It was often the aged and wise elders—the grandparents—who took upon the role of storyteller. This methodology produced a people of high moral courage who had a reverence for life and who honored and respected their elders.

The effectiveness of this method is demonstrated in an experience told by one of the storytellers of yesteryear. One day she went to visit a friend and when she walked in the front door, she could hear her friend's six-year-old son, John,

upstairs kicking and screaming and throwing things. The mother explained that he had disobeyed one time too many and had been sent to his room without his supper. The storyteller asked if she could go upstairs and see if there was something she could do. The mother didn't think it would do any good but agreed to let her try.

As she entered the bedroom, she found John curled up in a heap at the foot of the bed. He didn't even look up at her. She seated herself on the floor and proceeded to say, "I think I'll tell you a story. You needn't listen, of course. Away up in the far north where it is very, very cold, there lived a little boy who had a sled. Now, he didn't pull this sled with a rope. Oh, no. He hitched up four little dogs and how they would fly over the snow." By this time, John was facing her and had stopped kicking.

Slowly and quietly, the storyteller unfolded the story of little Jimmy Standby of Labrador who had stood by the dogs all through the night and the day in the bitter cold because he had *promised* Dr. Grenfell he would stand by. As the story progressed, John crept closer and closer to her until he had crawled up in her lap, his face eagerly looking into her face as he followed Jimmy Standby to the very end.

When the storyteller stood up to leave, John said, "Please, will you ask my mother if I can come downstairs for just a moment? There is something I need to tell her." After some coaxing, the mother agreed and John, with his dirt-streaked little red face, came down the stairs and walking right up to his mother said, "She has told me a nice story and I want you to know I'm going to have a name like his. I'm going to be Jimmy Standby, too."

And he walked upstairs like a man.

Just like planting seeds, not every story will take root and grow and there are many storytellers planting all kinds of

seeds in the hearts of our children. But one thing is certain—you will never harvest fruit from a seed that is never planted.

4 - We will see a new generation of patriots.

No people in the history of the world has managed to hold on to freedom…yet. When a nation has lost its way; when you find a nation in crisis, its storytellers reset its course. During World War I, the French bravely fought back the invading Germans for four brutal years. Twenty years later, in World War II, France fell to Nazi Germany in just six weeks. What changed?

Much of the blame was placed squarely on the shoulders of the teachers' unions who, in a spirit of pacifism and internationalism had purged all of their schoolbooks of stories of the courage and self-sacrifice of their fallen heroes. Instead, the children were bombarded with stories of the horrors of war and the suffering of both French and German alike.

How long will our fight for freedom last?

If we have only taught our children the mechanics of the Constitution and have failed to tell them the stories of what life looks like without freedom; if we have only taught our children the workings of our government and have failed to tell them the stories of the price that was paid to have that government; if we have failed to tell them the stories of what made America the light and hope of the world, then our battle for freedom will not last long enough.

Karl Marx warned, "A people without a heritage are easily persuaded." Thomas Jefferson knew "…a government is like everything else; to preserve it, we must love it…." Love comes from the stories that enter the heart. Stories can heal our nation and unite us as a people.

Without a story, we don't have a nation.

5 - We will awaken a love of beauty.

Educators of a hundred years ago were very concerned with instilling a love of beauty in their students. Beauty is not a topic in education reform today, but it should be. Beauty is synonymous with light and truth and its effect on our souls is pure joy; a joy that is completely independent of outward circumstances.

When Viktor Frankl observed a group of prisoners in those horrible Nazi death camps who secretly gathered to recite poetry, act in improvised plays and sing songs even though such acts were punishable by death, he was watching this essence of joy in action. Beauty became their soul's weapon for self-preservation. When we awaken a love of beauty in our children, we are arming them with the same defense.

The life sustaining power of beauty is found in its ability to inspire. To inspire implies filling with spirit or light. Dr. David Hawkins explains "…the term 'spirit' refers to an unseen essence…this essence is vital; when we lose our spirit, we die—we *ex*pire from lack of that which *in*spires." When an individual or nation lacks in beauty and those qualities we term "inspiration," he becomes "devoid of humanity, love and self-respect" and selfishness and violence fills in the void.

I watched this principle of beauty in action in the life of a man my husband and I became friends with at a retirement center. Grant was in his 90s. We helped with the church services on Sundays and he would shuffle to the meeting room every week with his little Edna on his arm. Grant was a frail looking man with stooped shoulders and I don't think Edna even reached five feet tall. After he seated her, he would pull a comb out of one pocket and tenderly comb her hair and then reach in his other pocket and pull out a little bow that he would carefully put in place. Then he'd lick his fingers so

he could pat down the stray hairs.

Grant had every reason to despair. He couldn't see or hear well. Their only child, a daughter, had died when she was just a young woman. Edna had been suffering the effects of Alzheimer's for many years. It had been a long time since she recognized him and she rarely spoke any words. He was her primary care giver and they lived in one of the independent living apartments.

But he held a treasure in his heart. From the time he was a child, he memorized poetry and would keep dozens of poems refreshed and alive at all times. He was often called upon to recite a poem, and when he would stand, his pale blue eyes would suddenly light up and his voice would become strong and vibrant as he shared beautiful words from his heart.

My husband and I went to visit him one night in his apartment. He said he was so very, very tired. I asked if he had a poem for us and away he went:

> Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night
> Sailed off in a wooden shoe–
> Sailed on a river of crystal light
> Into a sea of dew.
> "Where are you going, and what do you wish?"
> The old moon asked the three.
> "We have come to fish for the herring fish
> That lives in the beautiful sea;
> Nets of silver and gold have we!"
> Said Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

He went on to recite all the verses and I asked him if this was a poem from his childhood. He said, "Oh, no. This is what I have been working on for the last several weeks."

Poetry is how a lonely, tired man kept his heart from failing. This was his "jewel" of life that gave him joy in times of sorrow.

"So shut your eyes while mother sings
Of wonderful sights that be.
And you shall see the beautiful things
As you rock in the misty sea."

He passed away just a few days later and Edna followed shortly thereafter. I will forever remember what he taught me about the power of storing up treasures of poetry.

Nature and great masterpieces of art and music are wonderful storehouses of beauty. Story is the key to unlocking them. I was speaking at a conference where a young woman approached me and told me how much she loved the scarf I was wearing. I took a moment and told her it was a gift from my daughter who married a man from India and brought it home when she traveled to India to visit his family. My daughter told me it was called chickan embroidery and all the thousands of intricate stitches on the scarf were done by hand. In the particular village it came from, whole families—grandparents, parents and children—would sit in the yard and hand stitch these beautiful articles of clothing from morning to evening. It was their livelihood. When I was done telling her these things, the woman exclaimed, "Oh my goodness! Now I love it a *thousand* times more."

When we tell a story behind a great work of art, musical masterpiece or something in nature, it has the same affect on our children—they love what they are seeing or hearing a thousand times more. One evening after dark, I took two of my granddaughters out to the front porch rocking chair, and as we looked up at the night sky, I pointed out the Big Dipper. I told them a legend about a little girl who unselfishly shared her small dipper of water with those who were thirsty. Her little tin dipper turned into a diamond dipper and then a star dipper where it still shines today reminding people of a little girl who cared so much for others. I hope that in years to come, whenever they look up at the stars, they will not only

remember the story, they will remember a grandma who held them in her arms and loved them. I hope each time they look at the Big Dipper, they will recapture a moment of pure joy. Telling a story is how you engage the heart and attach a feeling to what the eyes are seeing.

We live in a unique time in world history. The kings and queens of times past, with all their wealth and all their power, could never in a lifetime gaze upon the great works of art, listen to the masterpieces of music or read the fine literature our children have free access to with a click of a mouse within the walls of their own homes. What we are missing in our day are eyes that can see, ears that can hear, and above all hearts that can feel. Imagine how civilization would leap forward if we could reawaken a love of beauty in a new generation.

The mother who covers her walls with great art that inspires souls instead of paintings to match her couch; the mother who shares from her own heart beautiful words from the finest literature instead of empty words written merely to entertain; the mother who takes her child by the hand as she tells the stories of the wonders of nature—this is the mother of poets and statesmen who will change the course of history.

A desire and a feeling for beauty is our greatest hope for survival.

6 - We will see the hearts of generations woven together.

A storytelling parent transforms from an authority figure to a trusted friend, advisor and confidante. As the years roll by, some parents may wonder why their children seem to grow away from them; why they have lost their confidence; why they fail to talk over with them the things they are planning to do or be. A child who grows up in a home where stories are a comfortable and natural way of sharing feelings will forge family bonds that are nearly impossible to break.

Generations used to be linked together on the front porch where grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, brothers and sisters and parents told and listened to the stories of their family heritage. It gave them a sense of belonging and identity. By understanding their roots, it increased their longing to preserve the honor of their family name.

Restoring the family story can help heal broken families today.

What will happen if we restore the art of storytelling in our homes? We will discover the greatest generation is not behind us. The greatest generation is yet to come.

Guidelines for Storytelling

Although perfecting the art takes time and practice, there are some basic guidelines that will get you well on your way towards becoming a storytelling artist. Keep in mind no artist ever created a masterpiece on the very first try.

As you have gathered by now, storytelling is all about heart. I have been deliberately referring to the "art" of storytelling. Yesterday's storytellers also called it an art and defined the artist as someone who is able to lift someone up so he can see life from higher places. You even find the word "art" in the word "heart." The nature of a story is it arouses feeling and emotion. The big difference between reading a story aloud rather than telling a story "by heart" is that when you read a story, you are reading someone else's words. The story that is *told* is filtered through your own heart and in the process, there is a literal transfer of energy or spirit from heart to heart. Stories that are told make a deeper impression on the heart than stories that are read. The richer and fuller your own heart, the more power is transmitted through the story you are telling. So the storyteller's first duty is to continually nourish his own heart with that which is good and worthwhile.

I have a friend who was severely abused as a child. To survive, she built a wall around her feelings. After she married and had children of her own, she found it impossible to read stories with her children because of the barriers around her heart. She had a strong desire to read stories to her children. However, she was surprised how difficult it was. She soon

realized it was the barriers around her own heart that were interfering with having an effective story time.

It was only after she healed her own heart, which she did after much effort and care, that she was truly able to share stories with her children. You may have some heart-healing of your own to do before you can become a storytelling artist. Stories of men and women who find healing for their wounded hearts may be the prescription for that type of healing. Then, the joy of storytelling will be able to come to life.

The best stories to choose to tell are those that have touched your own **heart**. If it doesn't create some kind of feeling in you, it's not worth taking the time to prepare it for telling because its effect will be dead and lifeless. If you want to make an impression on the heart, love the story you are going to tell or wait until you find a story you do love.

After selecting a story, read it through several times. Then put it down, close your eyes, and **envision** the story in your mind. Play the events through as though you are watching a movie. The more clearly you can see the details in your mind's eye, the better chance you have of helping your listener also see clearly. Imagine you are standing at the front window describing what you are seeing across the street to a listener on the other side of the room who can't see what you are seeing.

Storytelling is not memorizing words. That is so important, I am going to say it again. Storytelling is not memorizing words. If you try to memorize words, it will come across flat and dull and you run the risk that you will forget what you are saying. Stories are told from the images you have created in your mind's eye. Once those images are very clear, you will find you can recreate a story even if it has been years since it was last told.

Now you are ready to organize the story which means that

you need to know where your story is heading. Make sure there is a destination which is the climax of the story or the heart of the story. **Aim** towards that climax. Rambling is usually the problem with Grandpa's story: "I remember back in '32, well, maybe it was '33. We had a Ford back then. Well, let's see. Maybe it was a Chevy. Bob liked the Chevy's. Or maybe it was Mabel. I think Mabel was living home back then, but she might have been away at…" By that time you don't really care who was there or what they drove. Your mind has wandered far, far away.

It may be helpful to write down an outline of events the first few times you attempt to tell stories. With practice, organizing the stories in this way will become second nature and you won't need to take the extra step of writing down an outline.

The telling of stories is all about action. Something needs to be happening all the time. In a written story, you have the luxury of long descriptive passages and detours, but not in the telling of a story. The listener is riveted to what you are saying because he is constantly asking, "And then what happened? … and then what happened?" all the way to the climax where he finds a satisfying conclusion. When you know where you are heading, you can eliminate everything that isn't taking you there.

If you want to make an impression on the heart, don't wing it. An artist always takes time to **rehearse** the story out loud. Practice telling the story out loud in the shower, while you are driving home from work or taking a walk. You don't know what gaps still need filling until you actually run through the story. To take the time to think about what happens next or back track because you have forgotten something is a real story killer. My daughter told me she tried to tell the story of the Ugly Duckling to her little girls because she thought she

knew the story after hearing it all her life. It wasn't until she started telling it that she realized how many details weren't clear in her own mind. Don't skip this step.

Now it's time to **tell** the story. Don't preface it with, "I'm going to tell you a really scary story" or funny or sad or interesting. Let the listener be the judge of that. And no interest is peaked with, "Now, sit up straight and put on your listening ears." When you are ready to tell the story, just jump right in and start telling it. Your opening line needs to be the grabber that will draw them into the rest of the story. Memorizing the opening line is an exception to the no-memorizing rule because it's so important to the story.

For examples of great story starters, think back to the stories of your childhood: "There once lived a great king names Midas who cared for nothing but gold, gold, gold;" or, "It was a bitter, cold night and the little match girl blew into her hands and stomped her feet as she wandered up and down crying, 'Matches, matches, who will buy my matches.'" No child who has ever been cold will be able to resist finding out what happened to her.

As your story unfolds, resist the temptation to ask questions to keep their attention focused. Asking a question to see if they are still with you is like pulling a kite down from the sky to see if it's still soaring. The answer is, it isn't. You have broken the spell the storyteller weaves over his listener. When you ask a question like, "Now, what would you do?" or "What do you think is going to happen next?" you may get some clever answers, but you've completely dissipated the emotional flow of the story. Questions are for the mind and the intellect. Stories are for the heart and feeling. They are two completely different teaching methodologies that usually don't work well at the same time.

When you get to the end of the story, **STOP**. One little

girl was quite the storyteller, but she just couldn't quite bring her stories to an end until she created a little device she started using in all her stories: "And so, one bright beautiful morning, as they were walking down the path to the front gate, they all died." This would actually be a better ending to a story than, "Now, what do we learn from this story?" or "What this story is teaching us is…." Attaching a moral to the end of the story is like explaining a joke.

Complete silence at the end of the story will drive the message of the story deeper into the heart than anything you can possibly say. Let the child take the lead. What is going on in the heart often cannot be expressed in words and the feelings need a chance to do their work which is why bedtime is a perfect time for telling stories. Usually the lights are low and distractions are minimal and a child is in a calm, receptive mood. What better way to drift off to sleep than savoring the emotional tingle generated from stories of knights in shining armor from the days of chivalry; noble deeds of noble men and women; or beautiful fairy tales where good is always rewarded and there are plenty of happily ever afters.

By remembering HEARTS, you will be well on your way to becoming a storytelling artist:

Heart
Envision
Aim
Rehearse
Tell
Stop

You may be saying to yourself this is a lot of work and effort just to prepare one story to tell. Keep in mind that the response to a well told story is, "Please—tell it again." When you see a movie that you really enjoy, the reason you go back and watch it again isn't to see what happens. The second time

through, you already know. You watch it again because you want to relive all the feelings you felt the first time and also to see if there is something you missed the first time around. It's the same with stories. A child will want to hear many of the stories again and again to *feel* what he *felt* the first time around.

Who can say how many opportunities you will have to tell the story to other children. Maybe one day you can be part of an army of storytellers who will take stories of hope to children who have no one in their lives to tell them stories. Once a story is in your heart, it's yours forever. You have stored up a treasure of unlimited worth and use.

You may still be thinking that it's so much easier to read a story with a child. There will *always* be a place for reading together with a child. But, if you haven't tried telling a story by *heart*, you don't know what you are missing. Please allow me to pass along what my storytelling friends had to say to reluctant storytellers in their day: "Tell the stories. Tell the stories. A thousand times, put down the book and tell the stories."

Finding Stories to Tell

Many of the stories you find in the public library for children rely heavily on visual images and don't stand alone well for retelling. Very few written stories are ready for telling and must be reworked which is why an excellent place to start is with the classics that originated as oral stories. Fairy tales, folk tales, fables and myths have traveled down through time over hundreds and even thousands of years to us. They passed through multiple generations and often through many cultures before they were ever written down and they survived because of their universal appeal. There was plenty of time to knock off the rough edges and get rid of unnecessary details.

Many of the stories in Part Two of this book were selected because they are classic stories that have already been prepared for storytelling by master storytellers or were recommended by them. A person who takes the time to prepare and tell a goodly number of these stories will have a strong sense of what to look for when adapting stories in the future from a number of different sources. They provide a wonderful tutorial and introduction to the art of storytelling.

Not every story will appeal to every age group. The following chapters provide a general guideline to what kinds of stories will most likely appeal to which age group. A ten-year-old boy probably won't be excited to hear a story about fairies and a six-year-old girl won't understand a story of a hero of strong moral principle. However, don't limit telling the story just because your child isn't of a particular age. I never tire of hearing the story of *The Ugly Duckling* and it's been a lot of

years since I was five. You can tell in their eyes if the story is working or not.

Familiar Stories

Ages 3-5

Very young children are of the age when the musicality of the words themselves is sheer delight. Start with Mother Goose rhymes and poetry. This age group is the exception to the no-memorizing rule. Take time to learn a number of rhymes you can spontaneously share. Robert Louis Stevenson's *Child's Garden of Verses* is a long-standing favorite.

Give your child lots of beautiful and rich language to listen to. The words of the King James Version of the Bible are said to have been written when the English language was at its peak. Read it aloud even though they may not understand what the words mean. A child can assimilate as many as ten languages by the age of five just by being exposed to them. Language acquisition is a wondrous miracle and we underestimate what's happening in those little minds in the early years. Give them the best from the day they are born and it will lay a strong foundation for the future.

As you start to share stories, this age group likes stories about things that are familiar to them. They know cats and dogs and horses and babies and mommies. Aesop's fables are a good choice because they are short and are all about animals. Don't worry about the morals at this point. That will come later.

These youngest listeners absolutely love the predictability and repetition of the old favorites like *The Three Bears*, *The Three Pigs*, and *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*. You are probably seeing a pattern for three-year-olds. At this age, your child

won't let you get away with modifying "Someone's been eating my porridge" or "I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house down." And they will want you to tell the same stories over and over and over…and over again.

Imaginative Stories

Ages 5-8

Starting around age five, children enter the years of keen imagination and the perfect age for folk and fairy tales. Fairy tales awaken a sense of wonder and set dreams in motion. It's the dreamers who move our world forward; dreamers who aren't bound by the narrow limits of what they can see but continually ask all those splendid "what if's."

When the idea for a steam-powered locomotion engine came before a panel of "experts" in Europe, they rejected the idea because they said human beings could not possibly survive traveling at such vast speeds as 15 mph. Thank goodness there were others who dared to dream and push beyond the limited view of the realists.

When an anxious mother questioned Albert Einstein what she could do to raise her boy to be a scientist, his response was, "First, give him fairy tales. Second, give him fairy tales. Third, give him fairy tales." Ours is an age of science and information. Facts are often referred to as being cold and hard. Stirring the imagination keeps hearts warm.

A fairy tale has been described as an earthly tale with a heavenly meaning. The reason many of these tales have survived so long is that they are a kernel of Truth that has been wrapped around with a story. Watch out for fractured fairy tales. The story of Cinderella has been found in almost every culture around the world. It's the great story of forgiveness. In the traditional version, like Joseph who was sold into Egypt by his brothers, in the end Cinderella throws her arms

around her sisters and frankly forgives them and invites them to live with her in the palace. Modern versions leave that part out altogether or alter it as they did in the movie *Ever After*. In that version, you see the glint of sweet revenge in Drew Barrymore's eyes as she gives her stepmother and stepsister exactly what they deserve.

We don't want the little piggies to be eaten up by the wolf and are even reluctant to let the wolf actually get boiled in the pot of water at the end. One father who saved the wolf found his little girl having nightmares for several nights. Finally, she confided she was afraid the wolf was going to come back. There's even one version out there where you learn the wolf is just lonely and misunderstood; he's just looking for some friends. So the piggies invite him into their home and they all live happily ever after.

No wonder our kids are messed up.

Not every fairy tale is suitable for telling to children, especially the gory, gruesome ones that are fairly modern additions. Charles Dickens was a proponent of getting fairy tales into the schools in England, trusting the teachers would use good judgment in choosing which ones they would tell. Unfortunately, he changed his mind when they weren't selective and there was a marked increase in violent acts as a result. Look for stories where good is always rewarded and the underdog always ends on top; where fairies are well meaning and loving and you find all those wonderful happily ever afters.

The imaginative years are also the perfect time to introduce many of the stories of Greek mythology. The Greeks had a rare genius for storytelling. In the days that the myths were told, Greece was a most beautiful country. Their national ideal was beauty and they expressed it in everything they wrote, or thought, or made with their hands. They told their children of a wonderful place called Mt. Olympus where the

gods lived in beautiful mansions built of precious stones and jewels. They imagined that there must be a great many gods because there were so many things in the world that needed care and attention.

The Greek father taught his children that the gods gave them everything they needed—fruit and grain for food, the beautiful flowers, the fish in the sea and the birds in the air. He would share stories of Zeus, the king in that fair land of the clouds, and of Hera, the queen. There were stories of Athena, the goddess of wisdom and Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty. And of course there was Eros who could shoot love into people's hearts with his bow and arrow and Hermes who taught people to be skillful, brave and true.

So many of the Greek myths strengthen the imagination and embody ethical truths. They have endured the centuries for a reason. The influence of the Greeks is interwoven in our literature, our architecture and our Western thought. Young children still love their stories.

Heroic Stories

Ages 8+

Perhaps at no other time in life is the heart more receptive to stories of heroes than children between the ages of eight and twelve. At first, boys and girls are not yet ready for heroes of moral courage; they're looking for action heroes; heroes of great deeds and physical courage. Telling stories of the great legendary and epic heroes that are part fantasy and part factual is the perfect bridge between imagination and reality. Start with legends like Robin Hood, King Arthur and Sir Galahad. Introduce them to epic heroes like Siegfried, Roland and Ulysses.

And then start telling them stories of the great men and women who have lived throughout history: scientists, explorers, inventors, writers, artists, musicians, leaders, humanitarians. When you tell their stories, focus on a particular event in their lives that is story-worthy. Don't try and recite an overview of their lives. Leave that to the books which you can lead them to by sharing a story that piques interest in learning more.

Finding stories of great lives that inspire poses a problem to us today. A few generations ago, biographers started pulling our heroes off their pedestals. Instead of inspiring us with possibilities, they wrote to expose all the flaws and weaknesses. By showing the warts, they sent the message, "See, they look just like the rest of us." We are seeing the consequences today of lost heroes.

Several years ago I presented a class for a group of ladies

and told them the story of Florence Nightingale and how the soldiers of the Crimean War drew so much comfort from her, they would kiss her shadow as she passed by. One of the ladies was excited to learn more so she went to her local bookstore and picked up a book off the shelf. A few weeks later, I happened to see her and she commented, "I guess she's not all she's cracked up to be, is she?" How could that be? This was the story of a woman who changed the face of nursing forever. She wore herself out so completely in the care of the soldiers during the war that the massive correspondence that spurred reform was primarily written from her bed the last fifty years of her life. How could she not be worthy of admiration? I would have been incredulous had I not known how common the debunking of heroes is today.

One day I went to the bookstore in search of a good hero story for my grandchildren. I thought I couldn't go wrong with a book on George Washington. As I opened it, the first thing I read was, "George Washington never liked his mother. She was a cold, bossy woman." I turned a few pages and read, "and so he went off to the French and Indian War" and in parentheses it added, "…and he was probably really glad to get away from his mother." A few pages later it said, "We know he didn't like his mother because he addressed all his letters to her as "Honored Madam" rather than "Dear Mother."

To find heart touching, soul stirring stories, I heartily recommend turning to the buried treasure that is available online at Internet Archives and Project Gutenberg. There you will find the books written for young people during the Golden Age of children's literature—1880 to 1920. The writers of that day purposefully wrote to inspire young minds and hearts with greatness. They wanted to show them what "good" looks likes. Libraries of Hope is republishing many of these wonderful finds. There are also a number of great out-of-print books available online at sites such as Amazon. You

will find a noticeable "warmth" factor in books written before 1960.

I offer a warning, however, that if you look at children's books written earlier than 1880, many of those writers thought the best way to drive home a point was to be blunt and direct, so you find stories like this:

> *Jane North was an idle little girl who did not like her book. When she was told to read her lesson, she would cry and say she wanted to play with her doll. Her doll was taken from her until she read, but she read ill and would not write. So she grew up to be a dunce and no one loved her.*

Thankfully, this trend was corrected in later years.

Another difference between the writers of yesteryear and today is the earlier writers were more concerned with "Truth" than "True." For example, today there are those who would never tell their children the story of George Washington chopping down the cherry tree because they can find no documentation that the event actually happened. One scholar lamented, "We have no idea how many young minds have been corrupted by this story." Yet a French traveler in the early days of our Republic observed, "Do you know why you Americans are the most honest people in the world today? It's because you have been raised on a story of a young boy and his hatchet." The story may very well not be "true," but the story itself IS "truth"—*if* you chop down your father's favorite cherry tree and he asks who did it, the right thing to say is, "I cannot tell a lie."

Plutarch had to confront this problem of True vs. Truth when writing about his Greek and Roman lives. Although only a short time had passed, the facts of their lives had already become clouded and distorted. He observed, "It is so hard to find out the truth of anything by looking at the record of the past. The process of time obscures the truth of former

times, and even contemporaneous writers disguise and twist the truth out of malice or flattery."

He solved the problem by using a simple device: "…and so the story goes." His "bible for heroes" has influenced countless great lives for good over the centuries even though the stories may or may not be "true." Yesterday's storytellers recommended the same solution when dealing with stories of heroes. Is William Tell a myth? It doesn't change the value of the story. He represents the patriotic spirit of the Swiss.

It isn't always easy to discern whether a story about a real person is completely factual. Of course we want to be responsible in the stories we tell our children. The story about a surveyor saving the life of a drowning child that is included in the story section cannot be documented, yet it is reflective of the character of George Washington that we know to be true. There is value in the story. It may be helpful to apply the standard, "Does the story teach a correct principle." If you must make a choice between True and Truth, I suggest leaning towards Truth. And if you find evidence that a story you have shared with your child isn't factual, sharing what you have discovered with your child is a learning experience in itself. Ultimately, he will have to apply the same judgment.

By the age of twelve, young people are ready for a higher type of hero—one who endures, suffers and lives for a principle. This is the hero of great moral courage. Revisit the epic heroes who have been introduced in earlier years and build upon their stories of risking life and limb in defense of principle. Continue telling them the stories of real-life heroes keeping in mind that a hero is not necessarily spotless in character and life, but because he is brave, generous, self-forgetful and self-sacrificing.

Also, tell stories of true love to counteract all the stories of true lust our children are being saturated with in our world

today. Show them what a caring and lasting relationship looks like between a man and a woman; show them true romance.

Bible Stories

The Bible is an excellent resource for stories that appeal to all these age groups. They are time-tested stories that have touched hearts for generations. The very youngest listeners love to hear about the sun, the moon and stars and the beautiful garden with flowers and animals as well as the stories of baby Moses and baby Jesus. Children in the imaginative years will enjoy stories of angels bringing messages of good tidings and stories of miraculous deliverance when it seems there is no way out. For the heroic age, the list is long: Joshua and the battle of Jericho; Gideon and his army of 300; David slaying the giant, Goliath; Deborah and her song. For heroes of moral courage, tell the story of Esther who bravely went before the king; Job who passed through the refiner's fire as gold; Joseph who frankly forgave those who wronged him.

Human beings are natural born storytellers. Enjoy the journey. While you are searching for stories to warm the hearts of your children, you will find yourself warming your own heart.

Is it worth it?

Is storytelling worth the effort?

Margaret Eggleston, the first storyteller I encountered when I discovered the storytelling revival of a hundred years ago, was once asked this question. She responded, of course, with a story.

One day she told a story to a group of adolescent boys among which was a "hoodlum." She didn't think he was paying any attention to the story. It was a story of a young boy who had a job sweeping up a bank at closing time. As he went to empty one of the trash cans, he noticed a large roll of money that had accidentally been thrown away. As he held it in his hands, he thought how much this money would mean to his family. His father was a drunk who spent most of what he earned on drinking. The little bit of money this boy brought home went towards food for his little crippled sister and his mother who was very ill. The doctor had told him that if he didn't find a way to get medicine for his mother and move her out to the country where she could get fresh air, she probably wouldn't live past the fall.

He looked around and saw that no one had noticed him, so he slipped the money in his pants pocket and headed home. Along the way, the money felt heavier and heavier in his pocket. He moved it first to his outside jacket pockets and then to the inside pocket. But the closer he got to home, the heavier the money felt until he at last realized he just couldn't keep the money.

He headed back to the bank where a security guard let

him in. He marched straight to the bank president's office, knocked on the door, walked in and threw the money across the desk to the president, explaining how he had come by it. The president looked surprised. "Son," he said, "I know how much this money would mean to you and your mother. No one knew you had it. Why did you bring it back?" Without hesitating, the boy leaned across the desk, and looking straight into the eyes of the president said, "Sir, as long as I live, I have to live with myself and I don't want to live with a thief."

That was the story. There had been no particular reaction to it and the storyteller lost contact with this young man until years later when she received a letter from him. He was now a soldier fighting on the war front in France. As she opened it, she read, "Years ago on a wet and rainy day when the ice was dangerous on the sidewalk, you came and told a story to a group of boys. I don't remember the details of the story, but I remember how it ended: "As long as I live, I have to live with myself and I don't want to live with a thief." That one story has kept me from lying and stealing and from being a coward. And here in France, it has kept me true to my manhood. I have a class here in the barracks—I know that may be hard to believe—and some of my men need that story. I want it for all of them, for all that I am, I owe to that one story and I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Never underestimate the power of a story. Stories shape our lives.

What will happen if we restore the art of storytelling in our homes?

Wouldn't you like to find out?

PART TWO

Storytelling Tips & Suggested Learning Activities

The Importance of Stories

Come! Pull up a chair and get comfortable, and join my circle of storytelling friends as they talk about stories and story telling. They are wise and experienced and can help you become a storytelling artist. Listen in on their conversation and then try out their suggestions. The stories that have been included have all been chosen, adapted and prepared by them for telling.

Thoughts on the Importance of Stories and the Need for Storytellers

Esenwein/Stockard: "The story-teller is an interpreter of life. … The aspiration to be an interpreter of life is a daring, and a wonderful dream."

Seumas McManus: "The story-telling nations of the world are the cheerful, social, enthusiastic, idealistic nations, and this is because story-telling to the child brings out all the better qualities—sympathy, warm-heartedness, sociability."

Julia Cowles: "Strength of character, purity of life, truthfulness, unselfishness, obedience, faith—all may be made beautiful and attractive by means of stories."

Esenwein/Stockard: "It is through stories that a foundation is laid for full and efficient living."

Alice O'Grady: "The function of literature is not directly to inform or to instruct, but to delight and to cultivate through the actual experiences of pure, wholesome joy; therefore the story teller's real teaching lies in the unconscious sense of

meaning, humor, content, and above all beauty, which he awakens."

G. Stanley Hall: "Stories are the natural soul-food of children."

Edward St. John: "The loss of a love for stories may be the result of sophistication, but it is not an evidence of wisdom."

Herbert Willett: "[T]he forerunners of the Renaissance were the troubadours, minnesingers, bards, and minstrels, who aroused in the soul of a slumbering Europe the sense of nobler living in a time when Church and State were both asleep. Are not our story tellers, who are calling our age back to the poems and romances that nourished the strong and adventurous youth of the world, the true pioneers of a new revival of learning, in which not only the mind and emotions, but the social and civic conscience, the will and the purpose of the race, are to share?

"The telling of noble stories is one of the most effective methods of furnishing childhood with the literary materials which all well-informed people must know, and for which later years afford so small a margin of time. The child wants the story…. It is not through formal instruction that a child receives his impulses toward virtue, honor, and courtesy. It is rather from such appeal to the emotions as can be made most effectively through the telling of a story. The inculcation of a duty leaves him passionless and unmoved. The narrative of an experience in which that same virtue finds concrete embodiment fires him with the desire to try the same conduct for himself."

Percival Chubb: "If literature is to regain its sway over the heart and its ministry in life, there must be a greater return to the oral and auditory basis of appeal. The book, to be sure, has its own indispensable place and function, but in relation to popular culture, it is the second and not the first place.

Because our culture is increasingly eye-minded, it is necessarily less emotionalized and less vital, less joyous and spontaneous."

Richard Wyches: "The spoken word has more life than the printed page. Literature was first vocal, and nature's plan has suggested the method for the education of the child to-day."

Angela Keyes: "It is largely the school's neglect of oral foundation in literature…that is at the root of feeble appreciation in book-study of literature…. Some teachers fall back on reading the story; this has its own place, but it cannot take the place of telling."

Richard Wyches: "All parents and all adults, whether they have children of their own or not, should be interested in telling stories to the young people, for the culture and civilization that our forefathers have given us, we must in turn give to the rising generation about us. When the children come around us and say, 'Tell me a story,' it is our golden opportunity to give them the noblest ideals in the world's literature, the flower and blossom of civilization."

Emalyn Partridge: "Storytelling has been such a wholesome and vital part of the relation of parent and child in the past, that we must look upon its decline in recent years as a calamity. The child is now too completely given over to the school, and the parent has trusted too much to books to give him culture."

Richard Wyches: "There is no better place in all the world for telling a story than in the home, that institution which is greater and more important than all other institutions combined…. There are many homes that cannot afford libraries and the rich adornments of art, but no home is so humble that parents cannot gather the children around the fireside on a winter's evening or about the doorsteps in the twilight of a summer's day and tell them stories. A simple fireside is a

greater stimulant to the creative imagination than the wealth of a palace.

"To enter thus into the child's world and into the joyous companionship of children is one of the highest privileges of parent…. He who fails in this does not form the deepest and most lasting ties with the child. He also robs himself of one of the greatest sources of perennial youth."

Julia Cowles: "Nothing else so closely links mother and child in a sweet fellowship and communion of thought. Nothing else so intimately binds them together, nor so fully secures the confidence of the child…. And so the mother, by means of stories, becomes the intimate companion, the loving and wise guide, the dearest confidant of her child."

Hiram Corson: "Capable mothers are, alas! comparatively few; but forces are now at work which are increasing the number of such mothers, and will continue to increase it more and more as the ideals of true womanhood are more and more realized and exalted."

Julia Cowles: "Let me beg of you, mothers, do not think that you cannot tell stories. Try; try; keep on trying; and ease in telling is bound to come. Do not think of yourself in the telling; think of the story and of the child who listens. Nothing else matters.

"It takes time to search out and familiarize oneself with just the stories that are best worth telling, but surely no mother can find a more important or more worthy object upon which to expend the time."

Nora Archibald Smith: "[I]f one have neither natural adaptation nor experience, still I say, Tell the stories; tell the stories; a thousand times, tell the stories! You have no cold, unsympathetic audience to deal with; the child is helpful, receptive, warm, eager, friendly. His whole-hearted interest,

his surprise, admiration, and wise comment, will spur you on to greater efforts, and when the story is concluded you will wonder which of you has been the greater gainer."

Julia Cowles: "There is nothing better worth winning than the love of a child, and there is no surer way of reaching a child's heart than through the story."

William Forbush: "If there are in this world persons who have frequent privilege of feeling themselves fairy godmothers, they must be you who have made story-telling a profession. To enter into a room full of children, with whom you have previously made friends by stories, with so many eager 'hearts ajar for your arriving,' is one of life's keenest pleasures. The fact that everyone longs to touch you, to sit by you, to look up adoringly into your face, shows that you have their affections as well as their attention in your grasp. You step into a mood, personal and social, which assures you of a most potent influence. You take rank with the world's best prophets and truth-tellers. You are one of the makers."

Kate Douglas Wiggin: "I would rather be the children's story-teller than the queen's favorite or the king's counsellor."

Katherine Cather: "During Verdi's period of struggle and heartbreak, when Milan jeered at his compositions and critics declared him a man of no talent, when obstacles piled so high it seemed beyond mortal power to remove them, when no one in the city but himself and his wife believed in him, instead of becoming sour and worthless, as any but a granitic nature like his would have done, he returned to his native highlands and told stories to children who thought him more wonderful than a king; then he went back to his labor strong and fit. Forgetting himself in delighting the village bambinos bolstered up his courage and his faith and helped to make him an exuberant giver. Perhaps the present-day storyteller,…if he approach his work reverently and keep in mind a thought of what it has

meant to the world, may receive as much as he gives."

Suggested Learning Activity

1. Form a Story-Telling Club

Richard Wyches: "During the past few years some who are interested in story telling have organized themselves into leagues and clubs for the study and telling of stories…a few frequently met at twilight on the lawn and told stories. The meetings had a serious purpose, yet were free and informal. The stories we told represented almost all phases of literature from folk and fairy tales to the epic, and were interspersed with the singing of national airs and melodies. Sunday evenings,…more time was given to the meeting and Biblical stories replaced the folk tales.

"The fading twilight, the dreamy quiet of the hour, the overshadowing trees, the circle of faces, the repressed tone of voice of the story tellers appealed wonderfully to me. And the child, the being to whom these services were dedicated, was always in mind. When the darkness had fallen so that the form of the story teller was all but invisible, the effect was heightened. We always adjourned quietly, as if we feared the gentle influence would vanish, if we were noisy.

"We organized ourselves into a Story Tellers' League which afterwards became the National League…. It was the beginning of the Story Tellers' League movement which since that time has spread…all with one fundamental purpose, that of discovering in the world's literature, history, and life, the best stories and telling them to and for the young people, with love and sympathy. It seeks to bring together in story circles those who love to hear and tell a good story…and all whose hearts are afire with this work that they may impart its spirit to others.

"The programme for a meeting consisted of: first, a talk or

paper giving a survey of the topic in hand, the setting and sources of the story, and then a number of stories were told in a creative way by those appointed for the meeting several months or a year in advance….

"The originators of this movement thought at first only of telling stories to children, but one interesting development has been that of junior leagues among the children, when under the supervision of some teacher or tactful adult. Children like to have an organization of their own, and while not all of them like equally to tell a story, there are enough to make such an organization…interesting and helpful.

"I have in mind a girl that is now a student in the high school, who five years ago caught the creative spirit of story telling in a junior league and became so popular as a story teller that children would flock to her home to hear her tell stories…. She is now telling the Arthurian and Bible stories with the same abandon and freedom that she acquired in the beginning with the fairy stories, and this experience has helped to make her life a radiant one."

Henry Tralle: "One of my students, Jane Willis, was asked to tell a story in class for criticism, early in the course, and she reluctantly agreed to do so.

"When she came to the telling of the story, she was greatly embarrassed, and gave us about the poorest example of story-telling I had ever heard. I made a few suggestions as to how she might improve her story-telling and asked her to tell the story again, at the next meeting of the class. I said, 'You will do better next time.'

"The next time she did a little better, but seemed frightened, and was evidently discouraged. I said to her: 'Your chief difficulty is lack of self-assurance. Try to forget yourself. See what is going on in your story. Lose yourself in it. Now, try that story again, the next time we meet.' She said, 'Oh, I

cannot do it. I just cannot tell a story.' I saw that she was about to cry, and said nothing more to her at the time.

"At the close of the class she came to me, saying, 'I feel that I am carrying too much work in the school, and I am going to drop story-telling.' I said, 'You may drop anything else, but you are not going to drop story-telling.' She said, 'But I can never learn to tell a story.' I said, 'Yes, you can. Just make up your mind that you will, and stick to it.'

"I feared that she might not be present at the next meeting of the class, but she was there. Two weeks later she told another story in the class, and did better. From that time on she steadily improved in her story-telling. Toward the end of the course I said, 'I have here a clipping from a newspaper which has in it, it seems to me, the making of a good story. I should be glad to have some member of the class take this clipping and work it over, arranging it in good story-telling form, embodying all the principles of a good story, and then tell it in the class.'

"The first one to volunteer to undertake this difficult task was the young woman who had declared she never could become a good story-teller. She said, 'I can try it if you want me to.' I said, 'You are the very one to do this. I had hoped that you, of all the members in the class, would be the one that would be willing to undertake it.'

"At a later meeting of the class, when she had finished telling the story that she had prepared, in accordance with my request, she was spontaneously and vigorously applauded, and one of the other members of the class said, 'Why, that is the best story we have had in this class.'

I said, 'You are right; it is, without question, the best example of story-telling we have had in the class.'

"'Thank you, Miss Willis.'"

Six Steps of Storytelling
H.E.A.R.T.S.

STEP 1: WARM YOUR OWN **H**EART

Esenwein/Stockard: "Story-telling…rightly belongs to the arts, and the story-teller's preparation for his work as an artist must begin with the enrichment of his own personality,…he must be, as Ethel Clifford says,

> '…lover of wind and sun,
> And of falling rain, and the friend of trees;
> With a singing heart for the pride of noon,
> And a tender heart for what twilight sees.
>
> Let him be lover of you and yours–
> The Child and Mary; but also Pan,
> And the sylvan gods of the woods and hills,
> And the God that is hid in his fellowman.'

"With his culture, with his love of nature, with his love of his fellowman, he must keep the dauntless courage, the joy in life, which belongs to the spirit of youth. Difficult, perhaps impossible? Yes; the ideal of the artist is always so. As Browning tells us, 'A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's heaven for?' Not so much the attainment as the pursuit of the vision differentiates the clod from the master.

"The parent…should first enrich his own personality through an understanding of the essential values of literature and of life. The person whose life is colorless, whose emotions

are pallid, whose experience is narrow, whose appreciation of beauty is undeveloped, whose knowledge of literature is limited, should face squarely the fact that he is not the one to guide the development of a child. He should kindle the flame in his own life before he attempts to pass on the torch. The child responds instantly to the life-quality, both in the individual and in the story. It is this life-quality which 'feeds his soul.'"

Edward St. John: "Since the power of the story is chiefly in its emotional appeal, the story-teller's manifest feeling is an important factor in the impression that is made. It is precisely because it is interpreted by a human personality that the story that is told is better than the one that is read."

Margaret Eggleston: "Perhaps one of the greatest helps in story-telling is a rich personality. And how can this be obtained? By loving the beautiful, by reading the worth-while, by filling the mind with those things that are worth passing on, by cultivation of a cheery disposition, by striving toward high ideals. To aim to be an interpreter of life is to aim high. You must have high ideals if you wish the message of the story to be filled with the best. You must have a background in your own life through which the story may pass and be electrified."

Richard Wyches: "Love paints the pictures, writes the poems, sings the songs, bears the burdens and does all the great and abiding deeds.

"When we are using our imagination and emotion in telling a story, we are using the same forces that underlie all creative work…. He who is obedient to the highest ideals that come to him, and wills to follow his highest and best feelings, has gone back to the fundamentals. He has gone back of all art, all literature, all music, all creeds, and stands face to face with the Father—the eternal creator. He holds communion with the unseen and eternal. Thus he is baptized with the

spirit and the words he speaks are spirit and life. He becomes conscious of his kinship to the divine and his oneness to all that is high, good and beautiful in literature and life. This will bring to the speaker a culture that cannot come from books. It will give his thoughts and words a purity and sweetness that will put his work on a higher plane. He who communes with the All-father, will, when he communes with his fellow-men have a message for them. A deep and abiding soul life is more important than the mouthing of many words. The measure of our influence is not what we say but what we are….

"Spiritual equipment comes from putting oneself in harmony with all that is highest and holiest. It means opening all the avenues that lead to the soul: human friendship and love, the laughter of children at play, art, music, literature, the still, small voice within, the freeing of one's soul from evil; sorrow, disappointment, defeat, and victory; the stretch of prairie and ocean shore, the crowded street, the pathless wood, the song of the thrush at twilight….

"It is this spirit that will sweeten, interpret and purify all the literature of the past. The past then means infinitely more because it is a part of one great revelation whose beginning we have, but whose glorious development is known only to those who labor and love. To be a partaker in this divine process, and to be conscious of it, is a source of infinite comfort and peace."

Esenwein/Stockard: "The first step in the preparation of a story for telling is to put yourself in tune with its spirit. Never tell [a story] unless it appeals to you personally…. Unless the story expresses your own thoughts and feelings, unless it is an outlet for your inner self, it is not for you…. If you can say of a story 'I love it,' you are inevitably seized with a desire to make someone else love it, for the story-teller is never content until he has shared his treasure-trove."

Richard Wyches: "The formal must be an expression of the spiritual else it is not art…. No poet, painter, sculptor, builder, musician, writer, or worker of any kind has ever done abiding work who did it apart from the spirit….

"Art comes from within, not from without. Do not force; do not fuss; be quiet; wait for the child to hear the still, small voice from within."

Edward St. John: "The story which lacks an inner spiritual quality is…devoid of power to stir a soul."

Richard Moulton: "I would say that one's first duty to a story is to love it…."

Richard Wyches: "He who does not feel the story has little motive for telling it. The purpose of the story is usually to impart feeling and to awaken feeling. Then he who would tell a story effectively must feel it, and feel it deeply."

Margaret Eggleston: "Permeate the whole with a love of the story, a love of the child to whom it is to be given and gratitude that to you has come the opportunity to carry the great gift—and the result will be 'Please tell us another.' You have been an artist and a teacher."

Suggested Learning Activities

1. Immerse yourself in well told stories. Seek out the best. ***Tralle***: "Valuable suggestions may be had from listening to experienced story-tellers. It is advisable, moreover, to hear as many different story-tellers as possible, since there will be less likelihood of imitation. As the student listens to story-telling, he should give himself up to the lure, listening attentively and sympathetically."

Jim Weiss is a master storyteller today and draws heavily from classic stories. You can find many of his CDs in public libraries or you can purchase audios at welltrainedmind.com

or Amazon. His personal website is jimweiss.com.

2. Over time, read the stories aloud in Part Three of this book, one at a time, starting at the beginning. These stories were all chosen, prepared and adapted by the storytellers of a hundred years ago. As you read, your heart will begin being impressed with the flow and language of storytelling. You will get a sense of movement and use of picturesque words. The first stories are the simplest and you'll sense the joy of repetition and familiarity for young children. Then reacquaint yourself with the fairy tales of childhood and finally, experience the bringing of history to life through storytelling. Don't just read them quickly to yourself—you'll shortchange the experience for yourself if you don't read them aloud with feeling and purpose.

3. Consider joining mothersofinfluence.org, where you can connect with other mothers with whom you can form a study group and story circle. Go through the Catch the Vision course to warm and nourish your own heart.

Notes:

STEP 2: ENVISION

Esenwein/Stockard: "As a first step in mastering the story for telling, you will re-create in your own mind the story as a whole, adding to the author's vision the coloring of your personality. You will read it again and again, absorbing the author's style, the subtle shadings of his presentation of his theme. You will see the pictures move before the eye of your mind like the silent enactment of a drama on the moving-picture screen—as a series of definitely connected scenes. This inner visualization is the essential preliminary in the preparation of a story.

"One day last spring two street cleaners were talking together as they sat on the curb. One said to the other, 'You know when you tell a story you got to just see it happenin' when you're tellin' it—if you want the other feller to git the point.'"

Margaret Eggleston: "If [children] do not 'see,' they do not listen."

Richard Wyches: "To the extent that the story teller can imagine [the] scenes, creating them anew as he tells the story, to that extent can he make his audience see them. He may rest assured if he does not see clearly the mental pictures, his audience will not…. Therein is the difference in reciting a story and telling a story.

"To read or recite usually means memorizing and recalling the words. The usual school recitation is simply this and nothing else. If the reader forgets the word he is lost, stage-frightened; but if he is telling a story and is dealing with a

mental picture, creating it anew in his own mind and giving that forth, a different mental process is taking place. Have a mental picture, he is free to pick up a word here and a phrase there and build again the picture. If he forgets a word there stands the picture, another word will do…. The outward is an expression of the inward, and as the story takes shape, the story teller becomes a creator and an artist. That is a higher work than reciting the words in a book…."

Angela Keyes: "Some may find imagining difficult. Perhaps it was neglected in their training. Let them not be discouraged; each succeeding attempt to realize scene and person and action will make the task easier."

Julia Cowles: "Think the story over, again and again, until it becomes a personal possession—something which you know. Then begin formulating it. You can do this mentally, inaudibly at first, following the general mode of expression of the written story… This is not difficult, for if you have selected a well-written story, the style in which it is written will be in keeping with its character and will seem the natural mode of expression. This assimilation of style as well as of substance takes the place of literal memorizing. It allows full liberty in the telling, while memorizing only cramps and hampers….

"This assimilation of style as well as of substance takes time, but the ability to learn a story readily will come with practice. After you have mastered the method of learning, you will be able to acquire new stories with little difficulty."

Will showing pictures to the children while you're telling the story to them be helpful?

Marie Shedlock: "After long experience, and after considering the effect produced on children when pictures are shown to them during the narration, I have come to the conclusion that the appeal to the eye and the ear at the same time is of doubtful value, and has, generally speaking, a distracting

effect: the concentration on one channel of communication attracts and hold the attention more completely….

"There is…a real danger in using pictures to illustrate the story, especially if it be one which contains a direct appeal to the imagination of the child,…you force the whole audience of children to see the same picture, instead of giving each individual child the chance of making his own mental picture. That is of far greater joy….

"I have heard objections to this theory by teachers dealing with children whose knowledge of objects outside their own little limited circle is so scanty that words we use without a suspicion that they are unfamiliar are really foreign expressions to them. Such words as sea, woods, fields, mountains, would mean nothing to them, unless some explanation were offered…where we are dealing with objects that can actually be seen with the bodily eyes, then it is quite legitimate to show pictures of those objects before you begin the story, so that the distraction between the actual and mental presentation may not cause confusion."

Suggested Learning Activities

1. ***Esenwein***: "It should need no argument to convince us that the untrained observation is an inefficient affair. Take one long glance at the contents of a shop window, then try to repeat the details of what you were able to take in with that single look. When you have looked again at the window you may test the fullness and the accuracy of your first observation—the color, form, size, and number of at least some of the objects seen on that second look will surprise you, unless you are a trained observer. The same principle applies to a picture.

"Five minutes' practice daily will do wonders in cultivating the eye in full and exact observation. Begin with the whole, then observe the parts; next begin with the parts and

ascend to the whole. By this method you will learn to observe in an orderly way and so remember more of what you see."

2. Learning poetry "by heart" can increase your visualization skills as poetry is painting with words. Learn the following two Robert Louis Stevenson poems "by heart." Don't rely upon the words, but rather upon the pictures. Take the time to fully see each picture in your mind's eye. The rhyme and rhythm will help you hold on to the words.

Young Night Thoughts

All night long and every night,
When my mamma puts out the light
I see the people marching by,
As plain as day, before my eye.

Armies and emperors and kings,
All carrying different kinds of things,
And marching in so grand a way,
You never saw the lie by day.

So fine a show was never seen
At the great circus on the green;
For every kind beast and man
In marching in that caravan.

At first they move a little slow,
But still the faster on they go,
And still beside them close I keep
Until we reach the Town of Sleep.

Picture-Books In Winter

Summer fading, winter comes–
Frosty mornings, tingling thumbs,
Window robins, winter rooks,
And the picture story-books.

Water now is turned to stone
Nurse and I can walk upon;
Still we find the flowing brooks
In the picture story-books.

All the pretty things put by
Wait upon the children's eye,
Sheep and shepherds, trees and crooks,
In the picture story-books.

We may see how all things are,
Sea and cities, near and far,
And the flying fairies' looks,
In the picture story-books.

How am I to sing your praise,
Happy chimney-corner days,
Sitting safe in nursery nooks,
Reading picture story-books?

3. Learn the following two stories "by heart" and tell them to a child. These are simple stories that can easily be told by allowing the pictures to play out in your mind's eye.

Teeny-Tiny

Once upon a time there was a teeny-tiny woman who lived in a teeny-tiny house in a teeny-tiny village. Now, one day this teeny-tiny woman put on her teeny-tiny bonnet, and went out of her teeny-tiny house to take a teeny-tiny walk. And when this teeny-tiny woman had gone a teeny-tiny way, she came to a teeny-tiny gate; so the teeny-tiny woman opened the teeny-tiny gate, and went into a teeny-tiny church-yard. And when this teeny-tiny woman had got into the teeny-tiny churchyard, she saw a teeny-tiny bone on a teeny-tiny grave, and the teeny-tiny woman said to her teeny-tiny self, "This teeny-tiny bone will make me some teeny-tiny soup for my teeny-tiny supper." So the teeny-tiny woman put the teeny-tiny bone into her teeny-tiny pocket, and went to her teeny-tiny house.

Now, when the teeny-tiny woman got home to her teeny-tiny house she was a teeny-tiny tired; so she went up her teeny-tiny stairs to her teeny-tiny bed, and put the teeny-tiny bone into a teeny-tiny cupboard. And when this teeny-tiny woman had been to sleep for a teeny-tiny time, she was awakened by a teeny-tiny voice from the teeny-tiny cupboard, which said, "Give me my bone!" And this teeny-tiny woman was a teeny-tiny frightened, so she hid her teeny-tiny head under the teeny-tiny clothes, and went to sleep again. And when she had been to sleep again a teeny-tiny time, the teeny-tiny voice again cried out from the teeny-tiny cupboard, a teeny-tiny louder. "Give me my bone!" This made the teeny-tiny woman a teeny-tiny more frightened, so she hid her teeny-tiny head a teeny-tiny farther under the teeny-tiny clothes. And when the teeny-tiny woman had been to sleep again a teeny-tiny time, the teeny-tiny voice from the teeny-tiny cupboard said again, a teeny-tiny louder, "GIVE ME MY BONE!" And this teeny-tiny woman was a teeny-tiny bit more frightened, but she put her teen-tiny head out of the teeny-tiny clothes, and said in her loudest teeny-tiny

voice,

— "TAKE IT!!"

The Blind Man and the Elephant
(James Baldwin)

There were once six blind men who stood by the roadside every day, and begged from the people who passed. They had often heard of elephants, but they had never seen one; for being blind, how could they?

It so happened one morning that an elephant was driven down the road where they stood. When they were told that the great beast was before them, they asked the driver to let him stop so that they might see him.

Of course they could not see him with their eyes; but they thought that by touching him they could learn just what kind of animal he was.

The first one happened to put his hand on the elephant's side. "Well, well!" he said, "now I know all about this beast. He is exactly like a wall."

The second felt only of the elephant's tusk. "My brother," he said, "you are mistaken. He is not at all like a wall. He is round and smooth and sharp. He is more like a spear than anything else."

The third happened to take hold of the elephant's trunk. "Both of you are wrong," he said. "Anybody who knows anything can see that this elephant is like a snake."

The fourth reached out his arms, and grasped one of the elephant's legs. "Oh, how blind you are!" he said. "It is very plain to me that he is round and tall like a tree."

The fifth was a very tall man, and he chanced to take hold of the elephant's ear. "The blindest man ought to know that this beast is not like any of the things that you name," he said. "He is exactly like a huge fan."

The sixth was very blind indeed, and it was some time before he could find the elephant at all. At last he seized the animal's tail. "O foolish fellows!" he cried. "You surely have lost your senses. This elephant is not like a wall, or a spear, or a snake, or a tree; neither is he like a fan. But any man with a particle of sense can see that he is exactly like a rope."

Then the elephant moved on, and the six blind men sat by the roadside all day, and quarreled about him. Each believed that he knew just how the animal looked; and each called the others hard names because they did not agree with him. People who have eyes sometimes act as foolishly.

Notes:

STEP 3: ANALYZE/AIM/ACTION

Gardiner: "A story should move with directness and force, like an arrow to its mark."

Esenwein/Stockard: "Determine the climax of your story, then with the same sure strokes as those of the artist, make each incident of the action, each detail of the setting, say, 'It is for this we exist.'"

Katherine Cather: "Until the climax is reached the oral story must be full of suspense. In other words, the hearer must be kept guessing about what is going to happen."

Esenwein/Stockard: "It is important…to conceive of your story as a longer or shorter series of scenes…. Let the action be envisioned before you in this pictorial way, one act leading naturally to another until you come to the high point—the climax—where the vital action is shown. No more important step in preparation is there than to set the climax clearly before your mind's eye, for how can one intelligently work toward a point without planning clearly what that point is to be, and by what steps it is to be reached?"

Edward St. John: "[E]very good story must have a beginning that rouses interest, a succession of events that is orderly and complete, a climax that forms the story's point, and an end that leaves the mind at rest. Or, to put it in another way, the story has a hero, action, a plot, and a solution.

"The power quickly and accurately to analyze a story into these essential elements is the most fundamental and the most important part of the story-teller's theoretical training. It offers the certain means of determining whether a story is

worth telling at all. It makes its retention by the memory a comparatively simple matter. It makes it easy to condense a story that is too long, and facilitates the successful expansion of one that is too brief. The importance of persistent drill in the performing of this process can hardly be over-emphasized."

Margaret Eggleston: "Perhaps there is no more vital way of gripping an audience in the introduction of a story than with a sense appeal: cold, hunger, beauty, sorrow, sympathy, disgust, etc., as we characterize the hero. Think back to the childhood stories. "It was a bitter cold night and the little match girl blew on her hands and stamped her feet as she wandered up and down calling, 'Matches, matches; Please buy my matches.' Every child who has been cold is at once full of sympathy for the little girl."

Henry Tralle: "Sometimes the exact date is given or the story is specifically connected with some known event—'In the year that King Uzziah died,' in the story of Isaiah's vision; 'In the winter of 1776,' in the story of Washington crossing the Delaware.

"Frequently an indefinite time is indicated, as 'Once,' 'One time,' 'Once upon a time,' 'There was a time,' 'One day,' 'One night,' 'In the long ago,' 'Once, nobody knows just when.'

"Occasionally, an indefinite time is assumed, implied, taken for granted, as 'There was,' 'Three bears lived,' 'A pancake was frying for supper,' 'Some eggs were in a nice, warm nest under a mother duck.'"

Esenwein/Stockard: "Directness in the presentation of a series of scenes is…to be followed. There must be no digressions or side trips in the well-told children's story. However great may be the temptation to make pleasing little excursions by the way, the narrator must sternly bear in mind Mr.

Kipling's whimsical remark, 'But that is another story.' Interest soon wanders afield at the first inviting break in the hedge, and then how shall we come happily to the end of the road?

"Sometimes an unintentional digression is suggested by the narrator when an absorbing situation in a story is touched upon and left without having any real part in the story. Here is an example in point: 'And Erick went on and on until he came to a black rabbit with four glass feet and a silk hat, but he didn't stop there'—though the child's mind is likely to. That which does not help, hinders—let this maxim be repeated. The story-teller introduced the funny bunny merely as an ornament, with the result that it proved to be a distraction.

"Since the well-told story is a carefully considered sequence of pictorial scenes, each leading naturally into its successor, the straight-ahead course of the story must not be interrupted by the introduction of many, if any, matters that require explanation…. Examine any good fairy story… Everything is swiftly—almost casually—done. Events which in a story for grown-ups would require elaboration are passed over 'just like that,' because the child-mind leaps forward to what comes next with impatience of minute explanation. Children either sense what is conveyed in a few swift words, filling in the imagined sketch by their own lightning strokes of fancy, or they weary of the tedious recital.

"Just as explanations are bad, so are too many details."

Marie Shedlock: "I remember the despair of a little boy at a dramatic representation of 'Little Red Riding-Hood,' when that little person delayed the thrilling catastrophe with the Wolf, by singing a pleasant song on her way through the wood. 'Oh, why,' said the little boy, 'does she not get on?' And I quite shared the impatience."

Gardiner: "The essential thing in narrative is to make something happen."

Edward St. John: "[M]ovement compels our interest."

"It takes life to influence life, *and life is action*."

Edward St. John: "It is a safe rule which declares that what does not further the story's specific aim really lessens its power."

Carolyn Sherwin Bailey: "One may almost reduce a recipe for making over stories. It is possible to outline a pattern by means of which a printed story may be cut to fit the needs of a group of eager, restless, wriggling children. Having this recipe, this pattern, thoroughly in mind, a little practice in applying it to particular stories that need adapting will give the story teller power to apply it, quickly and effectually to any story with little loss of time…

"These…are our steps in story adaptation:

"Read the story, analytically.

"Select its necessary scenes.

"Reduce these scenes to elements of action."

Edward St. John: "[I]n real life it is the things that are done that count…. Tell us what he does and we can draw our own conclusions."

Suggested Activities

1. ***Esenwein/Stockard***: "Let us see in the following openings how these four purposes—the introduction of one or more of the characters in an interesting situation, the beginning of the action, the suggestion of a setting, and the establishment of a mood—are in whole or in part accomplished by skillful storytellers:

"In the High and Far Off Times the Elephant, O Best Beloved, had no trunk. (Rudyard Kipling, Just So Stories)

"Once upon a time there were a man and a woman, who had an only daughter. Now it happened that one of their sheep went astray, and they set out to look for it, and searched, each in a different part of the wood. Then the good wife met a witch, etc. … (Andrew Lang, The Red Fairy Book)

"Every afternoon, as they were coming home from school, the children used to go and play in the Giant's garden. (Oscar Wilde, The Selfish Giant)

"Once upon a time there was a little White Rabbit with two beautiful long pink ears and two bright red eyes and four soft little feet—such a pretty little White Rabbit, but he wasn't happy. (Southern folk tale)"

Examine the opening lines in several of the stories in Part Three of this book and look for the four parts of a good story opening.

2. Can you make the opening of this story more compelling?

Nahum Prince
(Carolyn Sherwin Bailey)

This is the story of Nahum Prince. He must have lived a hundred years or more ago, and he died, I do not know when. He was lame. Something had crushed his foot so that he could hardly walk.

It was at the time of the fighting with Burgoyne, and General Lincoln was in front and was ordering out every man from New Hampshire. And all the regular companies of troops had been marched out. Then there came the final call for all who could go, and all the old men and boys volunteered; and there was not a boy over thirteen years of age in the village that didn't go, except Nahum Prince. When they were getting ready to go he stood up as well as he could with an old Queen Anne's arm on his shoulder. And the captain came along and

saw him and said: —

"Nahum, you here!"

"Yes, sir," said Nahum.

Then the captain said: "Go home, Nahum; you know you don't belong here; you can't walk a mile."

Then he called to the doctor, and the doctor said, "Nahum, it's no use; you must go home."

Then they all marched off without him.

Rub-a-dub-dub; rub-a-dub-dub, went the drums; and every man and boy of them went off and left poor Nahum Prince alone.

He had a good home, but he was very homesick all that night and didn't sleep much; and the next morning he said:

"I shall die before night if I stay here all alone, the only boy in town. I must do something."

It was coming autumn. It was not late, but he knew he must do something; so he went down and split old Widow Corliss' wood for her, for he could split wood though he could not march.

He had not been splitting wood for more than an hour when four men on horseback came down the road and stopped. He could see them stand and talk. They all went off and then one came back again and beckoned to Nahum; and when he came up the man on horseback said, "Where are all the men gone?"

"They have all gone off to join the army," Nahum said.

"And isn't there any blacksmith in town?"

"No," said Nahum, "there isn't a man or a boy in the town except me, and I wouldn't be here only I am so lame I can't march."

"Do you mean to tell me," said the man, "that there is nobody here who can set a shoe?"

"Why, I can set a shoe," said Nahum.

"Then it is lucky you are left behind," the man said. "Light up the forge and set this shoe."

And now comes the most interesting part of the story. Nahum lighted the fire, blew the flames hot, and set the shoe on the horse; and the horse and the rider went away after the man had thanked Nahum.

Nahum finished splitting the widow's wood. And when, the next week, the boys came home and told how Colonel Seth Warner came up on his horse just in time, leading the First Regiment, and took the prisoners and won the day, Nahum didn't say anything. But he knew that Colonel Warner never would have been on that horse if he hadn't set that shoe. And it was little lame Nahum Prince who really won the splendid victory which ended the Battle of Bennington.

3. Read these two different versions of the same story aloud and compare the two. Did you favor one over the other? Which version is easier to re-tell? Why?

The Stone-Cutter
(Edna Lyman Scott)

Once upon a time there lived a stone-cutter who went every day to a great rock in the side of a big mountain and cut out slabs for gravestones or for houses. He understood very well the kinds of stones wanted for the different purposes, and as he was a careful workman. He had plenty of customers. For a long time he was quite happy and contented, and asked for nothing better than what he had.

Now in the mountains dwelt a spirit which now and then appeared to men, and helped them in many ways to become rich and prosperous. The stone-cutter, how-

ever, had never seen this spirit, and only shook his head, with an unbelieving air, when anyone spoke of it. But a time was coming when he learned to change his opinion.

One day the stone-cutter carried a gravestone to the house of a rich man, and saw there all sorts of beautiful things, of which he had never even dreamed. Suddenly his daily work seemed to grow harder and heavier, and he said to himself, "Oh, if I were only a rich man, and could sleep in a bed with silken curtains and golden tassels, how happy I should be!"

And a voice answered him, "Your wish is heard; a rich man you shall be!"

At the sound of the voice the stone-cutter looked round, but could see nobody. He thought it was all his fancy, and picked up his tools and went home, for he did not feel inclined to do any more work that day. But when he reached the little house where he lived, he stood still with amazement; for instead of his wooden hut was a stately palace filled with splendid furniture, and most splendid of all was the bed, in every respect like the one he had envied. He was nearly beside himself with joy, and in his new life the old one was soon forgotten.

It was now the beginning of summer, and each day the sun blazed more fiercely. One morning the heat was so great that the stone-cutter could scarcely breathe, and he determined he would stop at home till the evening. He was rather dull, for he had never learned how to amuse himself, and was peeping through the closed blinds to see what was going on in the street, when a little carriage passed by, drawn by servants dressed in blue and silver. In the carriage sat a prince, and over his head a golden umbrella was held, to protect him from the sun's rays.

"Oh, if I were only a prince!" said the stone-cutter to himself, as the carriage vanished around the corner.

"Oh, if I were only a prince, and could go in such a carriage and have a golden umbrella held over me, how happy I should be!"

And the voice of the mountain spirit answered, "Your wish is heard; a prince you shall be."

And a prince he was. Before his carriage rode one company of men and another behind it; servants dressed in scarlet and gold bore him along; the coveted umbrella was held over his head; everything heart could desire was his. But yet it was not enough. He looked round still for something to wish for, and when he saw that in spite of the water he poured on his grass the rays of the sun scorched it, and that in spite of the umbrella held over his head each day his face grew browner and browner, he cried in his anger, "The sun is mightier than I; oh, if I were only the sun!"

And the mountain spirit answered, "Your wish is heard; the sun you shall be."

And the sun he was, and he felt himself proud in his power. He shot his beams above and below, on earth and in heaven; and he burnt up the grass in the fields and scorched the faces of princes as well as of poorer folk. But in a short time he began to grow tired of his might, for there seemed nothing left for him to do. Discontent once more filled his soul, and when a cloud covered his face, and hid the earth from him, he cried in his anger, "Does the cloud hold captive my rays, and is it mightier than I? Oh, that I were a cloud and mightier than any!"

And the mountain spirit answered: "Your wish is heard; a cloud you shall be!"

And a cloud he was, and lay between the sun and the earth. He caught the sun's beams and held them, and to his joy the earth grew green again and flowers blossomed. But that was not enough for him, and for

days and weeks he poured forth rain till the rivers overflowed their banks and the crops of rice stood in water. Towns and villages were destroyed by the power of the rain, only the great rock on the mountain side remained unmoved. The cloud was amazed at the sight, and cried in wonder, "Is the rock, then, mightier than I? Oh, if I were only the rock!"

And the mountain spirit answered: "Your wish is heard; the rock you shall be!"

And the rock he was, and gloried in his power. Proudly he stood, and neither the heat of the sun nor the force of the rain could move him. "This is better than all!" he said to himself. But one day he heard a strange noise at his feet, and when he looked down to see what it could be, he saw a stone-cutter driving tools into his surface. Even while he looked a trembling feeling ran all through him, and a great block broke off and fell upon the ground. Then he cried in his wrath, "Is a mere child of earth mightier than a rock? Oh, if I were only a man!"

And the mountain spirit answered: "Your wish is heard. A man once more you shall be!"

And a man he was, and in the sweat of his brow he toiled again at his trade of stone-cutting. His bed was hard and his food scanty, but he had learned to be satisfied with it, and did not long to be something or somebody else. And as he never asked for things he had not got, or desired to be greater or mightier than other people, he was happy at last, and heard the voice of the mountain spirit no longer.

Hafiz, the Stone-Cutter
(retold by Marie Shedlock)

There was once a stone-cutter whose name was Hafiz, and all day long he chipped, chipped, chipped at

his block. And often he grew very weary of his task and he would say to himself impatiently, "Why should I go on chip-chip-chipping at my block? Why should I not have pleasure and amusement as other folk have?"

One day, when the sun was very hot and when he felt specially weary, he suddenly heard the sound of many feet, and, looking up from his work, he saw a great procession coming his way. It was the King, mounted on a splendid charger, all his soldiers to the right, in their shining armour, and the servants to the left, dressed in gorgeous clothing, ready to do his behests.

And Hafiz said: "How splendid to be a King! If only I could be a King, if only for ten minutes, so that I might know what it feels like!" And then, even as he spoke, he seemed to be dreaming, and in his dream he sang this little song:

"Ah me! Ah me!

If Hafiz only the King could be!"

And then a voice from the air around seemed to answer him and to say:

"*Be thou the King*."

And Hafiz became the King, and he it was that sat on the splendid charger, and they were his soldiers to the right and his servants to the left. And Hafiz said: "I am King, and there is no stronger in the whole world than I."

But soon, in spite of the golden canopy over his head, Hafiz began to feel the terrible heat of the rays of the sun, and soon he noticed that the soldiers and servants were weary, that his horse drooped, and that he, Hafiz, was overcome, and he said angrily: "What! Is there something stronger in the world than a King?" And, almost without knowing it, he again sang his song—more boldly than the first time:

"*Ah me! Ah me!*

If Hafiz only the Sun could be!"

And the Voice answered:

"*Be thou the Sun*."

And Hafiz became the Sun, and shone down upon the Earth, but, because he did not know how to shine very wisely, he shone very fiercely, so that the crops dried up, and folk grew sick and died. And then there arose from the East a little cloud which slipped between Hafiz and the Earth, so that he could no longer shine down upon it, and he said, "Is there something stronger in the world than the Sun?"

"*Ah me! Ah me!*

If Hafiz only the Cloud could be!"

And the Voice said:

"*Be thou the Cloud.*"

And Hafiz became the Cloud, and rained down water upon the Earth, but, because he did not know how to do so wisely, there fell so much rain that all the little rivulets became great rivers, and all the great rivers overflowed their banks, and carried everything before them in swift torrent—all except one great rock which stood unmoved. And Hafiz said: "Is there something stronger than the Cloud?"

"*Ah me! Ah me!*

If Hafiz only a Rock could be!"

And the Voice said:

"*Be thou the Rock.*"

And Hafiz became the Rock and the Cloud disappeared and the waters went down.

And Hafiz the Rock saw coming towards him a

man—but he could not see his face. As the man approached he suddenly raised a hammer and struck Hafiz, so that he felt it through all his stony body. And Hafiz said, "Is there something stronger in the world than the Rock?"

"*Ah me! Ah me!*

If Hafiz only that Man might be!"

And the Voice said:

"*Be thou—Thyself.*"

And Hafiz seized the hammer and said;

"The sun was stronger than the King, the Cloud was stronger than the Sun, the Rock was stronger than the Cloud, but I, Hafiz, was stronger than all."

4. Read these two versions of the same story aloud and compare the two. Which one did you prefer and what devices were used to make it more enjoyable?

Cornelia and her Jewels

(Version 1)

One bright morning in a beautiful Roman garden two brothers were playing among the flowers and trees. Cornelia, their mother, a Roman lady, called the boys into the house, saying, "A friend is to dine with us today, and she will show us her jewels." After the simple meal was over a servant brought into the room a large and beautiful casket of jewels, which the rich lady showed to her friends. How eagerly the boys gazed at those sparkling jewels—pearls, rubies, sapphires, and diamonds! The younger boy whispered to his brother, "I wish our mother had beautiful jewels, too!" Later, when the boys had gone out into the garden to play, the friend said, "Is it true, Cornelia, that you are so poor that you have no jewels?" "Oh, no," answered Cornelia, "I have jewels that are far more precious than yours." "Oh, let me see

them," said the lady; "where are they?" "If you care to see them I will bring them to you," said Cornelia. Then, calling her boys to her side, she presented them to the lady, saying, "These are my jewels! Are they not far more precious than your gems?"

In the long after-time when Cornelia's sons became the greatest and best men of Rome, they never forgot that day when they knew that they were their mother's pride and joy and love, dearer far to her than the most precious jewels of the rich.

(Version 2)

It was a bright morning in the old city of Rome many hundred years ago. In a vine-covered summerhouse in a beautiful garden, two boys were standing. They were looking at their mother and her friend, who were walking among the flowers and trees.

"Did you ever see so handsome a lady as our mother's friend?" asked the younger boy, holding his tall brother's hand. "She looks like a queen."

"Yet she is not so beautiful as our mother," said the elder boy. "She has a fine dress, it is true; but her face is not as noble and kind. It is our mother who is like a queen."

"That is true," said the other. "There is no woman in Rome so much like a queen as our own dear mother."

Soon Cornelia, their mother, came down the walk to speak with them. She was simply dressed in a plain white robe. Her arms and feet were bare, as was the custom in those days; and no rings nor chains glittered about her hands and neck. For her only crown, long braids of soft brown hair were coiled about her head; and a tender smile lit up her noble face as she looked into her sons' proud eyes.

"Boys," she said, "I have something to tell you."

They bowed before her, as Roman lads were taught to do, and said, "What is it, Mother?"

"You are to dine with us today, here in the garden; and then our friend is going to show us that wonderful casket of jewels of which you have heard so much."

The brothers looked shyly at their mother's friend. Was it possible that she had still other rings besides those on her fingers? Could she have other gems besides those which sparkled in the chains about her neck?

When the simple outdoor meal was over, a servant brought the casket from the house. The lady opened it. Ah, how those jewels dazzled the eyes of the wondering boys! There were ropes of pearls, white as milk, and smooth as satin; heaps of shining rubies, red as the glowing coals; sapphires as blue as the sky that summer day; and diamonds that flashed and sparkled like the sunlight.

The brothers looked long at the gems.

"Ah!" whispered the younger; "if our mother could only have such beautiful things!"

At last, however, the casket was closed and carried carefully away.

"Is it true, Cornelia, that you have no jewels?" asked her friend. "Is it true, as I have heard it whispered, that you are poor?"

"No, I am not poor," answered Cornelia, and as she spoke she drew her two boys to her side; "for here are my jewels. They are worth more than all your gems."

I am sure that the boys never forgot their mother's pride and love and care; and in after years, when they had become great men in Rome, they often thought of this scene in the garden. And the world still likes to hear

the story of Cornelia's jewels.

5. Select several stories in Part Three of this book and analyze them, looking for the four parts of a well-told story. Did it have:

- a beginning that rouses interest (did it cover the four points outlined in Activity #1?)
- a succession of events that is orderly and complete (identify them)
- a climax that forms the story's point (identify it)
- an end that leaves the mind at rest? (St. John)

Could any of the events leading to the climax have been omitted? Could they have been in a different order? Practice condensing a story without omitting any essential points.

Notes:

Amos Wells: "Practice! It will go clumsily at first…. Imagination will be dull, facts will escape your memory, relations will be confused, you will seem to be acting a part. But persevere, persevere! Study results. If you fail, see why you fail, and thus lay the foundation for success. Listen to others that know how to do it. Catch their points of effectiveness. Above all things, practice! practice! practice!"

Edward St. John: "[P]ractice. Tell the story again and again. It is not possible to carry this too far… As one gains familiarity with the story there is less of self-consciousness… More and more, as a result of this repetition, it becomes a personal possession and is told not from memory but really from the heart."

Julia Cowles: "[T]ell the story orally; not at once to an audience—but to an imaginary assembly. A doll makes a very good 'practice auditor,' and is not inclined to encourage you over-much by her responsiveness. If your imagination is good, a sofa pillow or a chair will do as well. You will probably make your first audible effort at an opportune moment when you are left quite alone in the house, and the first opening door will bring the rehearsal to a definite close. But in time, if you persevere, the family will become used to it."

Agnes Downey: "Practice. It may be hard on your relatives and friends, but the world will be the gainer."

Edward St. John: "The chief purpose of this preliminary telling of the story is to test one's mastery of the content, and to prepare the way for a refinement and enrichment of both content and form…. Every episode, incident, event, and descrip-

tion that does not directly add to the power of the story in the use that you now have in mind is to be eliminated…. Your aim is to stir certain feelings or to present certain truths; every word that does not further these ends hinders the accomplishment of your purpose."

Edna Lyman: "It may not be amiss to suggest how large an element the beauty of the voice is in the delight which people feel when listening…. Children are quite as sensitive as grown people to quality of tone and pitch, to distinct enunciation, and to artistic expression…. The disregard for punctuation and the habitual argumentative and dictatorial style of reading are extremely monotonous and inexpressive. Down go the voices like so many hammers, at every comma, semicolon, colon, or period…. A little thought as to the relation of punctuation and expression, and an effort to visualize the pictures as we read, will do much toward giving color and expression to our performance."

Esenwein/Stockard: "The spoken word is the story-teller's chief technical equipment. A knowledge of words, precision and fluency in their use, as well as voice-placing and training in articulation, are essential. The successful story-teller must make word and voice the servants of his spirit…. It is chiefly through the spoken word that spirit kindles response of spirit, and reveals itself to its kind…. 'The eyes are the windows of the soul,' but the voice is its musical instrument."

Esenwein/Stockard: "[The] charm of voice may be acquired by anyone who is willing to spend a few minutes daily on deep-breathing exercises, and to pay attention to the tones used in ordinary conversation. Doubtless nearly every story-teller can sing 'a little,' yet does not singing illustrate the ease of tone-placing? Put your voice down when it shows a tendency to shoot up. By an act of will smooth off its rough edges. Relax the muscles of the throat when you feel them tightening as

you speak. Practice the full, deep, open tones. Repeat 'open' words like 'Oh' until you feel deep down the vibrations and richness of a round tone.

"The poet Longfellow advised Mary Anderson to read joyous lyric poetry aloud daily so as to put brightness into her voice. Learn to listen to your own voice and so cultivate charm of tone."

Richard Wyches: "He whose heart has been touched by the message of a great story will, as he begins to tell it to others, creating afresh its feeling, find in his voice a soulfulness and tenderness that cannot be had by vocal training. The voice rings true to the inward feeling. This does not imply that vocal gymnastics have no place in speaking. Voice culture has a place and an important place in speaking. The story teller may rest assured that if he does not feel his words, his audience will not…. The music of a tender, sympathetic voice awakens the soul in the child, creates an atmosphere in which a soul can grow. The soulless speaker has a soulless voice."

Henry Tralle: "Too many story-tellers speak too slowly…. It is difficult to speak too rapidly, provided the story-teller speaks distinctly and with proper emphasis and modulation…. The human mind gets things quickly, and the story-teller needs to move rapidly, from word to word and from sentence to sentence, that he may sketch his mental pictures quickly, else the listeners will get impatient and become inattentive, and thus fail to see clearly, and to feel and act accordingly…. A slow-speaking, slow-moving story-teller cannot be very interesting and effective. Of course, the story-teller should not appear to be hurried or worried…."

Esenwein/Stockard: "Change of pace is one of the most effective methods of delivery. Now rapidly, now slowly, now with moderate speed, constantly accommodate your rate of utterance to the mood of the story. The flat evenness of a

uniform pace is guaranteed to be dull.

"Change of pace and the interest of the narration in general are helped by the use of what proficient speakers know as the pause—a well-calculated pause either just before or just after an emphatic word or an important statement. The preliminary pause is a signal that something interesting is about to come, it gives the vital point time to pierce the mind. The after-pause allows time for the point to sink in. Pause makes use of that greatest of all devices known to the talker—contrast. It is the foe of monotony and the friend of emphasis. Rightly used, there can be no better device by which to cap a climax.

"Change of pitch is still another admirable method of holding the listener's interest…read aloud any story given in this volume and practice both gradual and sudden shifts of pitch."

Edward St. John: "Certain devices are so commonly used by good story-tellers, and are…effective in adding interest to the story itself…

"One of the most important of these literary devices is the use of direct rather than indirect discourse…. There is no easier way to give the semblance of reality to an imaginary tale than by letting the characters speak for themselves. The personality of the narrator is less intrusive, and the effect upon the hearer is that of looking on at a scene in real life. On the other hand, in the most literal prosaic tale characters who are not permitted to do their own talking seem but half alive."

Henry Tralle: "The sayings of Bacon are less familiar to us than those of Shakespeare because he talked too much. Shakespeare did not say anything. He let his characters do the talking, and we are still listening to them…. The trained story-teller knows that his listeners will listen far more readily to what his characters say than to anything he may say him-

self, and that they will accept suggestions from his characters when they would not accept them from him."

Edward St. John: "Another characteristic of a good style is worthy of special mention. This is *brevity*…. The principle of unity suggests it, the emphasis upon action and concrete statements favors it, and the choice of simple and straightforward language tends toward the same result."

Henry Tralle: "There is scarcely any place at all for adjectives in the story, and certainly not in the beginning. The listener should have the pleasure of finding out for himself whether the hero is good or bad, happy or unhappy, etc. Let the story itself unfold to the listener the action, and let him form his own judgments and experience his own emotions."

Walter Hervey: "Let what he did tell what he was."

Esenwein/Stockard: "The memorized story is mechanical, and its mechanism usually creaks—it is like a chiseled image, rather than a living, breathing being; it is parrot-like recitation, rather than creation. The story-teller must free his mind from all but the life of the story which flows through his words to his listeners. Each sentence must be charged with the electric current of his joy in the giving. It is this joy that will free him from self-consciousness. Not himself, but the story is important. He is merely the medium through which the message is transmitted. He must know his story so well that his mind is freed from thought of words and thought of self, then will his mood play through the story, catching and kindling the spirit of his audience.

"Consider the force of these words of the poet Bryant:

The secret wouldst thou know
To touch the heart or fire the blood at will?
Let thine own heart o'erflow;
Let they lips quiver with the passionate thrill;

Seize the great thought ere yet its power is past
And bind, in words, the fleet emotions fast."

Edward St. John: "Looking back over these suggestions the beginner may feel that it would require less effort to simply follow the story as it appears in the book or as it was told by another. There can be no doubt that this is true, but the fact remains that good story-tellers do not do that way…. Any one can memorize a story by simple repetition, and that plan may be used if he is to tell but one. But if motives are to be stirred, if conduct is to be guided, if character is to be formed,…he can afford to honor his art and take such time and pains as are necessary to perfect his technique….

"Practice, guided by a well-conceived plan, is the chief secret of success."

Suggested Learning Activities

1. Say the word "oh" at least four distinct ways.

How many ways can you say "yes," "no"? Practice with other words.

2. Read this story of Paul Revere aloud. The first time through, keep the same pace throughout. Don't vary soft or loud. Keep the inflection of your voice even and steady in every sentence, dropping your voice at each period.

Now read it aloud again, but this time as you read, try changing the pace or tempo throughout the story that reflects the mood of what is taking place; practice using "the pause" in places of suspense or emphasis; change the pitch of your voice, sometimes soft, sometimes loud. Vary the inflection of various sentences so that sometimes your voice goes up at the end of a sentence rather than down. Be aware of the "music" in your voice, both the melody and the rhythm.

The Ride of Paul Revere
(Emelyn Partridge)

Paul Revere hurried along the streets of Boston late one night many years ago. He was on his way to his boat to go across the Charlestown. No wonder he hurried! The British soldiers were to be transported across to Charlestown or Cambridge. They had marched down to the end of the Common that day. And the British man of war, *Somerset*, had swung out in the stream so that her guns covered the ferry ways. This meant,

"*People out in the country are not to know what is going on over here.*"

But there were some things the British did not know. They did not know that on Sunday, Paul Revere had given the warning to Lexington and Concord and that the military supplies had been moved and concealed in places of safety. They did not know about the signals that he had agreed would be given the watchers over in Charlestown. They did not know that William Dawes was on his way by land to Lexington and Concord with the same message that he, himself, was bearing.

All of these things Paul Revere was thinking about as he hurried to his boat where two friends were waiting to row him across the river. The moon was just rising; the tide was coming in; and the man of war, near by, was winding with the tide. They must keep their boat in the shadow as much as possible. So they went a little to the eastward of where the *Somerset* lay.

The two men rowed as noiselessly as they could. If they were discovered, it meant arrest, perhaps death. But, at last, the boat touched shore and the men could draw a long, deep breath of relief. On the shore, people were waiting for them.

"We have seen the signals," they said.

Someone provided the horse, and Paul Revere hurried away toward Lexington. It was eleven o'clock—a night full of shadows; for the moon was still near the horizon. He rode away,

–"*and through the gloom and the light,*

The fate of a nation was riding that night."

He had not gone far on the road through Charlestown, when he discerned, just ahead of him, two British officers. He turned quickly and made his escape through Medford. Here he aroused the Captain of the Minute Men.

"*The Regulars are coming out!*" he shouted.

And then at every house he halted, arousing the people with the cry,

"*The Regulars are coming out!*"

Just before midnight, he galloped up to Mr. Clarke's house, in Lexington by the green, where Hancock and Adams were staying. Here eight men were on guard.

"The family have retired and have requested that there be no noise," they told him.

"Noise!" said he, "you'll have noise enough before long. *The Regulars are coming out!*"

And then they allowed him to pass into the house.

In half an hour Dawes reached them, bearing the duplicate message from Warren. Now that Hancock and Adams had been warned of their danger, word must be hurried on to Concord. The two men, Dawes and Revere started out. They were soon joined by a young man named Prescott. When they were about half way to Concord, as Paul Revere was riding ahead—the other two having stopped to arouse someone—he saw two officers in the road. Before there was any chance to escape two more joined them.

"If you go an inch further you are a dead man," they called, as they pointed their pistols at him.

Revere's two companions now rode up, and the three tried to break their way through the officers.

"If you do not go into that pasture we will shoot," they threatened.

So into the pasture the men were forced to go.

But Prescott whispered,

"Put on!"

He galloped to the left and Revere to the right of the pasture, at the end of which was a wood.

"I will rush to that and then take to my feet through the woods," Revere determined.

Down the pasture he galloped; he reached the wood; and was about to alight from his horse, when out sprang six officers and pressed their pistols against his chest!

Then the officer in command questioned him. When they found that Paul Revere was actually in their power and that he had been arousing the country from Charlestown out, the commanding officer called out from the woods prisoners concealed there, and with the other four officers, they soon were on the way back to Lexington.

When they were within a half mile from the meeting house, they heard a gun fired in the distance.

"What is that?" the officers asked.

"That is an alarm; we will have five hundred men ready," said Revere.

Ordering the other prisoners to dismount, the bridles were cut, their horses driven away, and the commanding officer told them they might go.

"And will you not dismiss me too?" Revere asked him.

"I will keep you, let the consequence be what it will," he said.

As they came within sight of the meeting house, a volley of shots were fired. Ordering a halt, the Major turned to the prisoner.

"How far is it to Cambridge?" he asked. Then to the Sergeant, "Is your horse tired? Take the prisoner's; he may go."

And they rode off in the night, leaving Paul Revere free once more. He ran to Mr. Clarke's house, and found Hancock and Adams still there.

"*You must hide yourselves*. I will take you to a safe place," he said.

Away across the fields for two miles he led them to a hiding place in the swamp:—then back he hurried.

"The Regulars are two miles away," they told him.

Revere knew that the papers of Colonel Hancock must be secured before the soldiers came up. Into the house he ran, another man with him, secured the box, and from the window saw the Regulars advancing. *He must* get away with that box of papers! Downstairs they hastened, across the green, behind the meeting house, through the line of militia gathered there and—*into safety*!

As he passed through the line he heard the commanding officer say to his men,

"Let the troops pass by, don't molest them, *unless they fire first*."

In a moment the Regulars appeared, made a halt behind the meeting house, then one gun was fired. Revere turned and saw the smoke in front of the troops; then he saw them run ahead a few paces with a great shout. Then—the whole body fire.

And *this* the battle of Lexington. *Here* the first blood

of the Revolution was shed.

3. After reading the examples of retold Aesop's fables in the Familiar Stories section—*The Lion and the Mouse*, *The Shepherd Boy and the Wolf*, *The Hare and the Tortoise*, *The North Wind and the Sun*—what can you do to this condensed Aesop fable to give it life and more interest?

The Ant and the Grasshopper

> On a warm day in summer, an Ant was busy in the field gathering grains of wheat and corn, which he laid up for winter food. A Grasshopper saw him at work, and laughed at him for toiling so hard, when others were at ease.
>
> The Ant said nothing. But afterwards, when winter came, and the ground was hard, the Grasshopper was nearly dead with hunger, and came to the Ant to beg something to eat. Then the Ant said to him:
>
> "If you had worked when I did, instead of laughing at me, you would not now be in need."

Notes:

Emelyn Partridge: "[The storyteller] is not to attract the attention of the audience especially to himself, but rather away from himself. Indeed it is his place to take them away from the present altogether, and place them in the midst of scenes which he is describing to them. This is precisely the opposite of acting…; the story-teller is at his best by the dim firelight."

Esenwein/Stockard: "How futile it is for a story-teller to gather her hearers and say, 'Now, children, I am going to tell you a lovely story, and I want you all to be ve-e-ry quiet—James, sit up straight! If, when I have finished, you do not say that this is one of the very best stories you have ever heard, I shall be very much disappointed"—and more irritating indirectness, plentifully sprinkled with very's.

"The way to begin is to begin. If the opening does not command interest no story-teller can demand it.

"Let there be no formal introduction—that is, no audible laying of foundations, no exposition of facts and conditions that took place prior to the story. Plunge in. The best opening brings before the child in one or two short, vivid sentences one or more of the leading characters in the story and shows him or them in an interesting situation.

"But what is interest? It is that which sends the mind forward in a swift leap of expectation. 'Something is going to happen!' we feel subconsciously; or, 'That's queer!' or, 'How did that come to be?' In short, the good story-opening not only points forward to action but actually begins the action…

"Every word that does not help, hinders."

Esenwein/Stockard: "[I]t is rarely if ever wise to ask the children questions while a story is being told, or to allow them to interrupt with questions. The well-prepared story will answer all necessary questions as it goes along. Even if every point cannot be briefly made clear to every child, do not stop to elaborate. Have not you yourself experienced the joy of sudden understanding of some passage in a story or a poem learned in childhood, the full meaning of which was long denied to your mind? Besides, it will not do to ignore the fancy of the child, which is marvelously equipped to paint its own pictures, if only you give it the imaginary background."

Edward St. John: "If the teacher pauses at a critical moment to ask, 'What do you think he did next?' 'How could you have escaped from such a place?' 'Who can tell of a better way?' he may secure some clever guesses, but he spoils the story. The steady flow of thought and feeling toward one particular end is checked; the impression already made is dissipated. The pupils' wits may have been sharpened, but their hearts have not been stirred…

"[R]emember that the question is as distinctly and as characteristically a device for stirring the intellectual powers as the story is for stimulating the feelings. There are, of course, times when the rhetorical question, one which the hearer is not expected to answer, but which serves to quicken and prolong curiosity, may be wisely used, but as a rule the story and the question are teaching devices that are not readily combined."

Henry Tralle: "The story may be said to weave a spell about the listener, and this is necessary to its success. Any interjecting question breaks this spell, and the story must begin over again.

"A boy would act no more foolishly if he were to jerk his kite back to the ground every five minutes, in order to make

sure that it will fly. The informed story-teller can trust the listener to fly, once he is properly started on the wings of a controlled imagination."

Julia Cowles: "If a child becomes inattentive, address your story to him for a time, and turn to him frequently afterward. Each child loves to feel that the story is being told to him. For this reason, the story and the children are the only things to be taken account of. The story should be told directly to the individual children, not to the mass of children."

Suggested Learning Activity

1. Practice telling the first stories in the Familiar section "by heart." Their repetitive nature and familiarity make them some of the easiest stories to tell.

2. ***St. John***: "Select two stories that are about equally difficult, and both of which contain about the same number of incidents or events. Learn one by simply reading it again and again without memorizing it. For the other, follow the plan suggested of analyzing its parts, making sure there is a strong opening and identifying and outlining each of the events in order that lead to the climax. At the end of the week, test the results by an attempt to use each."

3. ***St. John***: Recall some story heard but once, but which roused your interest, and attempt to outline the successive events in their order. Re-tell the story. Note how readily you can fill in the gaps when the aim is defined and the elements are outlined.

4. Attempt to tell a familiar fairy tale from your childhood. Did you find any gaps as you told the story?

5. Using the tips you have learned on eliminating unnecessary details, keeping the flow of the story, using repetitive phrases, brevity, simple picturesque words, etc., prepare this classic story for telling:

The Happy Prince
(Oscar Wilde)

High above the city, on a tall column, stood the statue of the Happy Prince. He was gilded all over with thin leaves of fine gold, for eyes he had two bright sapphires, and a large red ruby glowed on his sword-hilt.

"Why can't you be like the Happy Prince?" asked a mother of her little boy who was crying for the moon. "The Happy Prince never dreams of crying for anything."

"I am glad there is some one in the world who is quite happy," muttered a disappointed man as he gazed at the wonderful statue.

"He looks just like an angel," said the Orphan Children, as they came out of the cathedral.

"How do you know?" said the Mathematical Master, "you have never seen one."

"Ah! but we have, in our dreams," answered the children; and the Mathematical Master frowned and looked very severe, for he did not approve of dreaming.

One night there flew over the city a little Swallow. His friends had gone away to Egypt six weeks before, but he had stayed behind with the beautiful Reed. He had seen her early in the spring as he was flying down the river after a big yellow moth, and had stopped to talk to her.

"Shall I love you?" said he. "Shall I love you?" And the Reed made him a low bow. So he flew round and round her, touching the water with his wings, and making silver ripples. This lasted through the summer.

Then, when the autumn came, the other swallows all flew away. After they had gone he felt lonely.

"I am off to the Pyramids," said he to the Reed. "Goodbye!" and he flew after them.

All day long he flew, and at night-time he arrived at

the city. "Where shall I put up?" he said; "I hope the town has made preparations."

Then he saw the statue on the tall column.

"I will put up there," he cried; "it is a high place with plenty of fresh air." So he alighted just between the feet of the Happy Prince.

"I have a golden bedroom," he said softly to himself as he looked round and prepared to go to sleep; but as he was putting his head under his wing a large drop of water fell on him. "What a curious thing!" he cried; "there is not a single cloud in the sky, the stars are quite clear and bright, and yet it is raining. The climate in the north of Europe is really dreadful."

Then another drop fell.

"What is the use of a statue if it cannot keep the rain off?" he said; "I must look for a good chimney-pot," and he made up his mind to fly away.

But before he had opened his wings, a third drop fell, and he looked up and saw—Ah! what did he see?

The eyes of the Happy Prince were filled with tears, and tears were running down his golden cheeks. His face was so beautiful in the moonlight that the little Swallow was filled with pity. "Who are you?" he said.

"I am the Happy Prince."

"Why are you weeping then?" asked the Swallow. "You have quite drenched me."

"When I was alive and had a heart to feel," answered the statue, "I lived in a palace. In the daytime I played with my companions in the garden, and in the evening I led the dance in the Great Hall. Round the garden ran a very lofty wall, but I never cared to ask what lay beyond it. My courtiers called me the Happy Prince. So I lived and died. And now that I am dead they have set me up here

so high that I can see all the ugliness and all the misery of my city, and though my heart is made of lead, yet I cannot choose but weep."

"What! is he not solid gold?" said the Swallow to himself. He was too polite to make any personal remarks out loud.

"Far away," continued the statue, "far away in a little street there is a poor house. One of the windows is open, and through it I can see a woman seated at a table. Her face is thin and worn, and she has coarse, red hands, all pricked by the needle, for she is a seamstress. She is embroidering flowers on a satin gown for the loveliest of the queen's maids-of-honor to wear at the next court-ball. In a bed in the corner of the room her little boy is lying ill. He has a fever, and is asking for oranges. His mother has nothing to give him but river water, so he is crying. Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, will you not take her the ruby out of my sword-hilt? My feet are fastened to this pedestal and I cannot move."

"I am waited for in Egypt," said the Swallow. "My friends are flying up and down the Nile."

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "will you not stay with me for one night, and be my messenger? The boy is so thirsty, and the mother so sad."

"I don't think I like boys," answered the Swallow. "Last summer, when I was staying on the river, there were two rude boys, the miller's sons, who were always throwing stones at me. They never hit me, of course; we swallows fly far too well for that, and besides, I come of a family famous for its swiftness; but still it was a mark of disrespect."

But the Happy Prince looked so sad that the little Swallow was sorry. "It is very cold here," he said; "but I will stay with you for one night and be your messenger."

"Thank you, little Swallow," said the Prince.

So the Swallow picked out the great ruby from the Prince's sword, and flew away with it in his beak over the roofs of the town.

He passed by the cathedral tower, the white marble angels were sculptured. He passed by the place and heard a beautiful girl say, "I hope my dress will be ready in time for the State ball. I have ordered flowers to be embroidered on it; but the seamstresses are so lazy."

At last he came to the poor house and looked in. The boy was tossing feverishly on his bed, and the mother had fallen asleep, she was so tired. In he hopped, and laid the great ruby on the table beside the woman's thimble. Then he flew gently round the bed, fanning the boy's forehead with his wings. "How cool I feel," said the boy, "I must be getting better;" and he sank into a delicious slumber.

Then the Swallow flew back to the Happy Prince. "It is strange," he remarked, "but I feel quite warm now, although it is so cold."

"That is because you have done a good action," said the Prince. And the little Swallow began to think, and then he fell asleep. Thinking always made him sleepy.

When day broke he flew down to the river and had a bath. "What a remarkable phenomenon," said the Bird Professor as he was passing over the bridge. "A swallow in winter!" And he wrote a long letter about it to the local newspaper.

"Tonight I go to Egypt," said the Swallow, and he was in high spirits. He visited all the public monuments, and sat a long time on top of the church steeple. Wherever he went the Sparrows chirruped, and said to each other, "What a distinguished stranger!" so he enjoyed himself very much.

When the moon rose he flew back to the Happy Prince. "Have you any commissions for Egypt?" he cried; "I am just starting."

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "will you not stay with me one night longer?"

"I am waited for in Egypt," answered the Swallow. "Tomorrow my friends will fly up to the Second Cataract. The river-horse couches there among the bulrushes. At noon the lions come down to the water's edge to drink. They have eyes like green beryls, and their roar is louder than the roar of the cataract."

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "far away across the city I see a young man in a garret. He is leaning over a desk covered with papers. He is trying to finish a play, but he is too cold to write any more. There is no fire in the grate, and hunger has made him faint."

"I will wait with you one night longer," said the Swallow, who really had a good heart. "Shall I take him another ruby?"

"Alas!" said the Prince; "my eyes are all that I have left. But they are made of rare sapphires, brought out of India a thousand years ago. Pluck out one of them and take it to him. He will sell it to the jeweler, and buy food and firewood, and finish his play."

"Dear Prince," said the Swallow, "I cannot do that;" and he began to weep.

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "do as I command you."

So the Swallow plucked out the Prince's eye, and flew away to the student's garret. It was easy enough to get in, as there was a hole in the roof. Through this he darted, and came into the room.

The young man had his head buried in his hands, so he did not hear the flutter of the bird's wings, and when he looked up he found the beautiful sapphire.

"Now I can finish my play," he cried, and he looked quite happy.

The next day the Swallow flew down to the harbor. He sat on the mast of a large vessel and watched the sailors hauling big chests out of the hold with ropes. "Heave ahoy!" they shouted as each chest came up. "I am going to Egypt," cried the Swallow, but nobody minded, and when the moon rose he flew back to the Happy Prince. "I am come to bid you good-bye," he cried.

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "will you not stay with me one night longer?"

"It is winter," answered the Swallow, "and the chill snow will soon be here. In Egypt the sun is warm on the green palm-trees, and the crocodiles lie in the mud. My companions are building a nest. Dear Prince, I must leave you, but I will never forget you, and next spring I will bring you back two beautiful jewels in place of those you have given away. The ruby shall be redder than a red rose, and the sapphire shall be as blue as the great sea."

"In the square below," said the Happy Prince, "there stands a little match-girl. She has let her matches fall in the gutter, and they are all spoiled. Her father will beat her if she does not take home some money, and she is crying. She has no shoes or stockings, and her little head is bare. Pluck out my other eye, and give it to her, and her father will not beat her."

"I will stay with you one night longer," said the Swallow, "but I cannot pluck out your eye. You would be quite blind then."

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "do as I command you."

So he plucked out the Prince's other eye, and darted down with it. He swooped past the match-girl, and slipped the jewel into the palm of her hand. "What a lovely bit of glass!" cried the little girl; and she ran home, laughing.

Then the Swallow came back to the Prince. "You are blind now," he said, "so I will stay with you always."

"No, little Swallow," said the poor Prince, "you must go away to Egypt."

"I will stay with you always," said the Swallow, and he slept at the Prince's feet.

All the next day he sat on the Prince's shoulder, and told him stories of what he had seen in strange lands. He told him of the red ibises, who stand in long rows on the banks of the Nile, and catch goldfish in their beaks; and of the Sphinx, who is as old as the world itself, and lives in the desert, and knows everything.

"Dear little Swallow," said the Prince, "you tell me of marvelous things, but fly over my city, little Swallow, and tell me what you see there."

So the Swallow flew over the great city, and saw the rich making merry in their beautiful houses, while the beggars were sitting at the gates. He flew into dark lanes, and saw the white faces of starving children looking out listlessly at the black streets. Under the archway of a bridge two little boys were lying in one another's arms to try and keep themselves warm. "How hungry we are!" they said. "You must not lie here," shouted the Watchman, and they wandered out into the rain.

Then he flew back and told the Prince what he had seen.

"I am covered with fine gold," said the Prince, "you must take it off, leaf by leaf, and give it to my poor."

Leaf after leaf of the fine gold the Swallow picked off, till the Happy Prince looked quite dull and gray. Leaf after leaf of the fine gold he took to the poor. "We have bread now!" they cried. And the children's faces grew rosier, and they laughed and played games in the street.

Then the snow came, and after the snow came the frost. The streets looked as if they were made of silver, they were so bright and glistening; long icicles like crystal

daggers hung down from the eaves of the houses.

The poor little Swallow grew colder and colder, but he would not leave the Prince; he loved him too well. He picked up crumbs outside the baker's door, and tried to keep himself warm by flapping his wings.

But at last he knew that he was going to die. He had just strength to fly up to the Prince's shoulder once more. "Good-bye, dear Prince!" he murmured. "Will you let me kiss your hand?'"

"I am glad that you are going to Egypt at last, little Swallow," said the Prince, "you have stayed too long here; but kiss me on the lips, for I love you."

"It is not to Egypt that I am going," said the Swallow. "I am going to Death. Death is the brother of Sleep, is he not?"

And he kissed the Happy Prince on the lips, and fell down dead at his feet.

At that moment a curious crack sounded inside the statue, as if something had broken. The fact is that the leaden heart had snapped in two. It certainly was a hard frost.

Early the next morning the Mayor was walking in the square below in company with the Town Councilors. As they passed the column he looked up at the statue. "Dear me! how shabby the Happy Prince looks!" he said.

"How shabby indeed!" cried the Town Councilors, who always agreed with the Mayor, and they went up to look at it.

"The ruby has fallen out of his sword, his eyes are gone," said the Mayor; "in fact, he is little better than a beggar!"

So they pulled down the statue of the Happy Prince and sent it to be melted in a furnace.

"What a strange thing!" said the overseer of the workmen at the foundry. "This broken lead heart will not melt in the furnace. We must throw it away." So they threw it on a dust-heap where the dead Swallow was also lying.

"Bring me the two precious things in the city," said God to one of His Angels; and the Angel took Him the leaden heart and the dead bird.

"You have chosen rightly," said God; "in my garden of Paradise this little bird shall sing for evermore, and in my city of gold the Happy Prince shall praise me."

Notes:

STEP 6: STOP

Julia Cowles: "The story must reach a climax and stop there. Many a good story has been spoiled by its ending. Story-tellers sometimes remind one of a man holding the handles of an electric battery. The current is so strong that he cannot let go. The story-teller must know when and how to 'let go.'

"Bring the story to its self-wrought denouement and—let go. Do not apologize for the ending, do not explain it, do not tack on a moral—just 'let go,' and you will leave all the tingle and exhilaration of the magnetic current still in the veins of your listeners."

Henry Tralle: "The shorter the ending, the better. Usually a single sentence is sufficient. Interest is at its height when the story reaches the climax, and the close must come very quickly else there will be interference with the impression."

Esenwein/Stockard: "The swiftest endings of all fictional forms, excepting the anecdote, are those of children's stories. Indeed, in many stories the high point, or climax, is the ending itself, though in others a final line is added to round off the tale. But when you are through, stop. Anti-climax here means a painful let-down of interest.

"That teaching which the action of the story does not itself bring to the child's consciousness can never be given at the close by the formal words of the story-teller. If you would kill the natural effect of the story, get out your hammer and tack on a moral."

Katherine Cather: "[A]bove all, do not end a story that delights a boy or girl and then kill the whole effect by saying,

'Now, Peter, what does that story teach you?' Give the child credit for being an intelligent human being, and do not spoil a tale for him by turning it into a sermon while he is still tingling with the wonder and joy of it."

Edward St. John: "To add a moral application to a story is as complete a confession of failure as to append an explanation to a joke…. If a good story is well told moralizing is not necessary; but that is not all. It has been clearly demonstrated that it weakens the moral influence. Psychologists have formulated the law that the power of normal suggestion varies inversely with the extent to which its purpose is definitely revealed…. Children…are strongly influenced by transcripts of life in which the duties are clearly implied, but not explicitly stated….

"Moralizing all men resent; from experience they learn without a murmur."

Angela Keyes: "The tendency…to require immediate verbal reproduction of all stories is unwise utilitarianism…. The child is capable of responding in aesthetic pleasure or spiritual uplift to stories as yet beyond his retelling. It is highly desirable that he be given the chance of contact with such material and that its seed be given time to root and flower. To urge him to immediate reproduction is to develop shallow glibness at the sacrifice of something finer."

Marie Shedlock: "I have always maintained that five minutes of complete silence after the story would do more to fix the impression on the mind of the child than any amount of attempt at reproducing it."

Margaret Eggleston: "Once I heard the story of the 'Star Child' told. It has a wonderful ending. 'And they fell on his neck and kissed him, and brought him into the palace, and clothed him in fine raiment, and set the crown upon his head and the scepter in his hand. Much mercy and justice did he

show to all. He banished the evil magician; to the Woodcutter and his wife he sent rich gifts and to their children he gave high honor. Nor would he suffer any to be cruel to bird or beast but taught love and kindness and charity. To the poor he gave bread; to the naked he gave clothing and there was peace and plenty in the land.' A long conclusion but a very fine one. When the teacher had finished, she began asking questions, twice startling a little girl who finally began to cry. Later when I asked her why she had cried, she said, 'Oh, I was having such a lovely story about that city and it was so mean of her to spoil it all. But she always does and I want to keep still.'

"A good story stops at the conclusion."

Suggested Learning Activities

1. Study the endings of several stories in Part Three. How did the storyteller bring the story to a satisfying conclusion; 'to rest'?

2. Read this story of *The Star-Child* aloud which Margaret Eggleston referred to. How would you have felt if someone had made you discuss the moral of the story as soon as it was finished?

The Star-Child
(Carolyn Sherwin Bailey)

Once upon a time a poor Woodcutter was making his way through a pine forest. It was winter, and a night of bitter weather. So cold was it that even the animals and the birds did not know what to make of it. The little Squirrels who lived inside the tall fir tree kept rubbing each other's noses to keep warm, and the Rabbits curled themselves up in their holes and did not even look out of doors.

And as the Woodcutter pressed on toward home,

bewailing his lot, there fell from heaven a very bright and beautiful star. It slipped down the side of the sky, passing by the other stars, and it seemed to sink behind a clump of willow trees no more than a stone's throw away.

"Why, there is a crock of gold for whoever finds it," he said, and he hastened toward it. Stooping down, he placed his hands upon a thing of gold lying on the white snow. It was a cloak of golden tissue, curiously wrought with stars, and wrapped in many folds. There was no gold in it, but only a little child who was asleep.

Very tenderly the Woodcutter took up the child and wrapped the cloak around it to shield it from the harsh cold, and he made his way down the hill to the village.

"I have found something in the forest," he said to his wife when he reached the poor house where they lived.

"What is it?" she cried. "The house is bare and we have need of many things." So he drew the cloak back and showed her the sleeping child.

"It is a Star-Child," he said, and told her of the strange manner of finding it.

"But our children lack bread; can we feed another?" she asked.

"God careth for the sparrows even," he answered.

So after a time she turned round and looked at him, and her eyes were full of tears. And he came in swiftly, and placed the child in her arms, and she kissed it, and laid it in a little bed where the youngest of their own children was lying. And on the morrow the Woodcutter took the curious cloak of gold and placed it in a great chest, and a chain of amber that was round the child's neck his wife took and set in the chest also.

So the Star-Child was brought up with the children of the Woodcutter, and sat at the same board with them, and was their playmate. And every year he became more

beautiful to look at, so that all those who dwelt in the village were filled with wonder. While they were swarthy and black-haired, he was white and delicate as ivory, and his curls were like the rings of the daffodil. His lips, also, were like the petals of a red flower, and his eyes were like violets, and his body like a narcissus of a field where the mower comes not.

Yet the Star-Child's beauty worked him harm, for he grew proud and cruel and selfish. He despised the other children of the village because they were of mean parentage, and he made himself master of them and called them his servants. He had no pity for the poor, or for those who were blind, or lame; but would cast stones at them.

Now there passed one day through the village a poor beggar-woman. Her garments were torn and ragged, and her feet were bleeding from the rough road on which she had travelled, and she was in very evil plight. And being weary, she sat her down under a chestnut tree to rest.

But when the Star-Child saw her, he said to his companions, "See! There sits a beggar-woman under that fair and green-leaved tree. Come, let us drive her hence, for she is ugly and ill-favoured."

So he came near and threw stones at her, and mocked her, and she looked at him with terror in her eyes, nor did she move her gaze from him.

"Whose child is this?" she asked. Then the Woodcutter, who was passing by, told of finding the Star-Child, of the chain of amber around his neck and the cloak wrought with stars. And, hearing, the beggar-woman cried with joy.

"He is my little son," she said, "whom I lost through enchantment in the forest. I have searched for him through all the world."

The Woodcutter called the Star-Child, and said to him, "Here is thy mother, waiting for thee."

But the Star-Child laughed scornfully. "I am no son of thine," he said. "I am a Star-Child, and thou art a beggar, and ugly, and in rags. Get thee hence that I may see thee no more."

"Oh, my little son," cried the beggar-woman. "Will you not kiss me before I go? I have suffered much to find thee."

"No," said the Star-Child. "I would rather kiss an adder or a toad than thee."

So the woman went away into the forest, weeping bitterly, and the Star-Child was glad and ran back to his playmates. But when they saw him coming they ran away from him in fear. He went to the well and looked in. Lo, his face was as the face of a toad and his body was scaled like an adder. He flung himself down on the grass, and wept.

"I denied my mother," he said. "This has come upon me because of my sin. I will seek her through all the world, nor rest until I have found her."

So he ran away into the forest and called out to his mother to come to him, but there was no answer. All day long he called to her, and when the sun set he lay down to sleep on a bed of leaves, and the birds and the animals fled from him, for they remembered his cruelty, and he was alone save for the toad that watched him, and the slow adder that crawled past.

And in the morning he rose up and plucked some bitter berries from the trees and ate them, and took his way through the great wood, weeping sorely. And of everything that he met he made inquiry if perchance they had seen his mother.

He said to the Mole, "Thou canst go beneath the earth. Tell me, is my mother there?"

And the Mole answered, "Thou hast blinded mine

eyes. How should I know?"

He said to the Linnet, "Thou canst fly over the tops of the tall trees and canst see the whole world. Tell me, canst thou see my mother?"

And the Linnet answered, "Thou hast clipt my wings for thy pleasure. How should I fly?"

And to the little Squirrel who lived in the fir tree, and was lonely, he said, "Where is my mother?"

And the Squirrel answered, "Thou hast slain mine. Dost thou seek to slay thine also?"

And the Star-Child wept and bowed his head and prayed forgiveness of God's things, and went on through the forest, seeking for the beggar-woman.

When he passed through the villages the children mocked him and threw stones at him. He had no place to rest his head, and none had pity on him. For the space of three years he wandered over the world, and often seemed to see his mother in the road in front of him, and would call to her, and run after her until the sharp flints made his feet bleed. But overtake her he could not, and there was neither love nor charity for him. It was such a world as he had made for himself in the days of his pride.

It happened that in his wanderings he was taken and sold as a slave, and his master, who was a wicked magician, demanded that he go out in search of a piece of pure white gold.

"See that thou bringest it," said the magician, "or it will go hard with thee."

So the Star-Child went in search of the piece of white gold but he could not find it, although he sought for it from morn to noon, and from noon to sunset. Then he set his face toward home, weeping bitterly, for he knew that the magician would beat him with an hundred stripes. But suddenly he heard, from a thicket a cry, and, forgetting his

own sorrow, he ran to the place. He saw a little hare caught in a trap.

The Star-Child had pity on it and released it and the hare said to him, "What shall I give thee in return for my freedom?"

And the Star-Child said to it, "I am seeking for a piece of white gold nor can I, anywhere, find it; and if I bring it not to my master he will beat me."

"Come with me," said the hare. "I know where it is hidden, and for what purpose."

So the Star-Child went with the hare, and in the cleft of a great oak tree he saw the white gold that he was seeking. He took it and ran swiftly toward the city.

Now at the gate of the city there was seated one who was a leper. When he saw the Star-Child he called to him and said, "Give me a piece of money or I must die of hunger. They have turned me out of the city and there is no one who has pity on me."

"Alas," cried the Star-Child. "I have but one piece of money, and if I bring it not to my master he will beat me, for I am his slave."

"Give me the piece of money or I must die," cried the leper, and the Star-Child had pity on him and gave him the piece of gold. Yet his heart was heavy, for he knew what evil fate awaited him.

But, lo, as he passed through the gates of the city, the guards bowed to him and the high officers of the city ran forth to meet him and cried, "Thou art our lord for whom we have been waiting, and the son of our king."

And the Star-Child wondered. "I am no king's son, but the child of a beggar-woman and evil to look at," he said. Then he saw his image in one of the burnished shields of the guards.

Lo, his face was again beautiful, and all his comeliness had come back to him again.

But he said to them, "I am not worthy, for I have denied my mother, nor may I rest until I have found her. Let me go, for I must wander again through the world." As he spoke he looked toward the road and there he saw the beggar-woman who was his mother and at her side stood the leper who had sat beside the gate.

Then a cry of joy broke from the Star-Child's lips and he ran over, and kneeled down, and kissed the wounds in his mother's feet. And the beggar-woman put her hand on his head and said to him, "Rise"; and the leper put his hand upon the Star-Child also, and said to him, "Rise."

And he rose up from their feet and looked at them; and they were a King and a Queen.

And the Queen said to him, "This is thy father whom thou hast fed.

And the King said, "This is thy mother whose feet thou hast washed with thy tears."

And they clothed the Star-Child in fair raiment and set a crown upon his head and a sceptre in his hand and he was the ruler of the city. He was wise and merciful to all, and to the Woodcutter and his family he sent many rich gifts. He would not suffer any one to be cruel to bird or beast, but taught love and loving kindness; and to the poor he gave bread, and to the naked raiment; and there was peace and plenty in the land.

Progression of Stories

Esenwein/Stockard: "Bear in mind that not age but stage of progress must govern in choosing the story for the child."

James Baldwin: "Fifty percent of the readers who patronize our great public libraries have weak literary stomachs; … Yet this is but the natural result of the loose habits of reading which we encourage among our children, and cultivate in ourselves—the habit of reading anything that comes to hand, provided only that it is entertaining.

"How then shall we so order the child's reading so as to avoid the formation of desultory and aimless habits?

"Naturally, the earliest reading is the story—simple, short, straightforward recitals of matters of daily occurrence, of the doings of children and their parents, their friends or their pets. There are not a few good books that contain excellent material of the kind; but there are so many worthless publications… A pure, fresh book for a little child is a treasure to be sought for and appreciated.

"Very early in child life comes the period of a belief in fairies; and the reading of fairy stories is, to children, a very proper, nay, a very necessary thing. I pity the boy or girl who must grow up without having made intimate acquaintance with 'Mother Goose,' and the delightful stories of 'Little Red Riding Hood' and 'Cinderella,' and those other strange tales as old as the race itself, and yet new to every succeeding generation. They are a part of the inheritance of the English-speaking people, and belong, as a kind of birthright, to every intelligent child….

"And while your reader lingers in the great world of poetic fancy and child wonder, let him revel for a time in those enchanting idyls and myths which delighted mankind when the race was young and the earth was indeed a wonder-world. Then, by a natural transition, you advance into the borderland which lies between the world of pure fancy and the domains of sober-hued reality. You introduce your reader to some wholesome adaptations of those mediaeval romances, which, with their one grain of fact to a thousand of fable, gave such noble delight to lords and ladies in the days of chivalry…

"Do you understand now to what point you have led your young reader? You have simply followed the order of nature and of human development, and you have gradually—almost imperceptibly even to yourself—brought him out of the world of child wonder and fairy land, through the middle ground of chivalric romance, to the very borders of the domains of history. He is ready and eager to enter into the realms of sober-hued truth; but I would not advise undue haste in this matter. The mediaeval romances have inspired him with a desire to know more of those days when knights-errant rode over sea and land to do battle in the name of God and for the honor of their king, the Church, and the ladies; he wants to know something more nearly the truth than that which the minstrels and story-tellers of the Middle Ages can tell him. And yet he is not prepared for a sudden transition from romance to history.

"Let him read *Ivanhoe* and *The Talisman*; then give him the *Story of Robin Hood* and introduce to him some of the old ballads that have stirred the hearts of so many generations of men and boys. Can you withhold history longer from your reader? I think not. He will demand some authentic knowledge of Richard the Lion-hearted, and of King John, and of the Saxons and Normans, and of Charlemagne and his peers. Lose not your opportunity, but pass over with your pupil into

the promised land. The transition is easy—imperceptible, in fact—and, leaving fiction and "the story" behind you, you enter the field of truth and history. The way is clear now, the road is open, you need no further guidance—only, keep straight ahead and be sure that the books which you choose are well-written and truthful.

"In this careful direction of the child's reading, and in the cultivation of literary tastes, if you have succeeded in bringing him to the point which we have indicated, you have done much towards forming his character for life."

FAMILIAR STORIES

Edward St. John: "[Y]oung children are especially interested in the doings of others of about their own age…. Another marked interest of young children is in the natural objects around them, and especially in living creatures. Kittens, dogs, squirrels, birds, insects make a fascinating appeal to their attention, and plants, stars, clouds, and winds really stir the same kind of interest, for the child endows them all with life and feelings like his own.

"The very young child thinks little, he acts. He does not analyze, he feels. Hence his stories must contain action and emotion rather than reasoning. They must have vivid picture-quality without wordy passages of description. They must be concise and dramatic…. They should appeal to the imagination, inspire love of beauty, and present right ideals. They must mirror his own experience and embody universal truth.

"There never was an effective story that did not play upon one or more of the emotions—without this quality the narrative would be dead."

Esenwein/Stockard: "The story for the little child must be exceedingly simple in plot. It should deal chiefly with objects he

has touched and seen, with experiences he has had. It must be full of action, and told in language he can understand. It must be based in his real interests…. He cares nothing for motives. He cannot follow involved processes of reasoning, so 'plot complication' and 'periods of suspense' do not belong to his stories. Cause and result must develop in such close sequence that he can grasp their relation.

"The child should be encouraged to talk freely—sooner or later—about every story he hears, but the story-teller should never moralize, nor attempt to answer all his questions for him. It is often well to leave him wondering. She should never answer in such a way as to limit his thought or curb his imagination. If his mind is grasping for a fact, she should guide him only so far as he is unable to go alone, then leave to him the growth and the joy of discovering the fact for himself.

"The carefully selected, well-told story should be given to the little child over and over again until it becomes a part of him."

Julia Cowles: "During the early years, when the most lasting impressions are made, when faith is simple, when the thought of God's presence and love is natural, the Bible stories should be told over and over again.

"There should be no attempt at this time to interpret the stories or to bring out theological questions. The stories should be told in all their original simplicity…. The children will not tire of [their] telling, and [they] should become as familiar to them as their nursery rhymes. The shame is upon us as fathers and mothers that this is so seldom the case.

"Rightly told, the Bible stories arouse in the child the keenest interest and the deepest pleasure."

Louise Houghton: "There are no stories in any language of the world, which so aptly and precisely perform this function

as the Bible stories, and this for a very simple reason—the language in which they were originally written, the Hebrew, like the child's language, has no abstract words. All Hebrew words are concrete, just as the little child's words are."

Richard Moulton: "Our first duty to a Bible story is to love it; its effect we may leave to the Divine Artist."

Esenwein/Stockard: "[The] religious spirit should be intensified through the use of the Bible stories. The ancient Hebrew idea of God is that of the little child, and this idea is expressed in every story. The Bible is the child's own book. The simple, stately language, the pictorial power, its elemental and human quality, together with its wonderful God-consciousness, make it the essential food for his developing spirit."

Katherine Cather (quoting a famous psychologist): "To eliminate the Bible from education is as preposterous pedagogically as it would have been in the days of Plato to taboo Homer from the education of Greek youth. It is not only a model of English, but it is impossible to understand the culture history of Europe without it, as it has influenced the literature, history, and life of Western nations as no other book has begun to do."

Suggested Learning Activity

1. "Familiar" and "family" share the same base root. Many of the best stories you can tell to your children are stories from your family life when you were growing up.

St. John: "Work up some of your own experiences for telling as stories and test their effect. Consider such subjects as the happiest experience of your childhood or youth, some conscious wrong-doing that brought you sorrow, some great sorrow and its lesson, the bravest thing you ever knew a boy or girl to do, the most pathetic incident, etc."

IMAGINATIVE STORIES

Angela Keyes: "We say glibly that imagination is the root of the successful man's arrival at material profit, of the explorer's discovery and the practical scientist's invention, of the poet's song and the philanthropist's vision of a state of society in which the kingdom of heaven will be nearer at hand; but we give little or no training to the imagination. Here…is the story's opportunity. Through the story the interpretive story-teller may give the imagination consistent exercise."

Marie Shedlock: "It is just at the time when the imagination is most keen, the mind being unhampered by accumulation of facts, that stories appeal most vividly and are retained for all time."

Emelyn Partridge: "Let the child see, through the fairy-story, the play of good and evil in the world. Let him make his judgments upon these deep themes through the medium of his pure enjoyment and his unconscious striving with his own desires. Nothing need be explained to him, and there need be no thought of systematic teaching. The work of the story-teller is simply to satisfy a normal and deep appetite with the best nourishment he can provide."

Esenwein/Stockard: "[The child's] love of beauty is satisfied and increased by his glimpses of fairyland."

Richard Wyches: "Some one has defined a fairy story as a heavenly story with an earthly meaning, and in this all good fairy stories are one. He who fails to feel this truth cannot tell or read a fairy story to a child, though he have all the books published; but, he who realizes this truth, has a key to them all, and though his supply may be limited, yet he himself becomes a doorway through which the children pass into a land of green pastures and still waters."

Carolyn Sherwin Bailey: "If we want a child to see Heaven,

we must help him to see fairies."

Esenwein/Stockard: "The old stories of the race are not fact, but they are truth which the race-mind has visioned and given form in words…. They are the answers of his soul in his quest for God. They are his attempts to solve the mystery of his own life, the explanation of his environment….

"It is because folk and fairy tales are filled with this spirit of truth that they lay hold upon the heart of childhood from generation to generation…. This belief in an unseen world leads the child directly into the realm of pure spirit. The attitude of wonder is closely akin to reverence.

"Fairy tales give the child a sense of well-being. In them good always comes to good; somehow, somewhere, things tend to come out right for the man who chooses wisely and does his best. This attitude of mind is a valuable asset to the child. It adds to his power of endurance and courage, it robs him of fear."

Julia Cowles: "The child's ability to understand is far in advance of his ability to read, and the old folk-tales which have been handed down orally from generation to generation, and later gathered into volumes for the children of all nations to enjoy together, are a veritable mine of delight to both story-teller and listener."

Edna Lyman: "Perhaps it is because the folk and fairy tales, and the great epic literature of the world, were first recited to groups of eager listeners and were not produced with the idea of a printed form, that they furnish the most successful sources of material for the story teller."

Kate Douglas Wiggin: "Some universal spiritual truth underlies the really fine old fairy tale; but there can be no educational influence in the so-called fairy stories, which are merely jumbles of impossible incidents, and which not infrequently

present dishonesty, deceit, and cruelty in attractive or amusing guise."

Edward St. John: "The witches and giants must be wholly bad, and the heroes and heroines must be conventionally good."

Marie Shedlock: "After speaking on the subject of fairy stories being eliminated from the school curriculum, [Rev. R.L. Gales said]:

"'This would be lessening the joy of the world and taking from generations yet unborn the capacity for wonder, the power to take large unselfish interest in the spectacle of things, and putting them forever at the mercy of small private cares.

"'A nursery rhyme is the most sane, the most unselfish thing in the world. It calls up some delightful image—a little nut-tree with a silver walnut and a golden pear; some romantic adventure only for the child's delight and liberation from the bondage of unseeing dullness: it brings before the mind the quintessence of some good thing….'"

Colonel Parker: "Spiritual truths are hidden in the precious honey of stories."

Laboulaye (writer of French fairy tales): "When you throw away this book with your doll, do not be too severe with your old grandfather for wasting his time on such trifles as fairy stories. Experience will teach you that the truest and sweetest things in life are not those which we see, but of which we dream."

Julia Cowles: "The child who is made familiar with the old mythology by means of stories and verse, holds the key of understanding to the countless allusions of the world's best literature. He may not comprehend the deeper meaning, nor understand that they were the religion of an ancient people, but when in his later readings of some masterpiece of poetry

or prose he finds an allusion to Phaeton, to Apollo, or to Neptune, he will experience the same delight that comes to one who meets an old playfellow in a foreign land."

Edward St. John: "One may introduce the myth by saying, 'You know, children, that our Father in heaven made the earth and everything about us, and that he takes care of us all. Many years ago there were people who had never heard of this; but when they looked out upon the beautiful world and saw the sun rising every morning, and the stars shining at night, and the flowers blooming, and the fruits ripening on the trees, they knew that some one must care for all of these. Since they did not know of the one great God who can do all things they thought that there must be one god for the sun and one for the stars, another for the flowers and still another for the fruits. I am going to tell you some of the things that they thought these gods did.' When one has finished the story he may add, 'That is the way they told it long ago, but we know that it is really our Father in heaven who cares for all the creatures that he has made.' So the thought of those old days may stir the simple religious feelings of the child—the wonder and love and dread and trust that he shares with the men of that early age—and that without giving him wrong conceptions of God."

Suggested Activities

1. Select five fairy tales in the Imaginative section and identify the moral truth contained within the story.

2. Select five or more stories in the Imaginative section and identify the emotions they stir as you read them.

3. Notice how literature that is way beyond the grasp of a child can be adapted and put within their reach through a story, such as this example from Chaucer. A child may not grasp its full meaning until years later, but an adult of faith

who has been put through many trials will recognize this replay of the story of Job.

Patient Griselda

(Carolyn Sherwin Bailey)

Griselda lived with her father, Janicola, in a lowly cottage in Italy, and she worked all day long to make life pleasant and comfortable for him. Sometimes she herded sheep on the broken ground near the village, spinning as she tended the flock. At other times she brought water, and tended the vineyards, and gathered roots and herbs with which to make simples. Whatever Griselda did, though, was done with patience and kindness, and she was beloved by the whole countryside.

Not far from the village where Griselda lived lay a white castle, the home of the Marquis Walter, who was the lord of all that land. He seemed to Griselda, as she watched him ride by on his huge charger, the greatest and most wonderful nobleman there ever was. She bowed low as he passed, and hoped that some time he would stop and ask for the welfare of her father.

He never did, though, until the day when the wonder happened to Griselda.

It was a holiday, Griselda knew that, because she saw a company of men hurrying along the road that led to the castle; knights in flashing armor, lords in gay apparel, and even the farmers dressed in their best. Flags floated out from all the castle towers and there were garlands of flowers hung over the doors. The villagers told tales of a royal feast spread on gold plate in the banqueting hall of the castle, and of velvet robes and gems spread out in an upper room. They brought Griselda, where she sat in a field with her sheep, other tidings, too.

"This is the wedding day of the Marquis Walter," they said. "He rides down from the castle soon to choose his bride."

"He will choose a lady of fair estate and great riches, no doubt," sighed Griselda, comparing her lowly life with the great fortune that would befall the lady of the castle.

Suddenly Griselda's thoughts were interrupted by a shrill trumpet blast. The Marquis Walter rode out through the castle gate with his train, and followed by ladies bearing wedding robes and jewels.

"Perhaps I may be able to offer one of the wedding party a drink of water," Griselda thought, running to the cottage for a pitcher and filling it at the well. When she lifted it and turned to look at the procession, she saw the Marquis standing with her father beside the cottage door. She seemed to hear his words in a dream.

"My faithful servant," the Marquis Walter said to the old man, "may I have your daughter Griselda to be my wife?"

And when her father had given his surprised consent, the great lord spoke to Griselda.

"Griselda, the patient, I have come for you," he said. "You alone will I wed, for I have watched your industry and unselfishness. One demand I must make of you, though. Will you obey me in everything, whether I do you evil or good, without so much as showing me a frown on your lovely face?"

Griselda made this strange promise, standing before her future lord in great wonder and awe.

Then the ladies of the Court put a royal robe with great clasps of gold set with gems on Griselda. They put a crown upon her lovely hair and laid away the poor, ragged clothes she had worn before.

They forgot their pride in helping their new lady, who was as gentle as one of the ewes in the flock she had used to tend. The village people, crowding about, did not know Griselda as she stood in the cottage door, she was so fair

in her wedding gown and with happiness shining in her eyes. The Marquis Walter put a gold ring on Griselda's finger, lifted her upon a milk-white steed, and led her with great rejoicing home to the castle.

It was not long before the Lady Griselda's fame spread through all the land. She was not only beautiful and gracious, but a good housekeeper, a kind hostess, and full of tenderness for the poor. When Griselda's baby daughter was born, she thought she was the happiest lady in the land.

"No girl in the land shall be so well cared for, or have so much joy as you," Griselda thought as she held her baby close to her heart. "How proud my lord will be when you are old enough to ride beside him through the country!"

But Griselda's dream was rudely broken. The curtains at the doorway were suddenly drawn aside, and an evil looking guard entered the room.

"It is your lord's wish that I take away your child," he said, "and he must be obeyed." Then the soldier took Griselda's baby girl from her arms so roughly that it seemed as if he would kill her.

Griselda tried, at first, to snatch back the baby, and then she remembered the promise that she had made to the Marquis Walter in the door of her father's cottage. She bent over the rude soldier and kissed the baby's frightened eyes and trembling lips.

"I am my lord's wife and this is his child," she said through her tears. "I promised to obey him for evil or for good, and I do so now. But if it please my lord to have the child killed, I pray you in your kindness to bury the little body where no cruel beast or bird can harm it." Then Griselda covered her eyes as the soldier carried away the child.

Four years went by and in all that time no one knew how sick at heart the Lady Griselda was. She was just as

loving, and cheerful and busy as ever, and for the Marquis Walter she had only smiles. Then a baby boy was born to her and her heart sang again, losing some of its sorrow.

"You are come to fill my arms in place of your little sister," Griselda said as she rocked the child. "What more wonderful and pleasing to my lord than that I should be able to give him this heir to his kingdom?"

But when Griselda's son was only two years old, the soldier who had taken away her daughter appeared suddenly, demanding the boy.

"It is your lord's wish," he said again, "and his wishes must be obeyed."

Griselda tried to cover the boy with her own body, but the soldier drew his sword and snatched the child away. She sat, then, with empty arms, but her patience did not leave her. She remembered her wedding day in the village, and she said to herself:

"My will and my freedom were left behind in my father's cottage with the old clothes I cast aside. I must keep the love of my lord by doing his bidding no matter what he asks of me. It may be that this is the last sacrifice he will demand of me."

But when the little boy had been gone only a short time the Marquis Walter came to his wife.

"Griselda," he said, "you know that I love you, but my people tell me that they hate your presence because you are of mean and lowly birth. They do not like to think that you may rule over them some day. You have been a good and faithful wife and it grieves me indeed to tell you this, but I must consider the wishes of my people. There is no freedom for those who rule. I must ask you to return to your father's house that I may make arrangements to wed another who will better please the people."

Griselda bowed her head that her lord might not see

her tears.

"That has been my thought for long, also, my lord," she replied gently, "that I am unworthy to be your lady. I will go down to the village and tend my father's flock and his garden again. I will stay with him until death enters the cottage door. I have been so happy with you, my lord, the memory of it will make me rejoice always."

So Griselda took her wedding ring from her finger and gave it to the Marquis Walter, smiling bravely up into his face which he turned away in pity. She put aside her royal robes and her jewels, and in her simplest gown and with bare feet went down the road between the olive trees to her father's cottage.

Everywhere there was a welcome for Griselda; the birds sang more sweetly, the lambs followed her, the vines seemed to bear more grapes, and the fields blossomed everywhere she stepped. In time, as she took up her homely duties again, Griselda was happy. She never complained. Once more she brought water from the well, and followed the sheep, and thought of her father's comfort.

After a while a messenger came to her from the castle.

"It is the will of the Marquis Walter," the messenger said, "that you come to set the castle in order. There is to be a great feast tomorrow and the guests must be given a royal welcome."

So Griselda went to the castle and took control of the preparations. None of the servants was as deft and industrious and quick as she. When she finished, every room was clean, and decked for a guest, and the banqueting hall glittered with freshly polished glass and silver.

"It must be the new bride for whom we prepare," was whispered throughout the castle as Griselda moved here and there in her worn clothes the morning of the feast.

"Here she comes!" they cried at last as a company of

horsemen approached the castle, guarding in their midst a beautiful young girl in a shimmering white robe. Beside the girl rode a noble boy, perhaps her page, and a little younger than she. As the procession reached the castle and the feasting began, the Marquis Walter called for Griselda to come to him, pointing out to her the girl and the boy.

"Look closely at them, my Griselda," he said. "This is our daughter, and her brother, who is my heir. They are your children, Griselda. Take them and rejoice, for the time of your trial is past. I have tried your patience and faith as no lady's were ever tried before, and you have proved my faith in you. Be no longer sad," he said, "for your patience is rewarded." Once more Griselda held her children. Again she was dressed in her royal robes and wore her jewels and her wedding ring. The nobles and knights, farmers and peasants came to kneel at her feet and do her homage, and the walls of the castle echoed with sounds of joy and delight. The happiness that had come to Griselda was the greatest in all her life, because she knew that her lord trusted her entirely and she had proved true to his trust.

HISTORICAL STORIES/HEROIC PERIOD

Richard Wyches: "Next to literature, history is the greatest story book in the world, and the source from which the best stories have been drawn. Yet, when many of us look back to our childhood days in school, the waging of wars, the number of men killed in battle, the signing of treaties, dates and the naming in order all the presidents was emphasized more than the life story of the heroes who made these dates significant.

"History is dry kindling wood, the story teller must furnish the spark which makes it flame and glow. To one void of imagination, the richest material in history would be but a valley

of dry bones; but he whose imagination pierces the shell of appearance gets at the inner significance of things, and he can breathe on the valley of bones and they will arise and become living people. A thousand years will seem but as yesterday."

Henry Tralle: "It is not their annals that have revealed the peoples of the world to us, but their stories. We best know the Greeks through the Homeric and other stories, the Romans through Plutarch's Lives, and the Hebrews through the stories of the Bible; and these are the three peoples who have given to the world its three best gifts, namely, culture, law, and religion."

Emelyn Partridge: "History *is*, of course, the story of man…. History is important to the extent that it can rise above mere narration, and help to tell the story of man's spiritual or inner history. Biography is the historical story-teller's best field, because it presents the most unified and dramatic story. It has a wide range and calls for all the story-teller's art….

"So precisely suited is the story-telling method to the teaching of history that we can say that children cannot acquire a right knowledge of history in any other way. It is the way in which all history was once taught—and taught so that it was never forgotten. The story, from its very nature and intention, is admirably fitted to impart just those lessons which it is the function of history to teach."

Edna Lyman: "The child who has lost something of his interest in fairy tales and other imaginative literature craves the realistic story, or the recital of actual fact….

"The fact that historians are declaring that William Tell is a myth, … really does not make any difference about the value of telling these stories to children…whether such a man really lived or not does not matter, because he represents the patriotic spirit of the Swiss so perfectly that there are many men who might have borne his name….

"It is certainly a most desirable and happy thing for a child to grow up in a home where the famous names of history and literature are spoken often and with familiarity, where without knowing it he makes acquaintances among the world's great characters long before he can appreciate the story of their deeds…..

"It is a great pity if a child is limited in his reading to the works of one nation, and is not allowed to become acquainted with a wide variety of literatures, and to feel the difference in the point of view…."

Emerson: "With the great, one's thoughts and manners easily become great—what this country longs for is personalities, grand persons, to counteract its materialities."

Katherine Cather: "There is no time in the child life during which the story-teller has a finer opportunity of sowing seeds that shall come into splendid fruition by and by than in the heroic period…. This age is usually from about eight to twelve."

Ella Cabot: "Nine-tenths of the moral textbooks I come across are written on the principle that to mention a virtue impressively is to make it grow. But gardeners plant their young trees, dig about the roots, and water them day after day. Therefore I say: Never give brief summaries of any life, however great. Rather tell one graphic incident in full detail. Never tell any story that you cannot tell with fresh zest in the telling…. Keep a notebook and write down fully real incidents of heroism and loyalty."

Marie Shedlock: "I was told by Lady Henry Somerset that when the first set of children came down from London for a fortnight's holiday in the country, she was much startled and shocked by the obscenity of the games they played amongst themselves. Being a sound psychologist, Lady Henry wisely refrained from appearing surprised or attempting any direct

method of reproof. 'I saw,' she said, 'that the "goody" element would have no effect, so I changed the whole atmosphere by reading to them or telling them the most thrilling medieval tales without any commentary.

"'By the end of the fortnight the activities had all changed. The boys were performing astonishing deeds of prowess, and the girls were allowing themselves to be rescued from burning towers and fetid dungeons.'"

Richard Wyches: "To the adolescent period, this story [King Arthur] with its message of romance and chivalry, is especially appropriate and helpful. A teacher in a high school informs me that the study, dramatization, and an attempt on the part of the children to live again its spirit transformed the life of the school, bringing in a reign of kindness and courtesy, that had never before been known in her classes."

Richard Wyches: "I once heard Miss Elizabeth Harrison at a twilight meeting out of doors, tell a short story from the life of St. Francis of Assisi, that monk whose heart so overflowed with love that he went out and preached to the birds and trees and called them his brothers. The speaker standing on the slope of a hill, under the edge of a tree whose limbs moved softly to the summer breeze was herself well-nigh invisible against the sky, illumined only by one or two stars, yet she made me see most vividly a picture of St. Francis and his work; a picture, too, that I like to recall again and again, for it brings me peace and pleasure."

Nora Archibald Smith: "You may spend hours…in moralizing to a child upon the beauty of unselfishness, and not produce a thousandth part of the effect which you might have made by telling him the story of gallant Philip Sidney and the cup of cold water to one whose necessities were greater than his."

Edward St. John: "*Uncle Tom's Cabin* outweighed in influence thousands of sermons and tens of thousands of pages of

antislavery tracts a generation ago….

"It is the specific and concrete and that which is associated with human interests rather than general ideas logically arranged that find ready entrance to their minds. The average man will get a truer idea of the Middle Ages from *Ivanhoe* than from Hallam's history."

Margaret Eggleston: "The children to whom you tell the story of George Washington and the colt may forget the details of the story, but if, in the telling of the story, there has been created the desire to be always brave enough to tell the truth, then you have been an artist. You have brought a great gift to the child and because you have made the mind picture a beautiful one, he has received it and made it a part of himself and his character building. God speaks to the child through stories and happy the teacher or mother who learns to work with God."

Katherine Cather: "Boys and girls will not draw from this wealth unguided, because they do not know where it is stored. But if we give them frequent glimpses of its brightness, if we half open the door of the repository and let them peep inside, they will follow, seeking it, as the miner follows the half-revealed ore vein.

Tralle: "The story makes learning a delight, and why should it not be so?"

G. Stanley Hall: "Let me tell the stories and I care not who writes the textbooks."

Suggested Activities

1. Discuss the general principles of adaptation Sara Cone Bryant used to convert this condensed anecdote to a well-told story:

A detachment of troops was marching along a valley,

the cliffs overhanging which were crested by the enemy. A sergeant, with eleven men, chanced to become separated from the rest by taking the wrong side of a ravine, which they expected soon to terminate, but which suddenly deepened into an impassable chasm. The officer in command signaled to the party an order to return. They mistook the signal for a command to charge; the brave fellows answered with a cheer, and charged. At the summit of the steep mountain was a triangular platform defended by a breastwork, behind which were seventy of the foe. On they went, charging up one of those fearful paths, eleven against seventy. The contest could not long be doubtful with such odds. One after another they fell; six upon the spot, the remainder hurled backwards; but not until they had slain nearly twice their own number.

There is a custom, we are told, amongst the hillsmen, that when a great chieftain of their own falls in battle, his wrist is bound with a thread either of red or green, the red denoting the highest rank. According to the custom, they stripped the dead, and threw their bodies over the precipice. When their comrades came, they found their corpses stark and gashed; but round both wrists of every British hero was twined the red thread!

The Red Thread of Courage
(adapted by Sara Cone Bryant)

This story which I am going to tell you is a true one. It happened while the English troops in India were fighting against some of the native tribes. The natives who were making trouble were people from the hill-country, called Hillsmen, and they were strong enemies. The English knew very little about them, except their courage, but they had noticed one peculiar custom, after certain battles, the Hillsmen had a way of marking the bodies of their greatest chiefs who were killed in battle by binding a red thread about the wrist; when a body was marked so, it meant the highest tribute of honor they could pay a hero.

The English, however, found the common men of them quite enough to handle, for they had proved themselves good fighters and clever at ambushes.

One day, a small body of the English had marched a long way into the hill country, after the enemy, and in the afternoon they found themselves in a part of the country strange even to the guides. The men moved forward very slowly and cautiously, for fear of an ambush. The trail led into a narrow valley with very steep, high, rocky sides, topped with woods in which the enemy might easily hide.

Here the soldiers were ordered to advance more quickly, though with caution, to get out of the dangerous place.

After a little, they came suddenly to a place where the passage was divided in two by a big three-cornered boulder which seemed to rise from the midst of the valley. The main line of men kept to the right; to save crowding the path, a sergeant and eleven men took the left, meaning to go round the rock and meet the rest beyond it.

They had been in the path only a few minutes when they saw that the rock was not a single boulder at all, but an arm of the left wall of the valley, and that they were marching into a deep ravine with no outlet except the way they came. Both sides were sheer rock, almost perpendicular, with thick trees at the top; in front of them the ground rose in a steep hill, bare of woods. As they looked up, they saw that the top was barricaded by the trunks of trees, and guarded by a strong body of Hillsmen. As the English hesitated, looking at this, a shower of spears fell from the wood's edge, aimed by hidden foes. The place was a death trap.

At this moment, their danger was seen by the officer in command of the main body, and he signaled to the sergeant to retreat.

By some terrible mischance, the signal was misunder-

stood. The men took it for the signal to charge. Without a moment's pause, straight up the slope, they charged on the run, cheering as they ran.

Some were killed by the spears that were thrown from the cliffs, before they had gone half way; some were stabbed as they reached the crest, and hurled backward from the precipice; two or three got to the top, and fought hand to hand with the Hillsmen. They were outnumbered, seven to one; but when the last of the English soldiers lay dead, twice their number of Hillsmen lay dead around them!

When the relief party reached the spot, later in the day, they found the bodies of their comrades, full of wounds, huddled over and in the barricade, or crushed on the rocks below. They were mutilated and battered, and bore every sign of the terrible struggle. *But round both wrists of every British soldier was bound the red thread!*

The Hillsmen had given their heroic foes the highest honor they paid their own brave dead.

2. Although this is an interesting narrative of Henry Fawcett, it is not yet a story. What can you do to convert it to a story ready to be told?

Henry Fawcett, The Blind Postmaster General
(Ella Lyman Cabot)

Henry Fawcett was not an easy boy to handle. His first teacher said she never had so troublesome a pupil. "Mrs. Harris says that if we go on we shall kill her," he told his mother, "and we do go on, but yet she does not die!" He loved fishing and sport, and it was not until he was about fourteen that he began to study hard. He saw then that without work nothing could be accomplished. He edited a school newspaper, became interested in chemistry and mathematics, and even wrote a lecture on the uses of steam. His father was so delighted with the lecture that he gave Henry a gold sovereign. When the boys talked about

what they would do when they were grown up, Henry said he would be a Member of Parliament, an idea that his comrades greeted with roars of laughter.

In the autumn of 1858, when he was twenty-five, Fawcett went out shooting with his father. They were crossing a turnip field, when up started some partridges, who flew by into a field where the men had no right to shoot. Henry resolved that this should not happen again, and so he ran forward about thirty yards to frighten back any new covey. Soon another covey rose, and the father, who was near-sighted, forgot just where his son was, and fired at the birds. Several of the shots hit Henry, just entering his chest through his thick coat, but two of them hit his spectacles, making a clean hole through each glass and penetrating both eyes. He was instantly blinded for life. Fawcett's first thought was that he should never again see the wonderful view of river and hill before him. He kept steady all the time as he was carried home, and when his sister opened the door, he said quietly: "Maria, will you read the newspaper to me?" He knew that only by great cheerfulness could he help his broken-hearted father to bear the blow. Henry Fawcett said a few years later that in ten minutes he had decided that he would do just as far as possible what he had done before. He would keep happy and glean every bit of enjoyment there was for him. He took for his motto the verse from Shakespeare's Henry V—

There is some soul of goodness in things evil

Would men observingly distill it out.

And all the rest of his life he drew goodness from his misfortune as a flower draws nourishment from the dark soil.

He determined not to evade but to conquer his fate, to keep on in his old path and become a Member of Parliament, to keep up all the athletics possible to him—rowing, horseback riding, mountain walks, fishing and skating

—and to become a student of all questions about government and the welfare of the people. He was a remarkable skater, and he had such strong nerve that even the first time that he skated with a friend after he had become blind, he easily led in the race.

Soon after his accident Fawcett returned to the University at Cambridge to study, and in a year or two he wrote a book on Political Economy, so clear and strong that in spite of his blindness he was elected Professor of Political Economy at the College. Even this did not satisfy his ambitions. He wanted to be elected into Parliament. He taught himself to make public speeches, to study political questions, to meet many people. At last he was nominated for office. He spoke every night; he challenged any one to show that his blindness made him incapable of the best work. He told the audience his story.

"You do not know me now," he said, "but you shall know me in the course of a few moments."

He told them how he had been blinded by two stray shots from a companion's gun, and how the lovely landscape had been instantly blotted out.

"It was a blow," he said, "but I made up my mind to face the difficulty, and you must treat me as an equal."

After several defeats, Fawcett won an election, and at the age of thirty-two he became a Member of Parliament. He worked for the preservation of the forests, for savings banks, for education for every one, for compulsory attendance at school, and year by year he won more friends to his cause.

At last, in 1880, he was asked by Gladstone to be postmaster general. That England has an excellent postal system carrying not only letters but large parcels, and that telegrams are sent so cheaply that even poor people can use them often—these benefits are due to the forethought and the zeal of the blind postmaster general.

Even when he was busy with a mass of correspondence he never neglected to write once a week to his parents. One day he asked his sister: "What gives my father and mother most pleasure?"

"Your letters," she said. From that time on, though overwhelmed with official work, he wrote twice a week instead of once.

When Fawcett died, Mr. Gladstone said that no public man of the day was more loved by his countrymen. The workingmen especially loved him, and a group of them asked his wife if she would not let all the working people of England subscribe a penny each, so that she might live in comfort the rest of her life.

Fawcett was a master of his fate. He himself said: "The chief compensation, the silver lining to the dark cloud, is the wonderful and inexhaustible fund of human kindness to be found in this world, and the appreciation which blind people must have at every moment of their life of the cordial and ready willingness with which the services they need are generously offered to them."

3. Historical fiction can bring history to life beautifully. Here is an adaptation of a single story from Victory Hugo's *Les Misérables*. Notice how a story adaptation can be used to whet the appetite for the "rest of the story."

The Good Bishop
(Ella Lyman Cabot)

Jean Valjean was a wood-chopper's son, who, while very young, was left an orphan. His older sister brought him up, but when he was seventeen years of age, his sister's husband died, and upon Jean came lie the labor of supporting her seven little children. Although a man of great strength, he found it very difficult to provide food for them at the poor trade he followed.

One winter day he was without work, and the children

were crying for bread. They were nearly starved; and, when he could withstand their entreaties no longer, he went out in the night, and, breaking a baker's window with his fist, carried home a loaf of bread for the famishing children. The next morning he was arrested for stealing, his bleeding hand convicting him.

For this crime he was sent to the galleys with an iron collar riveted around his neck, with a chain attached, which bound him to his galley seat. Here he remained four years, then he tried to escape, but was caught, and three years were added to his sentence. Then he made a second attempt, and also failed, the result of which was that he remained nineteen years as a galley slave for stealing a single loaf of bread.

When Jean left the prison, his heart was hardened. He felt like a wolf. His wrongs had embittered him, and he was more like an animal than a man. He came with every man's hand raised against him to the town where the good bishop lived.

At the inn they would not receive him because they knew him to be an ex-convict and a dangerous man. Wherever he went, the knowledge of him went before, and every one drove him away. They would not even allow him to sleep in a dog kennel or give him the food they had saved for the dog. Everywhere he went they cried: "Be off! Go away, or you will get a charge of shot." Finally, he wandered to the house of the good bishop, and a good man he was.

For his duties as a bishop, he received from the State $3000 a year; but he gave away to the poor $2800 of it. He was a simple, loving man, with a great heart, who thought nothing of himself, but loved everybody. And everybody loved him.

Jean, when he entered the bishop's house, was a most forbidding and dangerous character. He shouted in a harsh loud voice: "Look here, I am a galley slave. Here is

my yellow passport. It says: 'Five years for robbery and fourteen years for trying to escape. The man is very dangerous.' Now that you know who I am, will you give me a little food, and let me sleep in the stable?"

The good bishop said: "Sit down and warm yourself. You will take supper with me, and after that sleep here."

Jean could hardly believe his senses. He was dumb with joy. He told the bishop that he had money, and would pay for his supper and lodging.

But the priest said: "You are welcome. This is not my house, but the house of Christ. Your name was known to me before you showed me your passport. You are my brother."

After supper the bishop took one of the silver candlesticks that he had received as a Christmas present, and, giving Jean the other, led him to his room, where a good bed was provided. In the middle of the night Jean awoke with a hardened heart. He felt that the time had come to get revenge for all his wrongs. He remembered the silver knives and forks that had been used for supper, and made up his mind to steal them, and go away in the night. So he took what he could find, sprang into the garden, and disappeared.

When the bishop awoke, and saw his silver gone, he said: "I have been thinking for a long time that I ought not to keep the silver. I should have given it to the poor, and certainly this man was poor."

At breakfast-time five soldiers brought Jean back to the bishop's house. When they entered, the bishop, looking at him, said: "Oh, you are back again! I am glad to see you. I gave you the candlesticks, too, which are silver also, and will bring forty dollars. Why did you not take them."

Jean was stunned indeed by these words. So were the soldiers. "This man told us the truth, did he?" they cried. "We thought he had stolen the plate and was running

away. So we quickly arrested him."

But the good bishop only said: "It was a mistake to have him brought back. Let him go. The silver is his. I gave it to him."

So the officers went away.

"Is it true," Jean whispered to the bishop, "that I am free? I may go?"

"Yes," he replied, "but before you go take your candlesticks."

Jean trembled in every limb, and took the candlesticks like one in a dream.

"Now," said the bishop, "depart in peace, but do not go through the garden, for the front door is always open to you day and night."

Jean looked as though he would faint.

Then the bishop took his hand, and said: "Never forget you have promised me you would use the money to become an honest man."

He did not remember having promised anything, but stood silent while the bishop continued solemnly:

"Jean Valjean, my brother, you no longer belong to evil, but to good. I have bought your soul for you. I withdrew it from black thoughts and the spirit of hate, and gave it to God."

Thus there began in the heart of Jean a life-and-death struggle between the spirit of hate and the spirit of love, and because of the good bishop's forgiveness the spirit of goodness won. He became a great and good man, whose story, when you are older, I am sure you will all read.

PART THREE

Stories to Tell

All of the stories included in this section were chosen, adapted, and prepared for telling by the storytellers of a hundred years ago.

Familiar Stories

(Ages 2-5)

The "Wake-Up" Story

(Alice O'Grady)

The sun was up and the breeze was blowing, and the five chicks and four geese and three rabbits and two kitties and one little dog were just as noisy and lively as they knew how to be.

They were all watching for Baby Ray to appear at the window, but he was still fast asleep in his little white bed, while mamma was making ready the things he would need when he should wake up.

First she went along the orchard path as far as the old wooden pump, and said: "Good Pump, will you give me some nice clear water for the baby's bath?"

And the pump was willing.

The good old pump by the orchard path

Gave nice, clear water for the baby's bath.

Then she went a little farther on the path and stopped at the wood pile, and said: "Good Chips, the pump has given me nice, clear water for dear little Ray; will you come and warm the water and cook his food?"

And the chips were willing.

The good old pump by the orchard path

Gave nice, clear water for the baby's bath.

And the clean, white chips from the pile of wood

Were glad to warm it and to cook his food.

So mamma went on till she came to the barn, and then said: "Good Cow, the pump has given me nice, clear water, and the wood pile has given me clean, white chips for dear little Ray; will you give me warm, rich milk?"

And the cow was willing.

Then she went to the top-know hen that was scratching in the straw: "Good Biddy, the pump has given me nice, clear water, and the wood pile has given me clean, white chips, and the cow has given me warm, rich milk for dear little Ray; will you give me a new-laid egg?

And the hen was willing.

The good old pump by the orchard path

Gave nice, clear water for the baby's bath.

The clean, white chips from the pile of wood

Were glad to warm it and to cook his food.

The cow gave milk in the milk pail bright,

And the top-knot Biddy, an egg, new and white.

Then mamma went on till she came to the orchard, and said to a Red June apple tree: "Good Tree, the pump has given me nice, clear water, and the wood pile has given me clean, white chips, and the cow has given me warm, rich milk, and the hen has given me a new-laid egg for dear little Ray; will you give me a pretty red apple?"

And the tree was willing.

So mamma took the apple and the egg and the milk and the chips and the water to the house, and there was Baby Ray in high nightgown, looking out of the window.

And she kissed him and bathed him and dressed him, and

while she brushed his soft, brown hair, she told him the "Wake-Up" story that I am telling you:

The good old pump by the orchard path

Gave nice, clear water for the baby's bath;

The clean, white chips from the pile of wood

Were glad to warm it and to cook his food.

The cow gave milk in the milk pail bright;

The top-knot Biddy an egg, new and white;

And the tree gave an apple so round and so red,

For dear little Ray, who was just out of bed.

The "Go-Sleep" Story

(Alica O'Grady)

"How can I go to bed," said Penny, the flossy dog, "till I say good night to Baby Ray? He gives me part of his bread and milk, and pats me with his little soft hand. It is bedtime now for dogs and babies. I wonder if he is asleep?"

So he trotted along in his silky white nightgown till he found Baby Ray on the porch in mamma's arms.

And she was telling him the same little story that I am telling you:

"The doggie that was given him to keep, keep, keep,

Went to see if Baby Ray was asleep, sleep, sleep."

"How can we go to bed," said Snowdrop and Thistledown, the youngest children of Tabby, the cat, "till we have once more looked at Baby Ray? He lets us play with his blocks and ball, and laughs when we climb on the table. It is bedtime now for kitties and dogs and babies. Perhaps we shall find him asleep." And this is what the kitties heard:

"One doggie that was given him to keep, keep, keep,

Two cunning little kitty-cats, creep, creep, creep,

Went to see if Baby Ray was asleep, sleep, sleep."

"How can we go to bed," said the three little bunnies, "till we have seen Baby Ray?" Then away they went in their white velvet nightgowns as softly as three flakes of snow. And they,

too, when they got as far as the porch, heard Ray's mamma telling the same little story:

"One doggie that was given him to keep, keep, keep,

Two cunning little kitty-cats, creep, creep, creep.

Three pretty little bunnies with a leap, leap, leap,

Went to see if Baby Ray was asleep, sleep, sleep."

"How can we go to bed," said the four white geese, "till we know that Baby Ray is all right? He loves to watch us sail on the duck pond, and he brings us corn in his little blue apron. It is bedtime now for geese and rabbits and kitties and dogs and babies, and he really ought to be asleep."

So they waddled away in their white feather nightgowns, around by the porch, where they saw Baby Ray, and heard mamma tell the "Go-Sleep" story:

"One doggie that was given him to keep, keep, keep,

Two cunning little kitty-cats, creep, creep, creep,

Three pretty little bunnies, with a leap, leap, leap,

Four geese from the duck pond, deep, deep, deep,

Went to see if Baby Ray was asleep, sleep, sleep."

"How can we go to bed," said the five white chicks, "till we have seen Baby Ray once more? He scatters crumbs for us and calls us. Now it is bedtime for chicks and geese and rabbits and kitties and dogs and babies, so little Ray must be asleep."

Then they ran and fluttered in their downy white nightgowns till they came to the porch, where little Ray was just closing his eyes while mamma told the "Go-Sleep" story:

"One little doggie that was given him to keep, keep, keep,

Two cunning little kitty-cats, creep, creep, creep,
Three pretty little bunnies, with a leap, leap, leap,
Four geese from the duck pond, deep, deep, deep,
Five downy little chicks, crying, peep, peep, peep,
All saw that Baby Ray was asleep, sleep, sleep."

The Little Red Hen and the Grain of Wheat

One day when the little red hen was scratching in the garden she found a grain of wheat.

"Who will plant this grain of wheat?" said the little red hen.

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

"Not I," said the duck.

"Not I," said the curly-tailed pig.

"Then I will," said the little red hen, and she did.

The wheat grew and grew, and finally it was ready to cut.

"Who will cut the wheat?" said the little red hen.

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

"Not I," said the duck.

"Not I," said the curly-tailed pig.

"Then I will," said the little red hen, and she did.

When the wheat was gathered she said,

"Who will take this wheat to the mill?"

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

"Not I," said the duck.

"Not I," said the curly-tailed pig.

"Then I will," said the little red hen, and she did.

When the wheat was ground the little red hen brought it home.

"Now who will make this wheat into bread?" said she.

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

"Not I," said the duck.

"Not I," said the curly-tailed pig.

"Then I will," said the little red hen.

So she made the bread and baked it, and when it was done she took it from the oven.

"Now who will help me eat this bread?" said she.

"I will," said the cat.

"I will," said the mouse.

"I will," said the duck.

"I will," said the curly-tailed pig.

"Oh, no, you won't," said the little red hen, and calling the little chickens, they had a feast in the corner of the barnyard, and the cat and the mouse and the duck and the curly-tailed pig did not get even a crumb.

The Little Gray Pony

(Maud Lindsay)

There was once a man who owned a little gray pony.

Every morning when the dewdrops were still hanging on the pink clover in the meadows, and the birds were singing their morning song, the man would jump on his pony and ride away, *clippety, clippety, clap*!

The pony's four small hoofs played the jolliest tune on the smooth pike road, the pony's head was always high in the air, and the pony's two little ears were always pricked up; for he was a merry gray pony, and loved to go *clippety, clippety, clap*!

The man rode to town and to country, to church and to market, up hill and down hill; and one day he heard something fall with a clang on a stone on the road. Looking back, he saw a horseshoe lying there. And when he saw it, he cried out:

"What shall I do? What shall I do?

If my little gray pony has lost a shoe?"

Then down he jumped, in a great hurry, and looked at one of the pony's forefeet; but nothing was wrong. He lifted the other forefoot, but the shoe was still there. He examined one of the hindfeet, and began to think that he was mistaken; but when he looked at the last foot, he cried again:

"What shall I do? What shall I do?

My little gray pony has lost a shoe!"

Then he made haste to go to the blacksmith; and when he saw the smith he called out to him:

"Blacksmith! Blacksmith! I've come to you;

My little gray pony has lost a shoe!"

But the blacksmith answered and said:

"How can I shoe your pony's feet,

Without some coal the iron to heat?"

The man was downcast when he heard this; but he left his little gray pony in the blacksmith's care, while he hurried here and there to buy the coal.

First of all he went to the store; and when he got there he said:

"Storekeeper! Storekeeper! I've come to you;

My little gray pony has lost a shoe!

And I want some coal the iron to heat,

That the blacksmith may shoe my pony's feet."

But the storekeeper answered and said:

"Now, I have apples and candy to sell,

And more nice things than I can tell;

But I've no coal the iron to heat,

That the blacksmith may shoe your pony's feet."

Then the man went away, sighing and saying:

"What shall I do? What shall I do?

My little gray pony has lost a shoe!"

By and by he met a farmer coming to town with a wagon full of good things; and he said:

"Farmer! Farmer! I've come to you;

My little gray pony has lost a shoe!

And I want some coal the iron to heat,

That the blacksmith may shoe my pony's feet."

Then the farmer answered the man and said:

"I've bushels of corn and hay and wheat,

Something for you and your pony to eat;

But I've no coal the iron to heat,

That the blacksmith may shoe your pony's feet."

So the farmer drove away and left the man standing in the road, sighing and saying:

"What shall I do? What shall I do?

My little gray pony has lost a shoe!"

In the farmer's wagon, full of good things, he saw corn, which made him think of the mill; so he hastened there, and called to the dusty miller:

"Miller! Miller! I've come to see you;

My little gray pony has lost a shoe.

And I want some coal the iron to heat,

That the blacksmith may shoe my pony's feet."

The miller came to the door in surprise; and when he heard what was needed he said:

"I have wheels that go round and round,

And stones to turn till the grain is ground;

But I've no coal the iron to heat,

That the blacksmith may shoe your pony's feet."

Then the man turned away sorrowfully and sat down on a rock near the roadside, sighing and saying:

"What shall I do? What shall I do?

My little gray pony has lost a shoe!"

After a while a very old woman came down the road, driving a flock of geese to market; and when she came near the man she stopped to ask him his trouble. He told her all about it; and when she had heard it all she laughed till her geese joined in with a cackle; and she said:

"If you would know where the coal is found,

You must go to the miner, who works in the ground."

Then the man sprang to his feet, and, thanking the old woman, he ran to the miner. Now the miner had been working many a long day down in the mine, under the ground, where it was so dark that he had to wear a lamp on the front of his cap to light him at his work! He had plenty of black coal ready, and gave great lumps of it to the man, who took them in haste to the blacksmith.

The blacksmith lighted his great red fire, and hammered out four fine new shoes, with a *cling!* and a *clang!* and fastened them on with a *rap!* and a *tap!* Then away rode the man on his little gray pony—*clippety, clippety, clap!*

Chicken Licken

One day as Chicken Licken was scratching under the pea vines in the vineyard a pea fell out of a pod and struck her on the head.

"Oh!" said Chicken Licken, "the sky is falling! I must go and tell the king."

So she ran and she ran, until she met Henny Penny.

"Where are you going, Chicken Licken?" said Henny Penny.

"Oh, Henny Penny, the sky is falling, and I'm going to tell the king!"

"How do you know?"

"I saw it with my eyes and I heard it with my ears, and a piece of it fell on my tail!"

"Then I will go with you," said Henny Penny.

So they ran and they ran, until they met Cocky Locky.

"Good morning, Henny Penny," said Cocky Locky. "Where are you going?"

"Oh, Cocky Locky, the sky is falling, and we are going to tell the king!"

"How do you know?"

"Chicken Licken told me."

"I saw it with my eyes and I heard it with my ears, and a piece of it fell on my tail," said Chicken Licken.

"Then I will go with you," said Cocky Locky.

So they ran and they ran, until they met Ducky Lucky.

"Good morning, Cocky Locky, Henny Penny, and Chicken Licken," said Ducky Lucky. "Where are you going?"

"The sky is falling, and we are going to tell the king."

"How do you know?"

"Henny Penny told me," said Cocky Locky.

"Chicken Licken told me," said Henny Penny.

"I saw it with my eyes and I heard it with my ears, and a piece of it fell on my tail," said Chicken Licken.

"Then I will go with you," said Ducky Lucky.

So they ran and they ran, until they met Turkey Lurkey.

"Good morning, Ducky Lucky, Cocky Locky, Henny Penny, and Chicken Little," said Turkey Lurkey. "Where are you going?"

"Oh, Turkey Lurkey, the sky is falling, and we are going to tell the king."

"How do you know?" said Turkey Lurkey.

"Cocky Locky told me," said Ducky Lucky.

"Henny Penny told me," said Cocky Locky.

"Chicken Little told me," said Henny Penny.

"I saw it with my eyes, and I heard it with my ears, and a piece of it fell on my tail," said Chicken Licken.

"Then I will go with you," said Turkey Lurkey.

So they ran and they ran, until they came to the woods.

They had not gone far into the woods when they met Foxy Loxy.

"Good morning, Turkey Lurkey, Ducky Lucky, Cocky Locky, Henny Penny, and Chicken Licken. Where are you going?"

"The sky is falling, and we are going to tell the king."

"Do you know where to go?"

"No," said they.

"Follow me, and I will show you," said Foxy Loxy.

So they all followed him into the deep woods. By and by they came to a rocky cavern in the hillside.

"Walk in here," said Foxy Loxy. And Turkey Lurkey, Ducky Lucky, Cocky Locky, Henny Penny, and Chicken Licken all walked into Foxy Loxy's den—and though he was seen to come out, no one ever saw those foolish birds again, and the king was never told that the sky was falling.

The Lion and the Mouse

(Lida McMurry)

In the long ago time there was a great, thick forest. In it there lived many animals, and the Lion was the king of them all. One day he was lying under a tree fast asleep. Near him some little field mice were playing about. They were chasing each other and did not see the Lion until one of them ran right over his paw.

With a roar the Lion clapped his foot down over the little Mouse and held him fast.

"How dare you wake me up?" cried the Lion angrily.

"Oh, please, Mr. Lion. I didn't mean to disturb you! Please let me go! If you only will I'll do something for you some day!"

When the Lion heard that, he laughed loud and long. "How could a little bit of a Mouse like you do anything for a great big Lion like me?" he said. "I'll let you go this time, but see that you never wake me up again!" So he lifted up his huge paw and the little Mouse scampered away.

Not long after this, one day the mice were playing in the forest again. Suddenly they stopped and listened. Great roars were sounding through the forest.

"That's my friend Mr. Lion," said the little Mouse, "I'm sure he's in trouble. I must go and see," and he ran through the forest until he found the Lion.

He was in trouble indeed; he was caught in a net which

some hunters had set for him. The thick ropes were wound around him. He pulled this way and that, but for all of his strength he could not break the ropes—they only drew closer and cut deeper.

"Wait, I'll help you," said the little Mouse.

"How can you help me, you foolish little thing?" said the Lion. "Do you not see that I, the strongest of animals, can do nothing?"

The little Mouse did not answer, but ran over to one of the ropes and began to gnaw it with his sharp teeth. He cut the threads as quickly as he could, then went to the next rope. That, too, he gnawed through with his sharp little teeth. Soon he had cut every rope. "Now, stand up, Mr. Lion," he said.

The Lion stood up and shook the pieces of rope from himself. There he was, safe and free again.

"Well," he said, "I never thought that a little bit of a Mouse like you could ever do anything for a great big Lion like me, but you've saved my life today!"

The Shepherd Boy and the Wolf

(Lida McMurry)

John was a shepherd boy. He cared for his father's sheep. As there were many wolves prowling about waiting for a chance to kill the sheep, John had to be very watchful.

Some men were harvesting wheat in a field not far from where the flock was feeding. One day they were startled by the cry, "A wolf! a wolf!" They looked up and saw John motioning wildly to them and pointing toward the sheep.

They threw down their sickles and ran to the flock. But they found the sheep quietly grazing, and there was no wolf to be seen.

"Where is the wolf?" they asked.

"I didn't say the wolf was here," replied John, and he laughed loud and long as he saw the look of surprise in the men's faces.

"What do you mean, you young rascal, by fooling us so?" they cried.

If they could have caught John, they would have given him a sound whipping, but he had run out of their reach.

Not many days after, these same men heard the cry, "Wolf! wolf!"

"John is trying to fool us again," they said, and went on with their work.

John called again and again, and seemed in so much trouble that the kind-hearted men left their work and hurried toward the sheep pasture.

When they came to the pasture, they knew that John had been playing another trick on them. They looked for him, but could not find him. He had hidden in some bushes where he could look on and enjoy their surprise and anger. At last they went back to their work.

One day wolves did come. John was very much frightened. He ran to the men for help. They only laughed at him. "Oh, you have fooled us twice," they said. "You shall not have another chance."

"But the wolves are surely there," cried John. "They are killing the sheep. Do come and help!" The men kept on with their work and did not even look at John.

Before he could find anyone who would believe him, many of the sheep had been killed.

The Hare and the Tortoise

(Lida McMurry)

"Why do you move along so slowly?" said a hare to a tortoise. "Let me show you how to get over the ground."

"You think I am slow, do you?" replied the tortoise. "Let us run a race to the cross-roads. I think I can beat you."

"Do you hear that?" said the hare to a fox, who was standing near. "Could anyone even think that such a slow-coach could beat me in a race?"

"It would be a good joke if he did," said the fox. "Do you wish to run a race? I will be the judge, if you care to have me."

"That suits me well," answered the hare.

"I am willing," said the tortoise.

So the fox marked off a place for starting, and set up a stake at the goal.

The hare and the tortoise stood side by side, and at the command, "Go!" from the fox, they began the race.

The hare bounded along and was very soon far ahead of the tortoise. He called back to the fox, "I think I shall take a little nap before I finish the race; the tortoise will not reach here for an hour or more." So he lay down in some bushes and went to sleep.

Every minute brought the tortoise a little nearer to the goal. He did not stop for a second.

At last he passed the hare, but the hare still slept. On and on he plodded; it was a long way, but he had no thought of stopping.

He came nearer and nearer the goal. At last his foot touched the stake.

The hare wakened, stretched himself, and leaped toward the goal. "What, you here!" he cried when he saw the tortoise. "How did you ever reach here?"

"Just by keeping at it," said the tortoise.

The North Wind and the Sun

(Lida McMurry)

"I am stronger than you," said the North Wind to the Sun.

"That is not true," said the Sun. "Everyone knows that I am the stronger."

"Show me that you are stronger than I," replied the North Wind. "You know very well that you are not."

"Do you see that traveler coming? I can make him take off his coat. You can not," said the Sun.

"We will see about that," answered the North Wind. "The one that makes the traveler take off his coat is the victor."

"All right," said the Sun, "and you may have the first trial."

"Whew! How the North Wind blows," said the traveler. "Whew! whew! Hold on there, North Wind; I would rather walk than fly. Whew! whew!

"How cold it is! I must button my coat uptight. Whew! whew! whew! I never felt such a wind before," said the traveler, as he folded his arms over his breast. "It seems determined to tear off my coat. I will turn my back to it. Whew! whew! whew! whew!" But the more the wind blew, the tighter the traveler held on to his coat.

At last the North Wind said, "I will try no longer, but you, Sun, can do no better."

The Sun said nothing, but came out from under a cloud and smiled down upon the traveler.

"How good that feels!" said the traveler. The Sun shone on. "It is getting warm," said the traveler, unbuttoning his coat.

It was now past noon. "The Sun is too much for me," said the traveler, and he threw off his coat and hunted for a shady place.

The North Wind's harshness had failed. The Sun's gentleness had won.

Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Once upon a time there were three bears who lived in a little house in the forest.

There was a great big papa bear and the middle-sized mama bear and the wee little baby bear.

One morning the mama bear made the porridge for their breakfast and poured it into their bowls to cool, a great big bowl for the papa bear and a middle-sized bowl for the mama bear and a little wee bowl for the baby bear.

"Now, my dears," said the papa bear, "we will go for a walk while our porridge is cooling."

So the great big papa bear and the middle-sized mama bear and the wee little baby bear all went for a walk in the woods.

Near the woods where the bears lived there lived a little girl whose hair was so yellow that she was called, "Goldilocks." She loved to gather the flowers that grew among the grass and under the trees.

On this morning she said to her mother, "Please, mother, let me go and gather some flowers, they are so beautiful today."

"If you will not go into the deep woods, you may go," said her mother.

"No, I will not go far," said Goldilocks, but she was a very thoughtless little girl, and she went on and on, gathering flowers, until she had a great bunch, as many as her hands

could hold, but when she looked up she was in the heart of the deep woods. No one answered when she called, and she ran on and on, until she was too tired to run any farther.

Just then she saw a little house not far away among the trees. "Some one here will surely tell me the way home," said the little girl, and she ran to the little house and knocked on the door.

No one answered, so Goldilocks opened the door and walked in. On the table she saw three bowls of porridge. She was very hungry, so she ran to the table and tasted the porridge in the great big bowl, but it was too hot; then she tasted the porridge in the middle-sized bowl, but that was too cold; so she tasted the porridge in the little wee bowl, and that was just right, and she ate and ate until the porridge was all gone.

She looked around the room and she saw three chairs, a great big chair and a middle-sized chair and a little wee chair. First she sat down in the great big chair, but that was too high for her; and then sat down in the middle-sized chair, but that was too low for her; so then she sat down in the little wee chair, and that was just right, and she rocked and she rocked until she fell over and broke the chair.

Then Goldilocks thought she would go upstairs and see what there might be up there. There she saw three beds, a great big bed and a middle-sized bed and little wee bed. First she lay down on the great big bed, but that was too hard for her; so then she lay down on the middle-sized bed, but that was too soft for her; so then she tried the little wee bed, and that was so comfortable that before she knew it she was fast asleep.

Just then the three bears who lived in the house came home from their walk. Seeing the door open, they hurried in.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN EATING MY PORRIDGE!"

growled the great big papa bear.

"*Somebody has been eating my porridge!*" snarled the middle-sized mama bear.

"Somebody has been eating my porridge and eaten it all up!" cried the wee little baby bear.

Then the bears looked around to see who had been in their house.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY CHAIR!" growled the great big papa bear.

"*Somebody has been sitting in my chair!*" snarled the middle-sized mama bear.

"Somebody has been sitting in my chair and broke it to pieces!" cried the wee little baby bear.

Then the bears decided to go upstairs to look for the intruder. The great big papa bear went first, and the middle-sized mama bear came next, and last of all came the wee little baby bear.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SLEEPING IN MY BED!" growled the great big papa bear.

"*Somebody has been sleeping in my bed!*" snarled the medium-sized mama bear.

"Somebody has been sleeping in my bed," cried the wee little baby bear, "and here she is!"

Now the voice of the great big papa bear had sounded to Goldilocks like thunder; and the voice of the middle-sized mama bear had sounded like the wind in the tree tops; but the voice of the wee little baby bear was so shrill that it woke her up.

When she opened her eyes and saw the three bears looking angrily at her she was so frightened that she rolled off the

bed on the farther side and, running to the window, she jumped out.

On and on she ran until finally she came to the path that led to her home. When she reached her home she was so tired she could hardly tell her mother what a naughty child she had been, and she never again strayed into the heart of the deep woods where the three bears lived.

The Story of the Three Little Pigs

(Lida McMurry)

Once a mother pig said to her little ones:

"My little pigs, you are old enough to take care of yourselves, so I must send you out into the world."

"All right, mother," said the little pigs.

The first pig, as it went on its way, met a man with a bundle of straw and said to him:

"Please, sir, give me that straw, that I may build me a house."

The man gave him the straw and he built him a house.

Soon a wolf came along and knocked at his door, and said:

"Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

The pig replied,

"Not by the hair of my chinny, chin, chin, I will not let you in."

So the wolf said:

"Then I'll huff, and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house in."

So he huffed and he puffed, and he blew the house in and ate up the little pig.

The second pig met a man with a bundle of sticks, and said to him:

"Please, sir, give me those sticks, that I may build me a house."

The man gave him the sticks and he built him a house.

Soon the wolf came along and said:

"Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

The pig replied:

"Not by the hair of my chinny, chin, chin, I will not let you in."

So the wolf said:

"Then I'll huff, and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house in."

So he huffed and he puffed and he puffed and he huffed, and he blew the house in and ate up the little pig.

The third little pig met a man with a load of bricks, and said to him:

"Please, sire, give me that load of bricks, that I may build me a house."

The man gave him the bricks and he built him a house.

Soon the wolf came along and said:

"Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

The pig replied:

"Not by the hair of my chinny, chin, chin, I will not let you in."

So the wolf said:

"Then I'll huff, and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house in."

So he huffed and he puffed and he puffed and he huffed and he huffed and he puffed, but he could not blow the house in. When he found that he could not get into the house by

puffing and huffing, he said:

"Little pig, I know where there is a large patch of turnips."

"Where is it?" said the little pig.

"Oh, it is in Mr. White's field. If you will be ready tomorrow morning I will call for you and we will go together and get some turnips for dinner."

"All right," said the little pig. "I will be ready. What time do you wish to go?"

"Oh, at six o'clock."

The little pig did not wait for the wolf. He got up at five o'clock, went for the turnips, and was home again when the wolf came by.

The wolf rapped at his door and called:

"Little pig, are you ready?"

The little pig called back:

"Oh, I went an hour ago. I have my turnips. Thank you, Mr. Wolf."

The wolf was very angry, but he said to himself, "I will have that little pig yet." Then he said to the little pig:

"I know where some excellent apples grow."

"Where?" asked the pig.

"Down in Mr. Black's garden," replied the wolf; "and if you will not deceive me, I will come for you at five o'clock and go with you after the apples."

The little pig got up at four o'clock the next morning and went to Mr. Black's garden, but the way was long and he had to climb the tree after he reached the garden. After he had picked all the apples that he wished, he started to get down

the tree, when what did he see but Mr. Wolf!

The wolf thought that he had the little pig now, so he ran up to the tree and said very pleasantly: "What! are you here, little pig! Are the apples good?"

The little pig was terribly frightened, but he replied: "The apples are the best I ever ate. I will give you the biggest one on the tree," and he threw it as far as he could.

The wolf ran after the apple, and the little pig hurried down and ran home.

The next day the wolf went to the little pig's home and called out:

"There is a fair in town this afternoon, little pig. Will you go?"

"Oh, yes," said the little pig. "At what time will you call?"

"At three o'clock," said the wolf.

The little pig started off to the fair at one o'clock, and bought a churn. On his return, just as he reached the top of the hill, he saw the wolf coming. "What shall I do?" he said, then he jumped into the churn. The churn fell over and rolled down the hill. The wolf saw it coming and was greatly frightened. So he ran home as fast as he could go, and the pig got safely home.

Soon after, the wolf went to the little pig's house and said:

"Oh, little pig, I started to the fair, but something big and round came running down the hill right at me, and I went home as fast as I could go."

"Ho! Ho! I frightened you, Mr. Wolf. I was coming from the fair with a churn. When I saw you, I jumped into the churn and rolled down hill."

"You hateful pig! I will eat you up. I am going down your

chimney after you now," growled the wolf.

"I will be ready for him," said the little pig, and he looked into the kettle to see how hot the water was. It was just right.

When he heard the wolf coming down the chimney, he took the cover off the kettle. In tumbled the wolf, and that was the last of him.

The Three Billy Goats Gruff

(George Dasent)

Once on a time there were three Billy-goats, who were to go up to the hill-side to make themselves fat, and the name of all three was "Gruff."

On the way up was a bridge over a burn they had to cross; and under the bridge lived a great ugly Troll, with eyes as big as saucers, and a nose as long as a poker.

So first of all came the youngest billy-goat Gruff to cross the bridge.

"Trip, trap! trip, trap!" went the bridge.

"WHO'S THAT tripping over my bridge?" roared the Troll.

"Oh, it is only I, the tiniest billy-goat Gruff; and I'm going up to the hill-side to make myself fat," said the billy-goat, with such a small voice.

"Now, I'm coming, to gobble you up," said the Troll.

"Oh, no! pray don't take me. I'm too little, that I am," said the billy-goat; "wait a bit till the second billy-goat Gruff comes, he's much bigger."

"Well, be off with you;" said the Troll.

A little while after came the second billy-goat Gruff to cross the bridge.

"TRIP, TRAP! TRIP, TRAP! TRIP, TRAP!" went the bridge.

"WHO'S THAT tripping over my bridge?" roared the Troll.

"Oh, it's the second billy-goat Gruff, and I'm going up to the hill-side to make myself fat," said the billy-goat, who hadn't such a small voice.

"Now I'm coming to gobble you up," said the Troll.

"Oh, no! don't take me, wait a little till the big billy-goat Gruff comes, he's much bigger."

"Very well! be off with you," said the Troll.

But just then up came the big billy-goat Gruff.

"TRIP, TRAP! TRIP, TRAP! TRIP, TRAP!" went the bridge, for the billy-goat was so heavy that the bridge creaked and groaned under him.

"WHO'S THAT tramping over my bridge?" roared the Troll.

"IT'S I! THE BIG BILLY-GOAT GRUFF," said the billy-goat, who had an ugly hoarse voice of his own.

"Now I'm coming to gobble you up," roared the Troll,

"Well, come along! I've got two spears. And I'll poke your eyeballs out at your ears; I've got besides two curling-stones, And I'll crush you to bits, body and bones."

That was what the big billy-goat said; and so he flew at the Troll, and poked his eyes out with his horns, and crushed him to bits, body and bones, and tossed him out into the burn, and after that he went up to the hill-side. There the billy-goats got so fat they were scarce able to walk home again; and if the fat hasn't fallen off them, why, they're still fat; and so—

"Snip, snap, snout

This tale's told out."

The Shoemaker's Helpers

(Lida McMurry)

A shoemaker was so poor that he had nothing left but leather for one pair of shoes. He said: "I will cut the shoes out tonight and make them in the morning. We have little money, wife, but we will do the best that we can, and we shall not starve."

In the morning, after prayers were said, and breakfast was eaten, the shoemaker went to his bench to make the one pair of shoes, but what was his surprise to find them finished! He examined them carefully. They were perfectly made, much better than he could have made them. Who could have done it?

Soon a man came in to buy a pair of shoes. He liked the shoes so well that he paid the shoemaker much more money than was asked for them. This made the poor shoemaker very happy. He gave part of the money to his wife for food, and with the rest he bought leather for two pairs of shoes.

At night he cut the shoes out and the next morning was about to go to work at them when he found them beautifully made as before.

The two pairs of shoes were soon sold, and now the shoemakers had money enough to buy leather for four pairs. The following morning he found the four pairs made, and so it went day after day. He bought more leather each succeeding day, and always found the shoes which he cut out at night were made by morning; and the shoemaker became famous

for selling the best shoes that could be found in the country. The shoemaker and his wife were very happy, for they were now beyond want.

Not long before Christmas the shoemaker said to his wife: "Someone has been working for us for many months, and we are now comfortably well off. Let us watch tonight to find out who it is that has been so good to us, then perhaps we can do something for this kind friend."

His wife agreed that this plan was a good one. At night she lighted a candle and put it in the shop, then they both hid in a closet, leaving the door partly open.

At midnight, whom do you think came into the shop!—two pretty little naked elves. They sat down at the shoemaker's bench and began work, stitching, and hammering so rapidly and so skillfully that the shoemaker could not take his eyes from them for a moment. They did not stop until all the shoes were made and placed neatly on the table, then they ran quickly away.

The next morning the shoemaker's wife said: "The two little elves have made us rich, and we must show them that we are very thankful for their help. They must be cold, for they have no clothes. I think I will make a suit of clothes for each one, and you will make a pair of shoes for each?"

"Most gladly, wife," said the shoemaker.

So the wife cut out and made little shirts, coats, vests, and trousers, and knit each elf a pair of long warm stockings; and the shoemaker made each one a beautiful pair of red shoes.

The night before Christmas, the shoemaker and his wife laid the little clothes and the shoes on the bench, but they left no work cut out for the elves to do. After putting a light in the shop, they hid in the closet as before.

At midnight the elves came bounding into the shop. They looked about for their work, but found only the clothes and the shoes. "What are these?" they said. "They must be for us. What fun it will be to dress up," and they put on the little clothes with great delight, and as they dressed they sang—

"Now we are boys so fine to see,

Why should we longer cobblers be?"

When they were in full dress they danced about the room, over the chairs and benches. At last they danced out of doors, and that was the last time the shoemaker ever saw the elves, for he needed their help no longer.

Little Red Riding-Hood

(Lida McMurry)

In a village a long, long way from here there lived a sweet little girl. Everyone who knew her, loved her. Her old grandmother thought so much of her that she made her many presents. Once she sent her a little red cloak with a red velvet hood. The little girl looked so pretty in this cloak that she was called Little Red-Riding-hood ever after.

One day her mother said to her, "Come, Red Riding-hood, bring me your little basket and I will put a cake and a glass of jelly in it for your grandmother. She is sick, and I want you to go and see how she does. Get ready at once, before it becomes too warm, and do not stop on your way."

Little Red Riding-hood was always glad to go to grandmother's; so she kissed her mother good-bye and started, with her little basket.

As she was going through the woods, she met a large wolf. He had a great mind to eat her up, but he did not dare, for there were some wood-cutters near by; so he said: "Where are you going so early, little girl?"

Now, Red Riding-hood did not know that it is not safe to stop and talk to a wolf, so she answered: "I am going to see my grandmother and take her this cake and glass of jelly that mother sent."

"Where does your grandmother live?" asked the wolf.

"She lives in the first house you come to, in the next

village. Her house stands under three large oak trees. You would surely know it," said Red Riding-hood.

Then they walked on together for a little way, until they came to some beautiful flowers. "See, what pretty flowers," said the wolf.

"Why do you not stop and gather some and rest yourself. And hear how sweetly the birds are singing!"

Then Little Red Riding-hood thought, "Grandmother loves flowers, and it is early yet, and I have plenty of time. I think I will gather her a bouquet of the prettiest ones." So she went on and on, farther and farther into the woods, gathering flowers.

But the wolf went straight on to grandmother's house, and knocked at the door, "Tap! tap! tap!"

The old grandmother was sick in bed upstairs, and did not hear the wolf knock. As the wolf heard no stir in the room he lifted the latch and went in. There in a box he found one of the grandmother's caps. He put it on, and quickly jumped into a bed in the room—the very one in which grandmother usually slept.

After Red Riding-hood had gathered as many flowers as she could carry, she went back to the right path and walked on very fast until she came to her grandmother's house. Then she knocked at the door—"Tap! tap!"

"Who is there?" asked the wolf, trying to speak in a voice like that of her grandmother. His voice sounded so gruff, though, that Little Red Riding-hood felt afraid; but she thought—"Grandmother has a cold and is hoarse," so she answered, "It is Little Red Riding-hood. Mother has sent you a cake and a glass of jelly."

"Lift the latch and come in," said the wolf.

So Red Riding-hood lifted the latch and went in. When she saw her grandmother, as she thought, lying in bed, she went up to her and said, "Good morning, Grandmother," but there was no answer.

Then she got on the bed and said, "Oh, grandmother, what great ears you have!"

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

"And, grandmother, what great eyes you have."

"The better to see you, my dear."

"And, grandmother, what great arms you have."

"The better to hug you, my dear."

"But, grandmother, what great teeth you have," cried Red Riding-hood, beginning to be frightened.

"The better to eat you," said the wolf, as he got ready to spring upon her.

At that moment a bee which had followed Little Red Riding-hood into the house, stung the wolf on the nose so that he sneezed again and again.

Just then a sparrow flew to the window-sill and chirped, and a hunter aiming at it, shot through the window and killed the wolf.

The Goats in the Rye Field

(Esenwein/Stockard)

One bright morning Johnny was driving his goats to pasture. He trudged along whistling, and paying but little attention to the goats, when suddenly he saw them all running toward the farmer's rye field. There was a hole in the fence, which the leader of the goats had seen, and before Johnny could stop them, they all scrambled through and were busily eating the rye. Johnny knew that this would never do, so he climbed over the fence, took a stick, and tried to drive them out. But they would not go—they only ran round and round the field. Johnny ran after them until he was so tired he could run no farther, then he crawled through the hole in the fence, sat down by the roadside, and began to cry.

Just then a Fox came down the road.

"Good morning, Johnny, why are you crying?" asked the Fox.

"I'm crying because I can't get the goats out of the rye field," said Johnny.

"Oh, don't cry about that! I'll drive them out easily; watch me!" said the Fox.

He leaped over the fence and began to chase the goats. Round and round they ran, and nothing could get them to go near the hole in the fence. At last the Fox was so tired that he could run no more, so he crawled through the hole in the fence, sat down beside Johnny, and began to cry.

Then a Rabbit came hopping down the road. When he saw Johnny and the Fox he stopped still.

"Why are you crying, Fox?" he asked.

"I'm crying because Johnny is crying," said the Fox.

"Why are you crying, Johnny?"

"I'm crying because I can't get the goats out of the rye field," said Johnny.

"Tut, tut!" said the Rabbit, "what a thing to cry about! Watch me. I'll soon drive them out."

The Rabbit hopped over the fence, and round and round the field he chased those goats; but they would not go near the hole in the fence. At last the Rabbit was so tired he could not hop another hop, so he crawled through the fence, sat down beside the Fox, and began to cry.

While they were all crying away, along came a little Bee. She stopped in surprise. "Good morning, Rabbit, whatever are you crying about this lovely morning?"

"I'm crying because the Fox is crying," answered the Rabbit.

"And why are you crying, Fox?"

"I'm crying because Johnny is crying."

"Why are you crying, Johnny?"

"Boo hoo!" sobbed Johnny, "I'm crying because I can't get the goats out of the rye field!"

"Don't cry about that. I'll get them out for you," said the Bee.

Johnny was so surprised that he stopped crying; then he began to laugh. "What! A little thing like you drive them out when I couldn't do it!" he shouted.

"And when I could not!" said the Fox.

"And when I could not!" said the Rabbit. Then they all began to laugh.

The little Bee didn't say a word. She flew over the fence and flew right to the ear of the leader of the goats. "Buzz-zip!" She went in one ear. The goat shook his head, and the little Bee flew to the other side. "Buzz-zip!" She went right in that ear. The goat started running toward the hole in the fence. The little Bee never stopped buzzing in his ear until he ran out of the field. And all the other goats followed after him.

Johnny, the Fox, and the Rabbit stared at each other in surprise.

"Thank you, little Bee," said Johnny, and he ran after his goats to the pasture.

Mrs. Tabby Gray

(Maud Lindsay)

Mrs. Tabby Gray, with her three little kittens, lived out in the barn where the hay was stored. One of the kittens was white, one was black, and one gray, just like her mother, who was called Tabby Gray from the color of her coat.

These three little kittens opened their eyes when they grew old enough and thought there was nothing so nice in all this wonderful world as their own dear mother, although she told them of a great many nice things, like milk and bread, which they should have when they could go up to the big house where she had her breakfast, dinner, and supper.

Every time Mother Tabby came from the big house she had something pleasant to tell. "Bones for dinner today, my dears," she would say, or "I had a fine romp with a ball and the baby," until the kittens longed for the time when they could go, too.

One day, however, Mother Cat walked in with joyful news.

"I have found an elegant new home for you," she said, "in a very large trunk where some old clothes are kept; and I think I had better move at once."

Then she picked up the small black kitten, without any more words, and walked right out of the barn with him.

The black kitten was astonished, but he blinked his eyes at the bright sunshine, and tried to see everything.

Out in the barnyard there was a great noise, for the white

hen had laid an egg, and wanted everybody to know it, but Mother Cat hurried on, without stopping to inquire about it, and soon dropped the kitten into a large trunk. The clothes made such a soft, comfortable bed, and the kitten was so tired after his exciting trip, that he fell asleep, and Mrs. Tabby trotted off for another baby.

While she was away, the lady who owned the trunk came out in the hall; and when she saw the trunk was open, she shut it, locked it, and put the key in her pocket, for she did not dream that there was anything so precious as a kitten inside.

As soon as the lady had gone upstairs, Mrs. Tabby Gray came back, with the little white kitten; and when she found the trunk closed, she was terribly frightened. She put the white kitten down and sprang on top of the trunk and scratched with all her might, but scratching did no good. Then she jumped down and reached up to the keyhole, but that was too small for even a mouse to pass through, and the poor mother mewed pitifully.

What was she to do? She picked up the white kitten, and ran to the barn with it. Then she made haste to the house again, and went upstairs to the lady's room. The lady was playing with her baby and when Mother Cat saw this she rubbed against her skirts, and cried: "Mee-ow, mee-ow! You have your baby, and I want mine! Mee-ow, mee-ow!"

By and by the lady said, "Poor kitty! She must be hungry," and she went down to the kitchen and poured sweet milk in a saucer, but the cat did not want milk. She wanted her baby kitten out of the big black trunk, and she mewed as plainly as she could: "Give me my baby—give me my baby, out of your big black trunk!"

The kind lady decided that she must be thirsty: "Poor Kitty, I will give you water," but when she set the bowl of

water down Mrs. Tabby Gray mewed more sorrowfully than before. She wanted no water—she only wanted her dear baby kitten; and she ran to and fro, crying, until, at last, the lady followed her; and she led the way to the trunk.

"What can be the matter with this cat?" said the lady; and she took the trunk key out of her pocket, put it in the lock, unlocked the trunk, raised the top—and in jumped Mother Cat with such a bound that the little black kitten waked up with a start.

"Purr, purr, my darling child," said Mrs. Tabby Gray, in great excitement; "I have had a dreadful fright!" and before the black kitten could ask one question she picked him up and started for the barn.

The sun was bright in the barnyard and the hens were still chattering there; but the black kitten was glad to get back to the barn. His mother was glad, too; for, as she nestled down in the hay with her three little kittens, she told them that a barn was the best place after all to raise children.

And she never afterwards changed her mind.

Raggylug

(Sara Cone Bryant)

Once there was a little furry rabbit, who lived with his mother deep down in a nest under the long grass. His name was Raggylug, and his mother's name was Molly Cottontail. Every morning, when Molly Cottontail went out to hunt for food, she said to Raggylug, "Now Raggylug, lie still, and make no noise. No matter what you hear, no matter what you see, don't you move. Remember you are only a baby rabbit, and lie low." And Raggylug always said he would.

One day, after his mother had gone, he was lying very still in the nest, looking up through the feathery grass. By just cocking his eye, so, he could see what was going on up in the world. Once a big blue-jay perched on a twig above him, and scolded some one very loudly; he kept saying, "Thief! thief!" But Raggylug never moved his nose, nor his paws; he lay still. Once a lady-bug took a walk down a blade of grass, over his head; she was so top-heavy that pretty soon she tumbled off and fell to the bottom, and had to begin all over again. But Raggylug never moved his nose nor his paws; he lay still.

The sun was warm, and it was very still.

Suddenly Raggylug heard a little sound, far off. It sounded like "*Swish*, *swish*," very soft and far away. He listened. It was a queer little sound, low down in the grass, "*rustle rustle rustle*;" Raggylug was interested. But he never moved his nose or his paws; he lay still. Then the sound came nearer, "*rustle rustle rustle*;" then grew fainter, then came nearer; in and out, nearer

and nearer, like something coming; only, when Raggylug heard anything coming he always heard its feet, stepping ever so softly. What could it be that came so smoothly, *rustle rustle* without any feet?

He forgot his mother's warning, and sat up on his hind paws; the sound stopped then. "Pooh," thought Raggylug, "I'm not a baby rabbit, I am three weeks old; I'll find out what this is." He stuck his head over the top of the nest, and looked straight into the wicked eyes of a great big snake. "Mammy, Mammy!" screamed Raggylug, "Oh, Mammy, Mam—" But he couldn't scream any more, for the big snake had his ear in his mouth and was winding about the soft little body, squeezing Raggylug's life out. He tried to call "Mammy!" again, but he could not breathe.

Ah, but Mammy had heard the first cry. Straight over the fields she flew, leaping the stones and hummocks, fast as the wind, to save her baby. She wasn't a timid little cottontail rabbit then; she was a mother whose child was in danger. And when she came to Raggylug and the big snake, she took one look, and then *hop! hop!* she went over the snake's back; and as she jumped she struck at the snake with her strong hind claws so that they tore his skin. He hissed with rage, but he did not let go.

Hop! hop! she went again, and this time she hurt him so that he twisted and turned; but he held on to Raggylug.

Once more the mother rabbit hopped, and once more she struck and tore the snake's back with her sharp claws. *Zzz!* How she hurt! The snake dropped Raggy to strike at her, and Raggy rolled on to his feet and ran.

"Run, Raggylug, run!" said his mother, keeping the snake busy with her jumps; and you may believe Raggylug ran! Just as soon as he was out of the way his mother came too, and showed him where to go. When she ran, there was a little

white patch that showed under her tail; that was for Raggy to follow, he followed it now.

Far, far away she led him, through the long grass, to a place where the big snake could not find him, and there she made a new nest. And this time, when she told Raggylug to lie low you'd better believe he minded!

Why the Evergreen Trees Keep Their Leaves in Winter

One day, a long, long time ago, it was very cold; winter was coming. And all the birds flew away to the warm south, to wait for the spring. But one little bird had a broken wing and could not fly. He did not know what to do. He looked all round, to see if there were any place where he could keep warm. And he saw the trees of the great forest.

"Perhaps the trees will keep me through the winter," he said.

So he went to the edge of the forest hopping and fluttering with his broken wing. The first tree he came to was a slim silver birch.

"Beautiful birch-tree," he said, "will you let me live in your warm branches until the springtime comes?"

"Dear me!" said the birch-tree, "what a thing to ask! I have to take care of my own leaves through the winter; that is enough for me. Go away."

The little bird hopped and fluttered with his broken wing until he came to the next tree. It was a great, big oak-tree.

"Big oak-tree," said the little bird, "will you let me live in your warm branches until the springtime comes?"

"Dear me," said the oak-tree, "what a thing to ask! If you stay in my branches all winter you will be eating my acorns. Go away."

So the little bird hopped and fluttered with his broken

wing till he came to the willow tree by the edge of the brook.

"Beautiful willow tree," said the little bird will you let me live in your warm branches until the springtime comes?

"Indeed," said the willow-tree; "I never speak to strangers. Go away."

The poor little bird did not know where to go; but he hopped and fluttered along with his broken wing. Pretty soon the spruce tree saw him, and said, "Where are you going, little bird?"

"I do not know," said the bird; "the trees will not let me live with them, and my wing is broken so that I cannot fly."

"You may live on one of my branches," said the spruce; "here is the warmest one of all."

"But may I stay all winter?"

"Yes," said the spruce; "I shall like to have you."

The pine tree stood beside the spruce, and when he saw the little bird hopping and fluttering with his broken wing, he said, "My branches are not very warm, but I can keep the wind off because I am big and strong."

So the little bird fluttered up into the warm branch of the spruce, and the pine tree kept the wind off his house; then the juniper tree saw what was going on, and said that she would give the little bird his dinner all winter, from her juniper berries. Juniper berries are very good for little birds.

The little bird was very comfortable in his warm nest sheltered from the wind, with juniper berries to eat.

The trees at the edge of the forest saw it all.

"I wouldn't take care of a strange bird," said the birch.

"I wouldn't risk my acorns," said the oak.

"I would not speak to strangers," said the willow. And the three trees stood up very tall and proud.

That night the North Wind came to the woods to play. He puffed at the leaves with his icy breath, and every leaf he touched fell to the ground. He wanted to touch every leaf in the forest, and see all the trees bare.

"May I touch every leaf?" he said to his father, the Frost King.

"No," said the Frost King, "the trees which were kind to the bird with the broken wing may keep their leaves."

So North Wind had to leave them alone, and the spruce, the pine, and the juniper tree kept their leaves all winter. And they have done it ever since.

The Ugly Duckling

(Esenwein/Stockard)

It was Springtime in the country. Birds were singing, flowers were blooming, and the green wheat was waving in the fields. Down by the water a Duck was sitting on her nest. She had been sitting there alone for many days waiting for her eggs to hatch. The other Ducks sometimes swam up and talked to her, and then went away, leaving her alone again. At last to her great joy the eggs began to hatch and out came the downy little Ducks. There was only one egg left: it was a very big egg, different from the rest.

"Let me see it," said a Visiting Duck. "Take my word for it, it's a Turkey's egg. You'll be sorry if you hatch it, for young Turkeys are a great deal of trouble. Nothing can induce them to go near the water. Leave it and come along to the barnyard."

"No," said the Mother Duck, "since I've waited so long I may as well wait one more day."

The other Duck swam away and left her, and the Mother Duck settled back on her nest.

The next day the big egg hatched, and out came a big gray Duckling. He was very ugly and awkward, not at all like the other Ducklings.

"I do wonder if he is a Turkey?" said the mother. "I shall take them to the water at once and find out."

When they reached the water the Ugly Duckling was the

first one to plunge in. He swam better than any of the others.

"No, he is not a Turkey. Well, that is a relief, at any rate," said the Mother Duck. "Come along, now I will show you the barnyard. That's quite the finest place in the whole world," and she led the way to the barnyard, with all of the little ducks waddling after her.

"What's this, a new family?" All the inhabitants of the barnyard cried when they saw her coming. "That one is very ugly!" and they began to push him about and to make fun of him.

"Let him alone," said his Mother. "You should see him swim, he is very graceful in the water. Then, too, see how strong he is."

But it did no good, the Chickens, the Turkeys and all the other Ducks pecked him, and said: "Get out of our sight, you ugly thing!"

The poor Duckling grew more and more miserable until at last he could bear it no longer: so he flew over the fence and down to the moor. He was very lonely there, but it was more peaceful than in the barnyard.

One day there was a terrible storm. The Duckling was blown by the wind and beaten by hail stones. He ran through the woods seeking a shelter. At last he came to a little house. The door was open and he slipped in. This was the home of an old woman, her cat and her hen. She peered at the Duckling. "Ah!" she said, "you shall stay here, and we shall have some duck's eggs."

So the Duckling settled down in his corner. He was quiet and peaceable enough, but the Cat and the Hen could never leave him alone.

"Can you purr or throw sparks?" asked the Cat.

"I never did such a thing in my life," said the poor Duckling.

"Then you are not at all interesting: kindly keep quiet," said the Cat.

"Can you lay eggs?" asked the Hen.

"No," said the Duckling.

"Then you are not good for much. Keep quiet!" said the Hen.

One day the warm spring air came through the door.

"How splendid it would be to take a swim!" said the Duckling. "I should love to feel the water close over my head, to—"

"Swim! Swim!" the Cat and the Hen exclaimed in horror. "Who ever heard of anything so foolish? We do not swim, the old woman does not swim, so why should you wish to do such an awful thing?"

"I think I'll go out into the world," said the Duckling.

"Please do, we really do not care to associate with you."

The Duckling slipped through the door and ran down to the moor again. There he floated and dived through the long summer. He felt very lonely, but every day he grew larger and stronger.

The autumn came on, and one day as he lay among the reeds on the edge of the pool he heard a strange cry overhead. He looked up, and sailing above him were some beautiful white birds. He had never seen anything like them before, and he did not know why the strange feeling swept through him. He whirled and whirled in the water, and uttered a cry so strange and wild that it almost frightened him. But the beautiful birds did not hear him: they sailed on out of sight.

Then the long winter came and the Duckling found it

hard to get food. Sometimes the water almost froze around him as he swam up and down. He was lonely, cold and hungry. But at last one day there was a smell of spring in the air. The sun shone warmer, the grass grew green and the Duckling felt glad to be alive. His wings had grown very strong, and he flew across the woods to a large pond.

When he lighted on the water he saw the flock of the beautiful white birds he had seen in the fall. He felt that he must be with them.

"They will be angry that anything so ugly as I dares to come near them, but they may kill me if they will—I must speak to them."

So he bent his head and glided toward them. They swam to meet him, and what was his surprise when they caressed him with their beaks and bowed before him.

Some children and their father had come down to the pond. They threw crumbs to the birds and cried out: "Oh, father, see! There is a new Swan, and he is the most beautiful of them all!"

The other Swans wheeled about him: "Yes, you are the most beautiful of us all. You must never leave us," they cried.

He bent his head and looked at his reflection in the water. He saw that his ugly gray feathers had become white like the birds he had loved and dreamed of through the long winter. A great happiness filled his heart; he was no longer unloved and alone, he had found his own at last.

Imaginative Stories

(Ages 5-8)

The Princess and Her Golden Ball

(Elizabeth Dillingham)

Once upon a time a little princess was playing in the garden with her golden ball. She was tossing it up and catching it, when all of a sudden it rolled away and fell down into a deep, dark well.

The little princess ran to the edge of the well and looked over, but she couldn't see it. She sat down beside the well and began to cry and cry. While she sat there crying, a great green frog poked his head right up out of the water.

"What are you crying for, little princess?"

"I've lost my golden ball down the well, and I'm afraid I'll never see it again."

"Little princess, if I will go down to the bottom of the well and bring up your golden ball, what will you give me?"

"Oh," said the little girl, "I'll give you—I'll give you all my playthings."

"Why," said the frog, "I don't want your playthings. What will you give me, little princess?"

"I'll give you my silk dress."

"I don't want your silk dress. What will you give me, little princess?"

"I'll give you my little red slippers."

"Oh," said the frog, "I don't want your little red slippers.

They wouldn't fit me. What will you give me, little princess?"

The little girl began to cry again. "I haven't anything to give you," she said.

"Little princess," said the frog, "if I will go down to the bottom of the well and bring up your golden ball, will you let me come to your house and let me eat out of your golden plate and drink out of your silver cup and sleep on your little white bed?"

"Yes, yes!" cried the little girl, "if you will only get my golden ball!"

So the frog dived down to the bottom of the well and in a minute came back with the ball in his mouth. The little girl took the ball and ran off home, forgetting all about the frog. He called after her, "Little princess! little princess! you *said* I might come." But she wouldn't listen.

That day as she was eating her dinner there came a knock at the door.

"Run to the door, little princess," said her father, "and see who is there."

So she ran to the door and opened it. There was that great green frog! She shut the door in a hurry and went back to the table.

"What is the trouble, little princess? Who is at the door?" asked her father.

"A great green frog! I told him if he would get my golden ball, he might come to my house and eat out of my golden plate and drink out of my silver cup and sleep on my little white bed. I didn't think he would come, and now he's here."

"Little princess," said the father, "a promise is a promise. Go open the door and let the frog come in, and do just as you

said you would."

So she had to open the door and let the frog come in. He hopped along beside her, and she had to pick him up and let him eat out of her golden plate and drink out of her silver cup, because she had said she would.

Then by and by it was time to go to bed, and she had to take that great green frog and let him sleep on the foot of her little white bed, because she had said she would.

She shut her eyes and went to sleep. When she opened them it was morning and the sun was shining. She looked down at the foot of the bed, thinking she would see the frog, but he wasn't there. The little girl was so glad to be rid of him that she jumped up and dressed quickly, and ran out into the garden. There was a little boy all dressed in green velvet clothes.

When he saw the little girl he said: "O little princess! yesterday I was a great green frog, but because you were so kind to me, and let me eat out of your golden plate and drink out of your silver cup and sleep on your little white bed, I have been changed into a little boy, and I'm going to stay and play with you."

And they had a lovely time in the garden.

Thumbelina

(Caroline Sherwin Bailey)

Once upon a time there was a little girl no bigger than her Mother's thumb, and so they called her "Thumbelina."

Thumbelina did not sleep in a little white bed, as you do; her bed was the half of a walnut shell. Her mother covered her with pink rose leaves for blankets, when she curled up for a cozy nap. By and by, when Thumbelina had grown large enough to run about wherever she wished to go, she started for a walk one beautiful sunshiny morning. She had not gone very far when she heard something coming *hoppity-skip*, *hoppity-skip* behind her. She turned around, and there she saw a great big green Grasshopper.

"How do you do, Thumbelina?" he said. "Wouldn't you like to go for a ride this morning?"

"I should like it very much," said Thumbelina.

"Very well, hop up on my back," said the Grasshopper. So Thumbelina hopped up on his back, and away they went, *hoppity-skip*, *hoppity-skip*, through the grass. Thumbelina thought it was the finest ride she had ever had. After a while the Grasshopper stopped and let her get down off his back.

"Thank you, Mr. Grasshopper," said Thumbelina. "It was very good of you to take me for a ride."

"I'm glad you enjoyed it," said the Grasshopper. "You may go again some day. Good-bye." And away he went, *hoppity-skip*, *hoppity-skip*, through the grass, while Thumbelina went

on her walk.

She walked on and on until she came to a river, and as she stood on the bank, looking down into the shining water, a Fish came swimming up.

"How do you do, Thumbelina?" he said.

"How do you do, Mr. Fish?" said Thumbelina.

"Wouldn't you like to go for a sail this morning?" asked the Fish.

"Yes, indeed," said Thumbelina, "but there is no boat."

"Wait a moment," said the Fish, and he flirted his tail, and darted away through the water. Presently he came swimming back to the bank, and in his mouth he held the stem of a lily leaf.

"Step down on this; it will make a fine boat."

Thumbelina stepped down on the lily leaf and sat carefully in the middle of it. The Fish kept the stem in his mouth, and swam away down the stream. Overhead the birds were singing, along the bank the flowers were blooming, and over the edge of the leaf Thumbelina could see the fishes darting here and there through the water.

So they sailed and sailed down the river. But at last the Fish took her back to the bank again.

"Thank you for the sail, Mr. Fish," Thumbelina said as she stepped off on to the bank. "I never had such a good time in all my life."

"I'm glad you enjoyed it, Thumbelina. Good-bye for today." The Fish darted away through the water, and Thumbelina turned to go home. Just then Mrs. Mouse came running up.

"How do you do, Thumbelina?" she said. "Won't you

come home with me and see my babies?"

"I'd love to," said Thumbelina, and she clapped her hands in glee.

Mrs. Mouse's home was quite a way down under the ground. Thumbelina crept through the long dark passageway to the cozy room in which Mrs. Mouse and her three babies lived. They all ran races up and down the long passageway, and Thumbelina tasted the dried peas which Mrs. Mouse had brought home with her.

"I think I must go home now," Thumbelina said at last, "my Mother will be wondering where I am." So she said good-bye to them all and started off home.

She had not walked very far along the path through the field when she heard something saying: "Peep, peep," in a weak, sick little voice. Thumbelina looked, and there close beside her in the grass she saw a little Bird; his eyes were shut, and he looked very sick.

"Why, what's the matter, little Bird?" said Thumbelina.

"Oh, I have a thorn in my foot, and it does hurt so."

"Let me see," said Thumbelina. "Perhaps I can help you."

She looked carefully, and there she saw the thorn sticking in the poor Bird's foot. She took her little fingers and pulled it out, as gently as she could. Then she fetched some clear, cold water and bathed the wounded foot. The Bird felt so much better that he opened his eyes.

"Why, it is Thumbelina!" he said.

"How did you know my name?" said Thumbelina, in surprise.

"That's easy to explain," said the Bird. "My nest is up a tree, close beside your window. I often hear your Mother

calling you. But are you not a long way from home?"

"Yes, I am," said Thumbelina. "I was hurrying home when I found you."

"Well," said the Bird, "If you will climb up on my back, I'll take you there, far more quickly than you can run." So Thumbelina climbed up on the Birdie's back.

"Hold on tight," he said, as he spread his wings and flew swiftly up above the tree tops.

He went so high that sometimes they skimmed along through the clouds, and so fast that Thumbelina could hardly get her breath; but still she thought it was very wonderful, and she was not a bit afraid. Soon the Bird lit right in the window of Thumbelina's own room. She climbed down off his back, and thanked him for bringing her home. Then she ran away to find her Mother, and tell her all about the wonderful things which had been happening to her that day.

Cinderella at Home

(Lida McMurry)

Long ago there lived a very beautiful girl who was as good as she was beautiful. But she was very lonely, for her mother was dead, and her father was away from home all day long, and she had no brother or sister.

One day her father said to her, "My dear, today I shall bring you a new mother, and her two daughters will be loving sisters to you, I am sure."

This made the dear child very happy. She swept and dusted the rooms and put fresh flowers into the vases.

At last, when it was time for her father and mother to come, she ran down to the gate and watched for them. When she saw them coming she clapped her hands and ran to meet them; but her new mother did not kiss her, and the sisters pushed her rudely aside.

They did not like to have her with them, she was so much prettier and sweeter than they.

A few days after this, her sisters took away all her nice clothes and made her wear an ugly old frock and clumsy, wooden shoes. Then they sent her to the kitchen to work.

They would not let her go into the parlor at all, and when they met her they would laugh and say, "See our fine princess."

But the poor girl never complained. She worked hard all

day, and at night had no bed but the bare, hard floor. When it was very cold she would creep into the ashes on the warm hearth, and so her sisters called her Cinderella, or cinder-maid.

Now it happened that the king gave a great ball in honor of his son, the prince. He invited all the grand and wealthy people in the city.

Cinderella's two sisters were going, and they could talk of nothing but meeting the prince. "Very likely he will ask us to dance with him," said they, so they bought beautiful dresses and set Cinderella at work starching and ironing their skirts.

When these were ready they called her to brush and comb their hair. While she was busy at this, her sisters said, "Cinderella, wouldn't you like to go to the ball?"

"You are making fun of me," said Cinderella, "such as I would not be welcome at such a place."

"That is true," said they. "It would make the people laugh to see a cinder-maid at a ball."

Almost anyone would have done up their hair carelessly after this unkind speech, but Cinderella said never a word, as she arranged their braids most becomingly. But when they were gone she could no longer keep the tears back; she sat down by the hearth and cried.

At this moment a good fairy came and stood beside her. "Why do you cry so, Cinderella?" said she. Cinderella could not answer for her sobs, so the good fairy said, "I know why you weep. You wish to go to the ball, and you shall go, so stop your crying and do as I bid you. Run to the garden and fetch me the largest pumpkin you can find there; now scoop out the inside of it."

This being done, the fairy touched it with her wand, when

lo! it became a beautiful gilded coach.

"Now run and bring me the mouse-trap from the pantry and open its door." As six sleek mice scampered out one by one, the fairy touched each with her wand, and there stood six beautiful gray horses, harnessed, ready to be hitched to the coach.

"Now, what shall we do for a coachman?" asked the fairy.

"Might not a rat from the rat-trap do?" asked Cinderella.

"A bright thought," said the fairy. "Bring it at once."

Back came Cinderella with the trap. In it were three large rats. The fairy chose one with long black whiskers, and with her wand she made him a coachman. He picked up the lines at once and the horses were soon in place.

"Now, run to the garden," said the fairy, "and there behind the watering-pot you will find six toads. Bring them quickly."

No sooner had the wand touched them than there stood before Cinderella six sprightly footmen in livery. They bowed low before her, as much as to say, "At your service."

"Now, Cinderella, here is your coach and your coachman and your six footmen. What is to hinder your going to the ball?"

"How can I go in these ragged clothes?" asked Cinderella.

"They are beautiful," said the fairy, touching them with her wand. And so they had become. Her dress was a rich velvet, and there were diamonds at her throat and in her hair. On her feet were silk stockings and dainty glass slippers. Cinderella's eyes sparkled with delight.

"Now, go to the ball, Cinderella," said the fairy, "but remember to leave before the clock strikes twelve. If you stay

one moment after midnight you will find your coach a pumpkin, your horses mice, your coachman a rat, and your footmen toads. And you will be a poor cinder-maid, with ragged frock and bare feet."

Cinderella at the Palace

Cinderella promised the fairy that she would leave the ball before midnight. She stepped gayly into the coach and was driven to the palace. The prince himself, seeing the beautiful coach arrive, came down the steps and helped her to alight. He then led her to the dancing hall. As soon as she entered, all voices were hushed, and all eyes were turned toward her as the prince presented her to the king and queen. He could not call her name, for she kept that a secret.

"Who is this beautiful princess?" asked the guests of one another, as the prince led her to the best seat in the room, but no one could tell.

Soon after, the prince asked her to dance with him. No other lady there could begin to dance as gracefully as she.

Afterward supper was brought in, but the prince could not take his eyes from her long enough to eat. Her plate was loaded with the best of everything. Seeing her sisters near, she went and sat by them and shared with them the fruit that the prince had given her. They did not know her at all, and felt very proud that she should notice them.

Cinderella was talking with them when the clock struck the quarter before twelve. She arose at once and bade the king and queen good-night. The queen said, "There is to be another ball here tomorrow evening. Do not fail to come." The prince led her down the steps to her coach and soon she was at home.

The fairy was in the kitchen waiting for her. Cinderella thanked her for the delightful evening that she had spent, and

added, "And I should like very much to go tomorrow evening."

Before the fairy had time to reply, there was a knock at the door. The sisters were returning from the ball. The fairy disappeared, as did also all of Cinderella's fine trappings.

As she opened the door for her sisters she asked, "Did you have a pleasant evening?"

"Yes, indeed," they replied. "There came the most beautiful princess that ever was seen, and she was very kind to us, and loaded us with oranges and grapes."

"Who was she?" asked Cinderella.

"Nobody knew her name. The prince would have given anything to know," said they.

The next evening came, and the sisters went again to the ball. After they had gone, the fairy came and made Cinderella ready. Her dress this time was even more beautiful than before.

"Now remember," said the fairy, "remember twelve o'clock."

The prince was by her side the whole evening, and she enjoyed his talk so much that she entirely forgot about twelve o'clock.

The half-hour after eleven struck; she did not hear it. The quarter before twelve struck; neither did she hear that. Soon afterwards the clock began to strike twelve. At the first stroke she hastened out of the room, but in her haste she lost one of her beautiful glass slippers on the stairs. She had to walk home that night alone, dressed in her old gown, with nothing left of her splendid outfit but one slipper.

The prince had followed her, but could not overtake her.

In his haste he came near falling over a tiny glass slipper. He picked it up and put it into his pocket. Then he inquired of all the servants if they had seen the beautiful princess as she hurried out; but they replied that they had seen only a poor ragged cinder girl.

"What became of her coach?" he asked. "We do not know," they replied, "we only saw in the place where it stood an old pumpkin, and we saw six mice, a rat, and six toads scampering away."

When the two sisters returned from the ball, Cinderella asked, "Was the beautiful princess there tonight?"

"Yes," they replied, "but she left very suddenly, and no one knows what has become of her."

A few days after this the prince sent word into all the city that he would marry the one whose foot the glass slipper should exactly fit, and a messenger was sent with it, first to all the princesses. Not one could squeeze her foot into the tiny slipper. Next he visited the homes of all the grand people. He came to Cinderella's home. The two sisters each tried hard to thrust a foot into the little shoe, but all their pushing and tugging were in vain.

Cinderella, who saw all of this, and knew her slipper, said to them, laughing, "Let me try it on."

"You," said her sisters scornfully, "What have you to do with a glass slipper!"

But the messenger looked closely at her, and noticed how beautiful she was. He made her sit down, and, taking from her foot the rude wooden shoe, slipped on the glass slipper. It was a perfect fit. Cinderella pulled out of her pocket the other glass slipper and put it on the other foot. Just then the fairy glided in, unseen by any but Cinderella, and touched her clothes with her wand. They became finer than any she had

worn at the ball.

How surprised her sisters were as she stood before them in all her beauty. They thought of their cruelty to her, and falling at her feet, begged her to forgive them.

Cinderella raised them up and threw her arms around them. She told them that she freely forgave them and wanted them to love her always.

She was taken to the prince, dressed as she was. He thought her more charming than ever. In a few days he married her, and Cinderella brought her sisters to live with her at the palace.

When the king and queen died, the prince and Cinderella became king and queen; and in all the world there never was quite so beautiful and good a queen as Cinderella.

The Little Match Girl

(Lida McMurry)

A little girl was walking the streets of a large city on a dark, cold, snowy evening. Her feet and head were bare.

Some of the snowflakes as they fell rested lovingly on her curls, and some flew saucily into her face, but she did not notice them.

She carried some boxes of matches in an old apron, and held one box in her hand; and as she walked she cried, "Matches! Matches! Who'll buy my matches?" She had not sold one box during the whole day, and no one had given her a penny.

Bright lights were shining from every window, and every one seemed happy this Christmas eve—every one but the little match-girl.

At last, in an old alley between two tall houses she sank down, leaning against the cold wall of one of the houses and drawing her feet under her to keep them warm.

She dared not go home without selling her matches; her father would whip her if she took him no money. Besides, it was nearly as cold at home; for they had no fire, and not enough rags to fill the holes in the windows.

Her little hands were nearly frozen. All of a sudden she happened to think, "Why can not I warm my fingers over a burning match?" She drew one out of a box—"Scratch!" How it sputtered and burned. It gave a warm, bright light like a

little candle, as she held her hand over it.

It was really a wonderful light, for it seemed to the little girl as if she were standing by a large, beautiful stove. How the fire burned! The little girl stretched out her feet to warm them, when, lo! the flame of the match went out, and the stove was gone, and she had only the half burnt match in her hand.

She scratched another match on the wall; it burst into a flame, and where the light fell upon the wall it became so thin that she could easily see through it. In the room she saw a table covered with a snowy cloth. A fine dinner was on the table, smoking hot. A great roast turkey lay upon a platter in the center, and, most wonderful of all, the turkey jumped right down from the dish and ran across the floor with a knife and fork in its breast, to the little girl. Then the match went out and there was nothing but the thick, cold wall before her.

She lighted another match. This time she found herself sitting under a beautiful Christmas tree. Many tapers were burning on the green branches. There were oranges, sacks of candy, dolls, and a host of beautiful things. She stretched out her hand toward them, but the match went out.

The Christmas lights rose higher and higher, till they looked to her like stars in the sky. Then she saw a star fall, leaving behind it a bright streak of light. "Some one is dying," thought the little girl; for her old grandmother—the only one who had ever loved her, and who was dead now—had told her that when a star falls a soul goes up to God.

She scratched another match and the light shone round her. In the brightness she saw her old grandmother smiling upon her. The little girl cried, "Grandmother! O, take me with you! I know you will go away when the match burns out!" and she hurried to light the whole box of matches, that she might keep her grandmother with her.

The light was brighter than noonday, and her grandmother looked larger and more beautiful than ever before. She took the little girl in her arms and they both flew upward to be with God, where there is neither cold, nor hunger, nor pain.

In the morning the little girl's body was found in the snow. She held in her hand the spent matches. "Poor child, she tried to warm herself," the people said. No one knew what beautiful things she had seen, nor to what a beautiful place she went with her grandmother on that Christmas eve.

The Legend of the Dipper

(Esenwein/Stockard)

There had been no rain in the land for a very long time. It was so hot and dry that the flowers were withered, the grass was parched and brown, and even the big, strong trees were dying. The water dried up in the creeks and rivers, the wells were dry, the fountains stopped bubbling. The cows, the dogs, the horses, the birds, and all the people were so thirsty! Every one felt uncomfortable and sick.

There was one little girl whose mother grew very ill. "Oh," said the little girl, "if I can only find some water for my mother I'm sure she will be well again. I must find some water."

So she took a tin cup and started out in search of water. By and by she found a tiny little spring away up on a mountain side. It was almost dry. The water dropped, dropped, ever so slowly from under the rock. The little girl held her cup carefully and caught the drops. She waited and waited a long, long time until the cup was full of water. Then she started down the mountain holding the cup very carefully, for she didn't want to spill a single drop.

On the way she passed a poor little dog. He could hardly drag himself along. He was panting for breath and his tongue hung from his mouth because it was so dry and parched.

"Oh, you poor little dog," said the little girl, "you are so thirsty. I can't pass you without giving you a few drops of water. If I give you just a little there will still be enough for my

mother."

So the little girl poured some water into her hand and held it down for the little dog. He lapped it up quickly and then he felt so much better that he frisked and barked and seemed almost to say, "Thank you, little girl." And the little girl didn't notice—but her tin dipper had changed into a silver dipper and was just as full of water as it had been before.

She thought about her mother and hurried along as fast as she could go. When she reached home it was late in the afternoon, almost dark. The little girl pushed the door open and hurried up to her mother's room. When she came into the room the old servant who helped the little girl and her mother, and had been working hard all day taking care of the sick woman, came to the door. She was so tired and so thirsty that she couldn't even speak to the little girl.

"Do give her some water," said the mother. "She has worked hard all day and she needs it much more than I do."

So the little girl held the cup to her lips and the old servant drank some of the water. She felt stronger and better right away and she went over to the mother and lifted her up. The little girl didn't notice that the cup had changed into a gold cup and was just as full of water as it was before!

Then she held the cup to her mother's lips and she drank and drank. Oh, she felt so much better! When she had finished there was still some water left in the cup. The little girl was just raising it to her own lips when there came a knock at the door. The servant opened it and there stood a stranger. He was very pale and all covered with dust from traveling. "I am thirsty," he said, "won't you give me a little water?"

The little girl said: "Why, certainly I will. I am sure that you need it far more than I do. Drink it all."

The stranger smiled and took the dipper in his hand, and

as he took it, it changed into a diamond dipper. He turned it upside down and all the water spilled out and sank into the ground. And where it spilled a fountain bubbled up. The cool water flowed and splashed—enough for the people and all the animals in the whole land to have all the water they wanted to drink.

As they watched the water they forgot the stranger, but presently when they looked he was gone. They thought they could see him just vanishing in the sky—and there in the sky, clear and high, shone the diamond dipper. It shines up there yet, and reminds people of the little girl who was kind and unselfish. It is called the Star Dipper.

Beauty and the Beast

(Lida McMurry)

There was once a wealthy merchant who had a very beautiful daughter. She was as sweet-tempered and good as she was beautiful; and, because she was so greatly loved, she was called Beauty by everyone who knew her.

Her mother had died not long before this story begins, leaving her and her father to comfort each other in their loneliness. Beauty spent her time pleasantly and well, for her mother had taught her to sew, to read good books, to make the home beautiful, and to care for people who needed her help. She was also an excellent musician.

One day her father received word that one of his ships had come into a distant port, and that it was necessary for him to leave home at once to attend to the cargo. Beauty could not bear that her father should go away, and could not keep back the tears when he was about to leave.

"What shall I bring you, little daughter?" he asked.

"I want nothing but to have you back home again," she said.

"I shall surely bring you something," said her father; "quick, now—what shall it be?"

"Some roses, father; bring me some roses, if you will," said Beauty; and her father mounted his horse and rode away.

When the father reached the port, he found that the whole shipload of goods had been stolen. He turned toward home, greatly disappointed; but the thought of the welcome

awaiting him there cheered him on his journey.

On his way homeward he had to pass through a forest. Night was coming on when he entered it, but he hoped to get to the other side before dark. This he could have done had not a storm of snow and wind come on, causing him to lose his way. He heard wolves howling at no great distance, and feared that he should never reach home.

All at once he saw a bright light, and, going toward it, he found his way out of the forest. The light came from a palace which was brilliantly illuminated. When he reached it he saw no one moving in the courtyard nor in the castle, nor did he hear the sound of any voice. His horse, from which he had dismounted, saw a stable door open, and, on going inside, found hay and oats in a manger.

The merchant entered the palace. He walked into a large dining-hall, where he found a good fire in the fireplace, and a table set with supper for one person. The merchant was wet to the skin, so he drew near to the fire to dry his clothes, expecting every minute that someone would come into the room. He waited until eleven o'clock, but no one came. At last he sat down at the table and ate until he wished no more. Then he left the dining-hall and went through several large rooms, all elegantly furnished. There was a bed in the last one which he entered, and he decided to shut the door and lie down, as it was now past midnight.

It was very late when he wakened the next morning. He looked about and was surprised to find a new suit of clothes in the place of his own, which had been spoiled by the storm. "Surely this palace belongs to some good fairy," he said. "She has taken pity upon me and has provided all things which I needed." He dressed quickly and looked out of the window. There was no snow to be seen, and he was delighted to see a garden of beautiful flowers.

When he went into the dining-hall, he saw a table set with breakfast for one, and said aloud, "I thank you, kind fairy, for this morning meal which you have provided for me," hoping the fairy might hear.

After breakfast, the merchant went out to get his horse. As he passed under a rose bower he remembered that Beauty had asked him to bring her some roses, so he picked a beautiful branch on which there were many blossoms. Just as he did so he heard a loud roar behind him, and, turning, saw such a dreadful-looking beast that he nearly fainted.

"How dare you pick my rose!" roared the Beast. "I opened my castle to you and saved your life, and for this you steal my flowers, for which I care more than for anything else in the world. I give you but a quarter of an hour to live, then you must die for your folly."

The merchant threw himself on his knees before the Beast, and begged him to forgive him. He said, "I had no thought of offending anyone. I picked these roses for my daughter, who asked me to bring her some."

"You have a daughter?" said the Beast. "I will pardon you if she will come of her own free will to die in your place. Say no more, only promise to return in three months, with or without her."

"I promise," said the poor merchant, for there was nothing else that he could do.

"Now go!" said the Beast, and turned away. The merchant took the branch of roses, mounted his horse, and rode sadly away from the castle.

When he reached home, Beauty came out, joyfully, to meet him; but when she greeted him, he wept. As he handed her the branch of roses he said, "Dear child, your father paid dearly for these." Then he told her all that had happened at

the palace.

Beauty did not weep, but her face was very pale as she said: "My dear father, you shall not die. Since the Beast is willing to take me, I shall go to him in your place. I shall have the joy of saving your life, and of proving my love for you."

"My Beauty," said her father. "Your loving heart fills me with gladness, but I cannot let you give your life for mine. I am old and have but a few years to live; your life is but just begun."

"Dear father, you shall not go back to the castle without me. If you will not take me, I shall follow you. I would rather be devoured by the terrible monster than to die from grief, which your death would cause me."

It was in vain that Beauty's father tried to persuade her to remain at home. Finally, he yielded and promised to take her with him.

When the time came for the merchant and Beauty to go to the palace, they left their home in great sorrow.

They reached the castle at nightfall, and found it brilliantly lighted as before. The horse went to the stable, where it found hay and oats. The father and daughter entered the large dining-hall, where they found an excellent supper awaiting two people.They could not eat, so sad were they, although Beauty tried to cheer her father.

Just as they were leaving the table, they heard a great noise; and the merchant, weeping, said farewell to his poor child, for he knew it was the Beast.

Beauty trembled when she saw the dreadful monster coming into the room, but she tried not to let the Beast know that she was afraid. He asked her if she had come of her own free will, and she told him, with a quivering voice, that she

had.

"You are very good," said the Beast, "and I thank you for coming." Then turning to the father, he said, "Good man, tomorrow morning you must leave, and I command you never to come here again." Then he left the room.

When he had gone, the merchant threw his arms about his daughter and begged her to go home in the morning and leave him there.

"No, no," said Beauty. "You shall go and I shall stay. I may find pity and help. Do not grieve."

When they went to their rooms, they did not think that it would be possible to sleep; but no sooner were their heads on their pillows than their eyes closed and they slept soundly. Beauty dreamed that a fairy came to her and said, "I am pleased with your goodness, Beauty. Because you are giving your life to save that of your father, you shall be rewarded." Beauty told her father of her dream the next morning, and, although it comforted him somewhat, he wept bitterly when he bade his poor daughter farewell.

As soon as her father had gone, Beauty went back to the dining-hall and wept as if her dear heart would break. But she was a brave girl, and, drying her tears, she arose and walked through the beautiful rooms in the castle. Great was her surprise when she came to a door over which was written, "Beauty's Room." She opened the door and exclaimed, "How lovely!" for she had never seen a room so tastefully and elegantly furnished. What most delighted her was a piano, a bookcase, and a beautiful sewing-table.

"The Beast does not wish me to be lonely," she said. "Sure if he expected to take my life tonight, he would not have made this thoughtful provision for my comfort and pleasure."

She opened the bookcase, and there saw a book on which

was written in letters of gold, "Wish what you like, command what you will; you alone are queen and mistress of this castle."

"Oh," she sighed, "I wish for nothing but to see my dear father and to know what he is doing at this moment." Hardly had she said these words when she saw, in a large mirror, her home and her father, who was looking very sad. Then the picture disappeared. Beauty felt grateful to the Beast for granting her wish, and she began to lose her fear of him.

At noon she found the table set for her, and, while she ate, sweet music was played by some unseen hand.

In the evening, as she sat down to her supper, Beauty heard the sound of the Beast's voice, and could not help trembling with fear.

"Beauty," he said, "may I look on while you eat your supper?"

"You are master in this palace," replied Beauty.

"No, no," said the beast; "you, and you only, are mistress here. But tell me truly, Beauty, do you think me very ugly?"

"I must tell the truth. Yes, I do think you ugly, but you are very kind," said Beauty. "When I think of your goodness, I forget your ugliness."

"Then, Beauty, will you be my wife?" said the Beast.

Beauty could hardly suppress a scream of fright, but she calmed herself, for she feared to anger the Beast. "I cannot marry you, Beast," she said. "I am sorry for you, and I think you are very good; but I cannot marry you."

The poor Beast drew a deep sigh which echoed through the whole castle and made Beauty tremble. Then he left the room, turning now and then to look at her. Beauty's kind heart ached for him, and she said, "Poor Beast! Poor Beast!

What a pity that one so good should be so ugly!"

Beauty had now spent three months in the castle. The Beast visited her every evening as she ate her supper, and every day she learned more of his goodness of heart. She became accustomed to his ugly form, and began to watch for his coming with feelings of pleasure. There was only one thing that troubled her about his visits; every evening before he left, he asked her to become his wife, and was always sad when she refused him.

One day she said to him: "It greatly troubles me to refuse, so often, to marry you. I wish that I might become your wife, but I am sure that I never can."

"What a hard fate," said the Beast. "I know I am a monster to look upon, but I love you dearly. Will you not at least promise never to leave me?"

Tears came into Beauty's eyes and she said: "Oh, Beast, my mirror tells me that my father is very ill, grieving for me; and I do so long to see him that I can never be wholly happy here. Dear Beast, do let me go home to see my poor father."

"Do not weep," said the Beast; "I cannot bear to see you unhappy. You shall go home to your father, but I shall die of grief for you."

"No, no, dear Beast," said Beauty, weeping, "you shall not die. I care too much for you to let you die. If you will send me home, I promise to return at the end of a week."

"You shall find yourself at home tomorrow morning, but remember your promise, *remember your promise*. When you wish to return, put your ring on the table before going to bed. Goodby, Beauty, goodby," said the Beast, sighing deeply.

Beauty went sadly to bed, because she had caused the Beast such deep sorrow. When she awoke in the morning she

found herself in her own room at home. She clapped her hands in joy, and, dressing quickly, went to find her father. His surprise was great. He could hardly believe that it was his dear daughter whose arms were around his neck.

Beauty told her father of all that had happened while she was at the palace, and, last of all, she told him of her promise to return at the end of a week. Her father could not bear the thought of losing his dear child again. So happy were they that Beauty could not think of leaving at the end of the week, so stayed a few days longer. She was not quite as happy now, for she thought constantly of her promise to the Beast, whom she began to miss very much.

On the tenth night she dreamed that she was in the garden of the castle and that she saw the Beast lying on the grass as if dead. Beauty awoke with a cry.

"How cruel I have been to the Beast," she said, "in return for all his kindness to me! It is not his fault that he is ugly. Why did I refuse to marry him! I shall go back to him. Poor Beast! Poor Beast!"

Beauty arose, placed her ring on the table, then lay down again. When she awoke the next morning she saw with joy that she was back in the Beast's palace. She dressed and went down to the dining-hall, hoping that the Beast would come to see her at once, but he did not. Then she said, "He surely will come at supper-time." The day passed very slowly, for she longed to see the Beast. Supper-time came, but still he did not appear. Beauty was now thoroughly alarmed. She feared that the breaking of her promise had caused his death. She ran through the castle, calling to him, but there was no answer. Then she remembered her dream. She ran into the garden, to the spot she had seen him in her dream. There was the poor Beast, stretched upon the ground, apparently dead. She threw herself down beside him, and, finding that his heart was still

beating, she brought water and threw it into his face.

The Beast slowly opened his eyes. When he saw Beauty, he said, feebly, "You forgot your promise, and I am dying."

"No, no, dear Beast; you shall not die. You shall live to be my husband, for I love you devotedly. Dear, dear Beast, live for my sake."

As she said these words, the whole castle became bright with lights. She glanced at it a moment, then turned to the Beast. What could this mean! The Beast had disappeared, and in his place stood a handsome young Prince.

"Where, oh, where is the dear Beast?" gasped Beauty.

"I am the Beast," said the Prince, "but no longer a Beast. You have freed me from that monstrous shape, dear Beauty, by your love you have set me free."

"What can you mean?" asked Beauty.

"I will tell you," said the Prince, taking her hand. "A wicked fairy made me take the form of a hideous Beast, and would not allow me to return to my own form, or show any signs of cleverness, until a beautiful maiden should promise to marry me. I owe you everything, my dear Beauty."

The Prince then led Beauty into the castle, where she found her dear father. The beautiful fairy of her dream had brought him there. She greeted Beauty, and said: "Dear child, you are receiving the reward of your goodness. You are soon to become a great queen. Always be the true, sweet, kind woman that you have been in the past." The good fairy then waved her wand, and they were carried into the Prince's kingdom. His subjects, who loved him and had long been searching for him, greeted him with great joy.

The wedding of Beauty and the Prince was soon celebrated with great rejoicing, and a happy life followed.

The Golden Pears

(Angela Keyes)

There was once a poor peasant of Burs who had nothing in the world but three sons, and a pear-tree that grew in front of his cottage. But the pears were very fine, and the Kaiser was fond of the fruit, so he said to his sons, one day, that he would send the Kaiser a basket as a present. "Perhaps," said he, "if the fruit please him he may help me and mine."

He plaited a krattle, or basket, and lined it with fresh leaves. Then he gathered the finest pears from the tree, large ones as yellow as gold, and laid them on the green leaves.

"Take these to the Kaiser," said he to his eldest son, "and see that thou dost not let anyone rob thee of them by the way."

"Leave that to me, father," said the boy, "I know how to take care of my own. It isn't much anyone will get out of me by asking. I'll have my answer, I can tell you." So he closed up the mouth of the basket with fresh leaves and set out to take the pears to the Kaiser.

It was autumn and the sun struck hot all through the mid-day hours; so when the boy came at last to a wayside fountain he stopped to drink and to rest in its coolness. A little doubled-up old woman was washing some rags at the fountain and singing a ditty all out of tune. "A witch, I'll be bound," said the boy to himself, "she'll be trying to get my pears, by hook or by crook, but I'll be up to her."

"A fair day, my lad," said the little old wife; "that's a weighty burden you have to carry. What may it be with which you are so heavily laden?"

"A load of sweepings from the road, to see whether I may turn a penny by it," answered the boy, shortly, to stop any further questioning.

"Road-sweepings," repeated the hag, as if she did not believe it. "Belike you don't mean that?"

"But I do mean it," retorted the boy.

"Oh, very well. You will find out when you get to your journey's end." And she went on washing and singing her ditty that was all out of tune.

"She means something," said the boy to himself, "that's clear. But at all events my basket is safe. I haven't even let her look at the fruit with her evil eye, so there's no harm done." But he felt uneasy, and as he could not rest, he got up and went on his way.

Soon he reached the palace, and on telling his errand was admitted.

"You have brought me some pears, have you, my boy?" said the Kaiser, well pleased; and his mouth began to water for the luscious fruit.

"Yes, your Majesty, some of the finest golden pears in your Majesty's whole empire," said the boy.

The Kaiser was delighted to hear this and he himself removed the covering of leaves. But what was his anger to find under it nothing but ill-smelling sweepings from the road! The attendants, who stood by, were equally indignant at the insult offered to the emperor, and barely waited for his order to hustle the boy off to prison.

"It is all due to that old hag by the fountain," said he to himself; "I thought she meant mischief to me." This was what he said the first day and the second, but the quiet and solitude of the prison led him to think more closely and to remember the answer he had made to the old wife's question.

"I have often heard my father say," he thought, "how strong truth makes the tongue. Alas, that I did not use it as a weapon to take care of my own."

Meantime the father said to his two sons, "You see how well your elder brother has fared. He kept his eyes wide awake and carried the krattle of golden fruit in safety to the Kaiser, who was no doubt so well pleased with it that he has kept the boy near his person and made him a rich man."

"I am as clever as he," said the second brother; "give me a krattle of the pears and let me take them to the Kaiser, and become a rich man too, only I won't keep it all for myself. I will send for you to share it with me."

"Well said, my son," answered the father; "I have worked hard for you all my life, and it is but meet that in my old age you should share your good fortune with me." And as the season for pears had just come around again, he plaited another krattle and lined it with fresh green leaves and laid in it a goodly heap of the golden fruit.

The second son took the basket and went his way, even in better spirits than his elder brother, for he had the supposed success of the first to give wings to his feet. The autumn sun was as hot through the midday as it had been the year before, so that when he had traveled three days and arrived at the wayside fountain, he too stopped to drink and rest in its coolness. The doubled-up old woman was washing her rags at the fountain and singing her ditty all out of tune. She stopped her croaking as before, to ask him the same question as she had asked his brother.

"It's pigs' wash," said he; "I am taking it to see whether I may turn a penny by it."

"Pigs' wash," repeated she, as if she did not believe it. "Belike you don't mean that?"

"But I do mean it," retorted he, rudely.

And at this she made the same remark she had made his brother.

Sure enough, when the Kaiser removed the leaves, instead of golden pears there was a mess of pigs' wash. The attendants hurried the second boy off to the cell next his brother, and pitched him in with even less ceremony.

Meantime the year was passing away and bringing no tidings to the father of the good fortune promised him by his son. "The ingratitude of children is like a sharp sting," said he, in the bitterness of his grief and disappointment. He would often say to his third son, who was considered too stupid to be good for much, "What a pity it is that you are so dull-headed! If I only dared trust you I might send you to see what has befallen your brothers."

The lad was used to hear himself called a good-for-nothing, so he did not think for a long time that he might even attempt the task. But as the days went by and his father's distress grew more sore, his loving heart was moved, and one day he summoned courage to ask whether he might not try to find his brothers.

"Do you really think you can keep yourself out of harm's way?" exclaimed the father, glad to find the boy anxious to undertake the venture.

"I will do whatever you tell me," said the lad, eagerly.

"Well, you shan't go empty-handed, at all events," said the father. And as the pears were just ripe again he laid the

choicest of the year's stock in a krattle and sent him on his way.

The boy walked along, looking neither to right nor left, but with his heart beating, lest he should come across the "Harm" out of whose way he had promised to keep himself. All went well, however, except that the sun shone down on him fiercely, so that when he too reached the wayside fountain he was glad to stop to drink and rest in the coolness.

The old wife was washing her rags in the water, and as she patted the linen, singing a ditty all out of tune. "Here comes a third of those surly dogs, I declare," she said to herself, as she saw him arrive with another load of the magnificent pears. "I suppose he'll try to make game of me too as if I didn't know the sweet smell of ripe golden pears from road-sweepings or pigs' wash! a likely thing! But I'm ready for him."

"Good morning, little mother!" said the boy in his direct way, doffing his cap as he had been taught, although she was old and ugly.

"He's sweeter behaved than the other louts, for all he doesn't look so bright-faced," said the hag to herself; and she stopped her song out of tune to return his greeting.

"May I sit down here a bit, please, good mother?" asked the boy, for he was so simple that he thought the fountain must belong to her.

"That you may, and take a draught of the cool water, too," she answered, wondrously softened by his civil manners. "And what may it be with which you are so laden, my pretty boy?" she asked. "It should be a precious burden to be worth carrying so far as you appear to have come. What have you in your krattle?"

"Precious indeed they are, I believe you," said the boy, "at least so you would think from the store my father sets by

them. They are truly golden pears, and he says there are no finer grown in the whole kingdom. I am taking them to the Kaiser, who is fond of the fruit."

"Only ripe pears and yet so heavy," returned the old wife; "one would say it is something heavier than pears. But you'll see when you come to your journey's end."

The boy assured her they were nothing but pears; and as one of his father's commands had been not to lose time by the way, he bade the old dame a courteous farewell and continued on his way.

When the servants saw another peasant boy from Burs come to the palace with the story that he had pears for the king, they said, "No, no! we've had enough of that! You may turn around and go back." But the poor boy was so disappointed that he could not carry out his task that he sank down on the step and sobbed bitterly, and there he remained sobbing till the Kaiser came out.

The Kaiser's little daughter was with her father. When she saw the boy sobbing, she asked what ailed him, and learned it was another boy from Burs come to insult the Kaiser with a basket of refuse. And the servants asked her whether they should not take the boy off to prison straightway. The Kaiser left the question to his daughter.

"But I have pears," sobbed the boy; "and my father says there are no finer in the empire."

"Yes, yes," jeered the servants, "we know that by heart;" and they attempted to drag him away.

"But won't you look at my pears first, fair princess? The pears that I have brought all this way for the Kaiser? My father will be so sorry."

The princess was struck with the earnestness with which

he spoke, and decided to see the basket herself. The moment she said so the boy walked straight up to her with his krattle, so strong in the truth that he felt no fear of the whole troop of lackeys.

The princess removed the leaves and—there indeed were golden pears, not merely yellow with ripeness, but really gold, each, large as it was, a shining pear of solid gold!

"These are pears fit for a king," she said, and presented them to her father. The Kaiser was greatly pleased. He ordered the gold fruit to be placed in his cabinet of treasures, and to the boy, as a reward, he promised whatever he should ask.

"All I wish is to find my two brothers, who hold some high office in your Majesty's court," said the boy.

"If those who came with pears before are your brothers, as I suspect, they hold office in prison," said the Kaiser, and commanded that they be brought. As soon as the two were led in, the third ran to them and embraced them. Then the Kaiser bade each tell his story.

"Strong indeed does truth make the tongue to keep its own," said the Kaiser, using almost the same words the boys had often heard their father speak. And they were truly sorry they had not kept his counsel.

The Kaiser sent for the father and gave him and his sons charge of the king's gardens. The father brought with him the pear-tree that, by the power of the truth told of it, had made golden fortune for them. And he and his sons had plenty ever after and were well content.

The Nightingale

(Sara Cone Bryant)

A long, long time ago, according to an old fairy story, there lived an emperor in China, and he had the most splendid palace in the world. It was made of crystal so thin and delicate that one had to take care how one touched it. In the garden were wonderful flowers, and to some of them silver bells were tied to make people notice how lovely they were.

Beyond the garden was a deep, dark forest, and in this forest lived a little nightingale. The nightingale sang so beautifully that even the poor workmen, who had many other things to do, stopped every evening on their way home to hear her sing.

From all the cities of the world people came to see the crystal palace and the wonderful garden and the deep, dark forest; but, when they heard the nightingale, they said, "That is the best of all." And, when the travelers went home, they told of it, and men wrote books about it, and poets sang of the little bird in the emperor's forest.

So it happened that one day the emperor himself was reading a book about his palace, and he read, "But the nightingale is the best of all."

"What is this?" cried the emperor. "I don't know any such bird. I never heard of it before." So he sent for his lord chamberlain, and commanded that the nightingale should sing at court that very evening.

The poor lord chamberlain was in a great fright because he, too, had never heard of the nightingale; but he ran about the palace, asking questions of everybody, until at last a little girl said: "Oh, yes, I know the nightingale. I will show you where you can hear her sing."

Then she led the lord chamberlain and many of the court ladies and gentlemen into the deep forest, and there they heard the nightingale sing.

"Dear, dear!" said all the ladies. "What an odd little gray bird! How plain and simple it will look in our fine palace!"

But the lord chamberlain was already asking the nightingale if she would come to court and sing for the emperor.

"My song sounds best in the forest, but I will come with you if you like," said the nightingale.

The palace was lighted up with thousands of lamps, and in the great hall sat the emperor. When he saw the little gray bird, he nodded at her, and she began to sing.

It was wonderful singing. The emperor with tears in his eyes thanked her, and would have given her costly presents. "No," said the little bird. "I have brought tears to the emperor's eyes. That is all the reward I ask for."

Then the emperor said that she should always stay at the palace and have a golden perch near his bed. For a long time she sang every evening, and all the people loved her. But one day there came a little box to the emperor, and inside was a golden bird whose wings were dazzling with rubies and diamonds. Round his neck there hung a key, and, when he was wound up, he could sing waltz tunes and move his tail up and down. Everybody was delighted with him, and thought that he was more wonderful than the real bird.

So it happened that at last the little nightingale, to her

great joy, was allowed to go back to the forest, and the golden bird was placed upon her golden perch. And, when he was wound up, he sang all his tunes, and the people clapped their hands.

"See how handsome he is!" they said to one another. "He shines like bracelets and breast-pins, and he sings real tunes."

But one day there came a snap and a whir-r-r, and all the wheels ran round, and the music stopped. The emperor sent for his doctor and his watchmaker, but neither of them could find out what was the matter. The golden bird sat on the golden perch by the emperor's bed, and everybody forgot that he was there.

A long time went by, and the emperor fell ill. As he lay there in his bed, he thought: "How lonely and unhappy I am! Nobody cares for me. If I should die, no one would be sorry. Little gold bird, will you not sing and help me to forget my troubles?"

But the little gold bird was worn out. It was very, very still in the emperor's room. Suddenly, from the window, there sounded an exquisite song. A tiny gray bird was perched on a tree outside. She had come to sing to the emperor and give him comfort and hope. When she had finished her song, the emperor stretched out his hands to her.

"Dear little nightingale," he said, "come and live with me always. I shall soon be well if I can listen to your song."

"No, no!" said the nightingale. "I sing best when I am free. But every night, when you are alone, I will sing to you, and make you well and happy."

Then the emperor rose and dressed himself in his royal robes, and, when his courtiers came in, there he stood, as well as ever, and said to them, "Good morning!"

The Magic Mask

(Mrs. Charles Lane)

There was once a great and powerful prince. He had hundreds of soldiers in his army, and with their help he had conquered vast strips of country, over which he ruled. He was wise as well as brave, but, though all men feared his iron will and respected his strong purpose, no one loved him. As he grew older, he became lonely and unhappy, and this made him sterner and colder, and more severe than ever. The lines about his mouth were hard and grim, there was a deep frown on his forehead, and his lips rarely smiled.

Now it happened that in one of the cities over which he had come to rule was a beautiful princess whom he wished to have for his wife. He had watched her for many months as she went about among the people, and he knew that she was as good and kind as she was beautiful. But, because he always wore his armor and his heavy helmet when he rode through his dominions, she had never seen his face.

The day came when he made up his mind that he would ask the lovely princess to come and live in his palace. He put on his royal robes and his golden coronet; but, when he looked at his reflection in the glass, he could see nothing but what would cause fear and dislike. His face looked hard and cruel and stern. He tried to smile, but it seemed an unnatural effort and he quickly gave it up. Then a happy notion came to him. Sending for the court magician, he said to him: "Make for me a mask of the thinnest wax so that it will follow every line of

my features, but paint it with your magic paints so that it will look kind and pleasant instead of fierce and stern.

Fasten it upon my face so that I shall never have to take it off. Make it as handsome and attractive as your skill can suggest, and I will pay for it any price you choose to ask."

"This I can do," said the court magician, "on one condition only. You must keep your own face in the same lines that I shall paint, or the mask will be ruined. One angry frown, one cruel smile will crack the mask and ruin it forever; nor can I replace it. Will you agree to this?"

The prince had a strong will, and never in his life had he wanted anything so much as he now wanted the princess for his wife. "Yes," he said, "I agree. Tell me how I may keep the mask from cracking."

"You must train yourself to think kindly thoughts," said the magician, "and, to do this, you must do kindly deeds. You must try to make your kingdom happy rather than great. Whenever you are angry, keep absolutely still until the feeling has gone away. Try to think of ways to make your subjects happier and better. Build schools instead of forts, and hospitals instead of battleships. Be gracious and courteous to all men."

So the wonderful mask was made, and when the prince put it on, no one would have guessed that it was not his true face. The lovely princess, indeed, could find no fault with it, and she came willingly to be his bride in his splendid palace. The months went on, and though at first the magic mask was often in danger of being destroyed, the prince had been as good as his word, and no one had ever discovered that it was false. His subjects, it is true, wondered at his new gentleness and thoughtfulness, but they said: "It is the princess who has made him like herself."

The prince, however, was not quite happy. When the princess smiled her approval of his forbearance and goodness, he used to wish that he had never deceived her with the magic mask. At last he could bear it no longer, and, summoning the magician, he bade him remove the false face.

"If I do, your Royal Highness," protested the magician, "I can never make another. You must wear your own face as long as you live."

"Better so," cried the prince, "than to deceive one whose love and trust I value so greatly. Better even that she should always despise me than that I should go on doing what is unworthy for her sake."

Then the magician took off the mask, and the prince in fear and anguish of heart sought his reflection in the glass. As he looked, his eyes brightened and his lips curved into a radiant smile, for the ugly lines were gone, the frown had disappeared, and his face was moulded in the exact likeness of the mask he had worn so long. And, when he came into the presence of his wife, she saw only the familiar features of the prince she loved.

The Emperor's New Clothes

(Carolyn Sherwin Bailey)

Many years ago there lived an Emperor who was so exceedingly fond of fine new clothes that he spent all his money on rich garments. He did not care for his soldiers, nor for the theatre, nor for driving about, except for the purpose of showing his new clothes.

He had a dress for every hour of the day, and just as they say of a king, "He is in Council," they always said of him, "The Emperor is in his Wardrobe."

Well, the great town in which he lived was very busy. Every day a number of strangers arrived.

One day two rogues came along, saying they were weavers, and that they knew how to weave the finest stuff one could imagine. Not only, said they, were the colors and designs exceedingly beautiful, but the clothes that were made of their material had the wonderful quality of being invisible to everybody who was either unfit for his position, or was extraordinarily stupid.

"They must be splendid clothes," thought the Emperor; "by wearing them I could easily discover what persons in my kingdom are unfit for their posts. I could distinguish the wise from the stupid. I must have that stuff woven for me at once!" So he gave the two rogues a large sum of money, in order that they might begin their work without delay.

The rogues put up two looms, and pretended to be

working, but they had nothing at all in the frames. Again and again they demanded the finest silks and the most magnificent gold thread, but they put it all in their own pockets, and worked at their empty looms late into the night.

"Now, I should like to know how far they have got on with that stuff," thought the Emperor; but he felt quite uncomfortable when he remembered that those who were stupid or unfit for their positions could not see it. He did not think for a moment that he had anything to fear for himself; but, nevertheless, he would rather send somebody else first to see how the stuff was getting on.

Everybody in the town knew what a remarkable quality the stuff possessed, and each was anxious to see how bad or stupid his neighbors were.

"I will send my honest old minister to the weavers," thought the Emperor; "he can judge best how the stuff looks, for he is intelligent, and no one is better fit for his office than he."

So the clever old minister went out into the hall, where the two rogues were sitting at work at their empty looms.

"Goodness me!" he thought, and opened his eyes wide; "I cannot see anything," but he did not say so. Both of the rogues begged him to be so kind as to step nearer, and asked him if it was not a pretty design, and were not the colors beautiful, and they pointed to the empty looms.

But the poor old minister kept on opening his eyes wider and wider: he could not see anything for there was nothing there.

"Goodness me!" he thought; "am I really stupid? I never thought so, and nobody must know it. Am I really unfit for my office? No; I must certainly not tell anybody that I cannot see the stuff."

"Well, what do you think of it?" asked the one who was weaving.

"Oh, it is beautiful! Most magnificent!" replied the old minister, and looked through his spectacles. "What a pattern! and what colors! Yes, I must tell the Emperor that I like it very much indeed."

"Ah! we are very glad of that," said both weavers, and then they described the colors, and explained the strange patterns.

The old minister listened attentively, so as to be able to repeat it all when he returned to the Emperor, and this he did.

The rogues now asked for more money, and for more silk and gold thread, which they required for weaving. They put everything into their pockets, and not a thread went on the frames, but nevertheless they continued to work at the empty looms.

Soon afterward the Emperor sent another clever statesman to see how the weaving was getting on, and whether the stuff was nearly ready. The same thing happened to him as to the minister; he looked and looked, but as there was nothing on the empty frames, he could not see anything.

"Now, is not that a beautiful piece of stuff?" said both rogues, and described the beauty of the pattern, which did not exist at all.

"I am not stupid," thought the statesman, "so it must be that I am unfit for the high position I hold; that is very strange, but I must not let anybody notice it." So he praised the piece of stuff which he could not see, and said how pleased he was with the beautiful colors and the pretty pattern.

"Oh! it is really magnificent!" he said to the Emperor.

All the people in the town were talking about the beauti-

ful stuff, and the Emperor himself wished to see it while it was still on the loom. With a whole suite of chosen courtiers, among whom were the two honest old statesmen who had been there before, the Emperor went to the two cunning rogues, who were now weaving as fast as they could, but without thread or shuttle.

"Well! is it not magnificent?" cried the two clever statesmen; "does your majesty recognize how beautiful is the pattern, how charming the colors?" and they pointed to the empty looms, for they thought that the others could see the stuff.

"What?" thought the Emperor; "I cannot see anything; this is terrible! Am I stupid; or am I not fit to be Emperor? This would be the most dreadful thing that could happen to me! Yes, it is very beautiful," he said at last; "we give our highest approbation!" and he nodded as if he were quite satisfied, and gazed at the empty looms.

He would not say that he saw nothing, and the whole of his suite looked and looked; but, like the others, they were unable to see anything. So they said, just like the Emperor, "Yes, it is very pretty," and they advised him to have some clothes made from this magnificent stuff, and to wear them for the first time at the great procession that was about to take place. "It is magnificent! beautiful! excellent!" they said one to another, and they were all so exceedingly pleased with it that the Emperor gave the two rogues a decoration to be worn in the button-hole, and the title "Imperial Weavers."

The rogues worked throughout the whole of the night preceding the day of the procession, and had over sixteen candles alight, so that people should see how busy they were in preparing the Emperor's new clothes.

They pretended to take the stuff off the looms, cut it in the air with great scissors, and sewed with needles without

thread, and at last they said:

"See! now the clothes are ready!"

The Emperor, followed by his most distinguished courtiers, came in person, and the rogues lifted their arms up in the air, just as if they held something, and said, "See! here are the trousers, here is the coat, here is the cloak," and so forth. "It is as light as a cobweb; one might imagine one had nothing on, but that is just the beauty of it!"

"Yes," said all the courtiers; but they could not see anything, because there was nothing.

"Will your imperial highness condescend to undress?" said the rogues; "we will then attire your majesty in the new clothes, here in front of the mirror."

"Oh! how well they look! how beautifully they fit!" said every one; "what a pattern! what colors! It is indeed a magnificent dress."

"They are standing outside with the canopy which is to be carried over your majesty in the procession," announced the Master of Ceremonies.

"Well, I am ready," said the Emperor. "Does it not fit me well!" and he turned again to the mirror, for he wanted it to appear that he was admiring his rich costume.

The chamberlains who were to carry the train fumbled with their hands on the floor just as if they were holding the train up; they raised their hands in the air, but dared not let any body notice that they saw nothing; and so the Emperor went in procession beneath the magnificent canopy, and all the people in the street and at the windows said: "Oh! how beautiful the Emperor's new clothes are; what a splendid train, and how well everything fits!"

No one would admit that he could see nothing, for that

would have shown that he was either unfit for his post or very stupid. None of the Emperor's costumes had ever been so much admired.

"But he has no robe on at all!" said a little child.

"Just hear the voice of the innocent," said his father, and one whispered to the other what the child had said.

"He has no robe on," cried the whole of the people at last; and the Emperor shivered, for it seemed to him that they were right.

But he thought to himself, "I must go through with the procession," and he walked with even greater dignity than before; and the chamberlains followed, carrying the train which did not exist at all.

The Princess and the Pea

(Carolyn Sherwin Bailey)

There was once a Prince who wanted to marry a princess; but she was to be a real princess. So he traveled about through all the world to find a real one but everywhere he went and whoever he saw there was always something in the way. There were princesses enough, of course, but whether they were real princesses this Prince could not make out. There was usually something about them that did not seem right. So he came home again and was quite sad; for he wished so much to have a real princess.

One evening a terrible storm came on. It lightened and it thundered and the rain streamed down; it was quite fearful! Then there was a knocking at the town gate and the old King went out to open it.

It was a Princess who stood outside the gate. But, oh, how she did look from the rain and the rough weather. The water ran down her hair and her clothes; it ran in at the points of her shoes and out at the heels; and yet she declared that she was a real princess.

"Yes, we shall soon find that out," thought the old Queen. She said nothing, though; she only went into the guest room, took all the bedding off and put a pea on the bottom of the bedstead. Then she took twenty mattresses and laid them upon the pea and then she spread twenty eiderdown quilts upon the mattresses. On these the Princess had to lie all night.

In the morning they asked her how she slept.

"Oh, most miserably," said the Princess. "I scarcely closed my eyes all night long. I don't know what was in my bed but I lay upon something very hard. It was so hard that I am black and blue all over. It was quite dreadful."

Then they saw that she was a real princess for through the twenty mattresses and twenty eiderdown quilts she had felt the pea. No one but a real princess could be so tender skinned.

So the Prince took her for his wife for now he knew that he had a real princess. And the pea was put in the museum and it is still to be seen there unless some one has carried it off.

The Plowman Who Found Content

(Carolyn Sherwin Bailey)

A plowman paused in his work one day to rest. As he sat on the handle of his plow he fell a-thinking. The world had not been going well with him of late, and he could not help feeling downhearted. Just then he saw an old woman looking at him over the hedge.

"Good-morning!" she said. "If you are wise you will take my advice."

"And what is your advice?" he asked.

"Leave your plow, and walk straight on for two days. At the end of that time you will find yourself in the middle of a forest, and in front of you there will be a tree towering high above the others. Cut it down, and your fortune will be made."

With these words the old woman hobbled down the road, leaving the plowman wondering. He unharnessed his horses, drove them home, and said good-bye to his wife; and then taking his ax, started out.

At the end of two days he came to the tree, and set to work to cut it down. As it crashed to the ground a nest containing two eggs fell from its topmost branches. The shells of the eggs were smashed, and out of one came a young eagle, while from the other rolled a small gold ring. The eagle rapidly became larger and larger, till it was of full size; then, flapping its wings, it flew up.

"I thank you, honest man, for giving me my freedom," it

called out. "In token of my gratitude take the ring—it is a wishing ring. If you wish anything as you turn it round on your finger, your wish will be fulfilled. But remember this—the ring contains but one wish, so think well before you use it."

The man put the ring on his finger, and set off on his homeward journey. Night was coming on when he entered a town. Almost the first person he saw was a goldsmith standing at the door of his shop. So he went up to him, and asked him what the ring was worth.

The goldsmith looked at it carefully, and handed it back to the man with a smile.

"It is of very little value," he said.

The plowman laughed.

"Ah, Mr. Goldsmith," he cried, "you have made a mistake this time. My ring is worth more than all you have in your shop; it's a wishing-ring, and will give me anything I care to wish for."

The goldsmith felt annoyed and asked to see it again.

"Well, my good man," he said, "never mind about the ring. I dare say you are far from home, and are in want of some supper and a bed for the night. Come in and spend the night in my house."

The man gladly accepted the offer, and was soon sound asleep. In the middle of the night the goldsmith took the ring from his finger, and put another just like it in its place without disturbing him in the least.

Next morning the countryman went on his way, all unconscious of the trick that had been played on him. When he had gone the goldsmith closed the shutters of his shop, and bolted the door; then turning the ring on his finger he said, "I wish for a hundred thousand sovereigns!"

Scarcely had the sound of his voice died away than there fell about him a shower of hard, bright, golden sovereigns. They struck him on the head, on the shoulders, on the hands. They covered the floor. Presently the floor gave way beneath the weight, and the goldsmith and his gold fell into the cellar beneath.

Next morning, when the goldsmith did not open the shop as usual, the neighbors forced open the door, and found him buried beneath the pile.

Meanwhile the countryman reached his home, and told his wife of the ring.

"Now, good wife," said he," here is the ring; our fortune is made. Of course we must consider the matter well; then, when we have made up our minds as to what is best, we can express some very big wish as I turn the ring on my finger."

"Suppose," said the woman, "we were to wish for a nice farm; the land we have now is so small as to be almost useless."

"Yes," said the husband; "but, on the other hand, if we work hard and spend little for a year or two we might be able to buy as much as we want. Then we could get something else with the wishing-ring."

So it was agreed. For a year the man and his wife worked hard. Harvest came, and the crops were splendid. At the end of the year they were able to buy a nice farm, and still had some money left.

"There," said the man, "we have the land, and we still have our wish."

"Well," said his wife, "we could do very well with a horse and a cow."

"They are not worth wishing for," said he; "we can get

them as we got the land."

So they went on working steadily and spending wisely for another year. At the end of that time they bought both a horse and a cow. Husband and wife were greatly pleased with their good fortune, for, said they, "We have got the things we wanted and we have still our wish."

As time went on everything prospered with the worthy couple. They worked hard, and were happy. Indeed, the husband would probably have forgotten all about the ring had not his wife constantly asked him to wish for something.

"Let us work while we are young," her husband would answer. "Life is still before us, and who can say how badly we may need our wish some day."

So the years passed away. Every season saw the bounds of the farm increase and the granaries grow fuller. All day long the farmer was about in the fields, while his wife looked after the house and the dairy. Sometimes, as they sat alone of an evening, she would remind him of the unused wishing-ring, and would talk of things she would like to have for the house. But he always replied that there was still plenty of time.

The man and his wife grew old and gray. Then came a day when they both died—and the wishing-ring had not been used. It was still on his finger as he had worn it for forty years. One of his sons was going to take it off, but the oldest said: "Do not disturb it; there has been some secret in connection with it. Perhaps our mother gave it to him, for I have often seen her look longingly at it."

Thus the old man was buried with the ring, which was supposed to be a wishing-ring, but which, as we know, was not, though it brought the old couple more good fortune and happiness than all the wishing in the world could ever have given them.

The Queen's Necklace

Once upon a time there lived an old king whom you could not very well call good, in fact he was very disagreeable and horrid.

Now, in his old age, the king had a fancy for marrying and he cast his eye over his many kingdoms to spy out a suitable wife for himself.

In this way his eye fell upon quite a young princess who was called Blanzeflor.

"She is as fair as a sunny day, as mild as a dove, and as meek as a lamb, and she is only seventeen years old, too! She will suit me admirably," said the king.

But when her father came to her and said: "Blanzeflor, our sovereign lord, the king, would have you for his queen," she wept and said she would rather sit upon a stone and spin goats' wool, than sit as queen at that king's side.

But when her father said that she must realize that if she refused the king he would come and hang both her father and mother and all the family upon a tree like so many bunches of onions, then the princess bowed her head and said, "Then I will marry him."

So they clad her in silk and in gold, and set a crown upon her head and combed her long golden hair over her shoulders, then they lifted her upon a white palfrey and rode forth with her to the king, and thus the wedding took place.

On her wedding day the king hung a necklace of pearls around her neck.

"I threaded them myself on this silken cord," said the king. "These are pearls of the East and there are three hundred and sixty-five of them, the smallest being a little crooked; and I warn you," he added, "take great care of them, for on the day you lose the necklace, I warrant you will not care to look me in the eyes;" and the king began to roll his eyes so horribly that the young queen felt cold shivers all down her spine. Thus Blanzeflor became queen.

Every morning the king ate porridge and cream in bed, and the queen carried it to him in a golden bowl and fed him like a baby, for such was his command. Every evening the king and queen would play chess, and then the queen always had to let the king win, otherwise he would get bad-tempered.

But the very worst was at mealtime, for the king was so proud he would not let anyone sit at table with the queen and himself. The young queen would sit with downcast eyes, scarcely daring to swallow a morsel, so greatly did she tremble for fear lest something should displease the king, for then he became quite terrible.

The only pleasure the court had was to stand and stare at Blanzeflor, for she glowed with a beauty more bright and radiant than all the torchlights in the banqueting hall, and when she bowed and smiled it warmed the heart like the sun in summer.

Now, dreadful stories came to the queen's ears of how the king would fling people into prison for the smallest offence, or wring their necks like chickens; but alas! what could she do in the matter? She, herself, sat like a prisoner in the royal castle, and never was she allowed to go out on foot but only on horseback followed by a royal retinue and closely guarded.

It happened one day, however, that the queen was in church—there at least the king could not prevent her from going—and as she knelt in prayer before the high altar, she

noticed how meanly and poorly God's holy altar was adorned.

Then the queen wept bitterly and said to herself: "I drink out of golden goblets, and silver torches are lighted on my table, but upon God's altar the candlesticks are of pewter and the velvet cloth which covers the Lord's table is all faded and patched. I cannot bear to see it." And thereupon she slowly and carefully unclasped her necklace, drew off seven of the largest pearls and laid them upon the altar.

That evening she had her hair combed back and fastened in a knot upon her neck, so that the king might not see that the pearls were missing.

Now it happened one night that the queen lay awake. She could not sleep because she thought she heard strange sounds of sighing and sobbing out in the night. It all sounded so piteous and heartrending that the queen wept upon her silken pillow. "Here I lie upon my bed of satin," she sighed, "whilst outside, perhaps little children go barefooted in the snow. I cannot bear to think of it."

There was a sound of twittering and chirping, and now she saw how one little half-frozen bird after another flew up and tapped upon the window-pane with its beak, in search of a chance grain of corn.

"Alas, alas!" sighed the queen, "I eat roast venison out of a golden dish and drink mulled wine, and there outside the poor little birds starve to death in the cold. I cannot bear to think of it;" and the next day she begged leave of the king to collect the crumbs after meals and to place them in a basket outside her window for the birds.

Well, of course the king thought it was asking a good deal, but as the queen never begged for anything for herself, and the crumbs were, after all, of not much use for anything else, he allowed her to take them, and from that day the queen

always sat and rolled bread between her white fingers during meals, and crumbled one little piece after another into little bits, whilst she chatted and jested with the king, so that he might not pay any heed to what she was doing, and when she rose from the table she would sign to her page, and then he would brush all the crumbs into a small basket which was hung outside the queen's chamber window, and at sunrise she was always awakened by the chirping of the small hungry birds when they came to empty her basket.

Now it happened one morning when the queen took in her basket to have it refilled, that she thought she saw a large snowflake lying at the bottom, but it was really a little piece of paper which had been folded around a small stone and thrown up at the window, and on it was written an appealing tale of misery.

"The queen who takes pity upon the starving birds of the air," it said, "will surely take pity upon the starving children upon earth;" and the queen read it over and over again, whilst her tears fell like rain in spring.

But, how could she help them? At last she hit upon a plan.

The king had given the queen a page, who was as young and beautiful as herself. He carried her long velvet train embroidered with golden crowns, he filled her goblet with wine, and lit the torch which was to light her upon her way through the dark passages of the castle, and he slept on a bear skin outside her door with his drawn sword beside him to protect her from all harm and danger.

Now when the page came to carry the train of her sky-blue velvet gown, the queen bent down as if to adjust it, and at the same time she slipped a little piece of paper into the page's hand. In it she had placed one of the pearls from off her necklace, and had written down where she wished him to carry it.

Away he flew as swiftly as a swallow, and when he took up the queen's train again that evening, he placed his hands upon his breast and bowed in silence, but the queen could read in his face that his errand had well sped.

From that day prayers and petitions simply rained down upon the queen's window-sill.

What could she do but take the pearls from her necklace? And so with trembling hands she drew off one pearl after another, and finally one morning there was not a single pearl left.

The king was not in a good temper at dinner that day, and he saw that the necklace was missing!

"Where is the necklace?" he shrieked. His voice sounded like the caw of a hoarse old crow. "Where is the necklace?"

The queen looked confused.

"Oh, I have not got it on today," she said. But the king had her eight tire-women and her eight ladies-in-waiting called up, and they had to search over and over through all the queen's drawers and presses, till they were as red as cranberries, but the necklace was not to be found.

"Have you lost the necklace?" roared the king.

"No," said the queen, timidly.

"Have you given it away?" shouted the king. "To whom have you given it?"

The queen dropped her eyelids and said nothing.

Then the king had the queen thrown into prison; there she was to remain until the necklace was found.

Now you can imagine what a hurly-burly there was after this. The king in front, with six attendants at his heels, searched the whole castle from garret to cellar. But still the

necklace was not to be found.

Alas for the queen, poor young Blanzeflor! She sat in the darkest of dungeons. No one could get to her.

She fell on her knees upon the straw lying on the prison floor, and prayed to God that he might perform a miracle and set the guiltless free.

"Thou, God, canst break through prison walls as easily as the sun breaks through the mists," she said. "Thou canst also set an innocent prisoner free."

But scarcely had she ended her prayer when she saw in the pale morning light how the thick prison walls fell apart, and between them came a swallow flying, as easily and as quickly as if it were merely flying through the air.

In its beak it held a white pearl, which it dropped upon the queen's knees.

"This is one of the tears you shed before the high altar," twittered the swallow, "God gives it you back in the likeness of a pearl."

At the same moment came another swallow through the wall, and another and another, and in a twinkling the whole prison was filled with a flight of birds.

Each had a white pearl in its beak, which it laid upon Blanzeflor's lap.

"Here are the tears you shed for those who were poor and sad at heart," they chirped; "not one has fallen in vain."

At last came a little bird with a maimed wing; in its beak was the little crooked pearl, for this, too, had been threaded on the necklace.

Blanzeflor sat perfectly still and let the pearls lie upon her knees, for she could not touch them with her fettered hands.

Then the sun rose red in the East and shone into the prison so that it streamed with light like heaven itself.

But just then the king came in with all his retinue. He had come to take the queen away to be beheaded. But when he saw her sitting with a halo of light around her and with the pearls in her lap, he stood stock-still with amazement. Then he began to count the pearls, and every single one was there, all three hundred and sixty-five, even to the little crooked one! But the silken cord on which they had been strung was missing.

Away went the king hobbling up the stairs to his own apartments to fetch a new silken cord. He was afraid to ask anyone else to go for it because he feared they would steal something.

When the king had snipped off his cord he hurried back so quickly down to the prison again, that he tripped over his own feet and fell and broke his neck, and there he lay dead on his way down to the dungeons where he had let so many innocent people suffer and pine to death.

The king was buried, and the queen was proclaimed the only reigning sovereign in all the land.

And never was there a gentler queen than she. If any one was in any trouble or distress they simply said: "We shall go to the queen, there is sure to be one more pearl left on her Majesty's necklace!"

The Honest Woodman

(D.L. Grates)

Once upon a time a poor woodman lived with his family near a great forest. Every week day he shouldered his ax very early in the morning, and bidding his wife and children good-bye, went out to cut wood for his master.

One day when he was chopping at the trunk of a great tree growing near a stream, his ax suddenly slipped out of his hands and dropped with a splash into the water.

Oh, how troubled the poor man was! He couldn't earn a penny without an ax, and he was too poor to buy one. He sat down on the bank and wept as though his heart would break.

"What is the trouble, my good man?" asked a voice at his side. It was a fairy! And such a jolly-looking fairy, too. He had wings on his cap, and wings on his shoes, and even on his staff!

"I dropped my ax in the stream, and I can't chop wood any more, and my family will starve," sobbed the man.

Instantly Mercury, for that was the fairy's name, dived down into the water, and came up, dripping wet, holding a beautiful golden ax in his hand.

"Is this your ax?" he asked.

"No, that is not mine."

The good fairy dived into the stream again, and this time brought up a silver ax.

"Is this yours?"

"No, that isn't mine, either." The poor man needed an ax very much, but he would not claim one that did not belong to him, of course.

Once more Mercury plunged into the water, but this time he came up with a common ax in his hand.

"Is this your ax?" he asked.

"Yes! Oh, yes! that is mine!" cried the man, joyfully. "Thank you so much for your kindness. I am sorry you are so wet."

"I don't mind that," said Mercury. "It is indeed a pleasure to meet such an honest man. I will give you both the gold and the silver axes as well as your own, and you can sell them for much gold, and you shall never be poor again." And he was gone before the woodcutter had time to thank him.

The woodcutter went home a very happy man, for now he would always have plenty for his family. When his neighbors heard about his good fortune, one of them who was a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow decided to try his luck in the same way. He went to the stream, threw his ax in, and sitting down on the bank, wept aloud as the honest woodman had done.

Suddenly Mercury appeared to him.

"What is the trouble, my good man?" he asked, as before.

"I dropped my ax in the river," sobbed the man.

Instantly the fairy dived into the water, and in a moment came up with a golden ax in his hand.

"Is this your ax?"

"Yes! Oh, yes! that is mine," the dishonest man cried, reaching out eagerly for the beautiful golden tool.

But Mercury knew he was not speaking the truth, and was very angry with him. Instead of giving him the golden ax, he dropped it into the stream and disappeared without trying to find the man's own ax. So, instead of going home a rich man, as he had expected, he went home poorer than he had come.

The Golden Touch

(Elizabeth Dillingham)

There once lived a king who was very fond of gold; gold money, gold chains, gold rings—all these pleased King Midas more than anything else in the world.

One day he was in his strong room in the cellar, where he kept all his gold. He counted his piles of gleaming money; he tossed up his golden bar and caught it again. Then, as he was playing with the gold dust that filled a great bowl, letting it trickle through his fingers like sand, he looked up suddenly, and there in the doorway stood a fairy.

"You must be very happy, King Midas," said the fairy. "You have all the gold you need."

"Oh," said King Midas, "I haven't half enough gold. I wish everything I touch would turn to gold!"

"King Midas," said the fairy, "do you really wish that?"

"Of course I wish it, nothing could make me so happy."

"Then you shall have your wish. Tomorrow morning when the first rays of the sun fall through your window, everything you touch will turn to gold."

That night King Midas could scarcely sleep, and in the morning, when he opened his eyes, he remembered what the fairy had said. He looked down at his white bedspread and touched it with his hand. It turned to yellow gold, and the sun shining over it sent sparkles of light into his eyes.

King Midas was greatly excited and, jumping out of bed, rushed about the room, touching first one thing, then another. He touched one of the bedposts; it turned to gold. He took up a book from the table; it turned to gold.

Then, as King Midas began to dress, he found that he was putting on gold clothes. He drew out the handkerchief that his little daughter Marygold had made for him. That too became gold, and all the little stitches that the child had put in so carefully were gold too. Somehow this didn't please the king very well. He would rather have had his handkerchief just as it was when Marygold climbed on his knee and put it into his hand. He took up his spectacles to put them on his nose, and they turned to gold.

"Ouch!" cried the king in dismay, "how can I read? But then," he added, "little Marygold will soon be old enough to read to me, and I will not mind a little thing like this."

He left his room and went downstairs, running his hand over the banister. It turned to gleaming gold behind him. He went out into the garden where there were hundreds and hundreds of beautiful roses, fresh and sweet in the sunshine. King Midas touched first one, then another, and another, here and there, turning them to hard, shining gold.

Then he went into the house and sat down to the breakfast table. In a few minutes little Marygold came in from the garden. She was crying, and in her hand she held one of the gold roses.

"What is the trouble, my little girl?" asked the King.

"O father!" cried Marygold, "See what has happened to all my roses! They are yellow and stiff and ugly."

"Why, they are golden roses, child. Do you not think they are more beautiful than what they were?"

"No," she sobbed, "they do not smell sweet. They won't grow anymore. I liked roses that are alive," and she threw down the hard, yellow rose and climbed into her chair opposite her father.

"Never mind," said the King, "eat your breakfast now."

For the king's breakfast there were fish, baked potatoes, hot cakes, and coffee, and for Marygold, a bowl of break and milk. King Midas lifted a spoonful of coffee, but just as soon as his lips touched it, it turned to a lump of hard gold.

"Why!" though the king, aghast, "what *shall* I do if I can't eat? All my gold will not buy me food. But perhaps I can get ahead of the golden touch."

So he popped a bit of potato into his mouth very quickly indeed. It turned to gold on his tongue, and was so hot it burned him!

"Oh, oh!" cried King Midas.

"Father, what is it?" asked little Marygold, and she ran over to him. She threw her arms about him, and he kissed her. But he suddenly cried out in terror and anguish. When he touched her, her lovely little face became glittering gold, her eyes could not see, her lips could not kiss him back again, her little arms could not hold him close; she was no longer a loving, laughing little girl, she was changed to a little golden statue.

King Midas bowed his head and great sobs shook him.

Just then the fairy appeared in the doorway. "Are you happy, King Midas? You have all the gold you want."

"Happy! How can you ask? I am the most miserable man living!" said the King.

"You have the golden touch," said the fairy, "is that not

enough?"

"Oh," cried the king, "take my gold, take all my gold, and give me back my little daughter! I've lost all that was worth having."

"You are wiser than you were, King Midas," said the fairy, "take that pitcher from the table, go to the stream that runs through your garden, fill the pitcher with water, and come back. Whatever you sprinkle with the water will turn again to what it was before it changed to gold."

Then the fairy went away. King Midas, snatching up the pitcher, rushed through the garden to the brook that babbled over the stones under the great trees.

Plish! plash! in he plunged. All his heavy gold clothes changed back to soft cloth. How much better they felt! The king filled the pitcher with water, and hurried back to the house. Here he began to sprinkle it by the handfuls over little Marygold.

The child woke up and began to sneeze. "Why, father!" she cried, "what are you pouring water over me for?" She had not remembered anything since she ran to her father.

Then King Midas took her by the hand, and they went out into the garden. Here he sprinkled the rest of the water over the roses, which turned back again, sweet and fair.

Never after that did King Midas care for any gold except for the gold of the sunshine, and the gold of little Marygold's hair.

Pandora

(Mara Pratt)

Man was a desolate creature living on the earth alone, and with no other occupation than fighting each other and subduing the wild beasts that roamed up and down the earth.

And the gods looked down from Mt. Olympus upon him and pitied him that he had, after all, so little to make him really happy and to lift his thoughts Heavenward.

"He has no love in his heart," said one god, sadly.

"He does not know the meaning of gentleness," said another.

"He knows no heroism except that of brute strength against a foe," said another.

"He thinks only of self," said another.

"There is," said Zeus, "but one way to lift his thoughts towards Olympus; but one way to arouse in his heart love and tenderness and true heroism; and that is to give him something to love, something to protect. Even the brutes of the forest have their young, and so are happier than man."

Then spoke the wise and loving Athene, "Let us send down to earth a woman who shall be to man a goddess, and who shall refine his nature and make to grow in his sleeping heart those qualities that shall make him god-like and brave and true."

To this great Zeus bowed assent; and happy in the task

before them, the gods set themselves to work, and every god and goddess vied each with the other to make some glorious gift to her.

One gave her a tender loving heart that could do no cruelty even to a worm of the earth; another gave her a beautiful form and a face from which the light of Apollo always shone; one gave her a love of music and beauty; another a love of home and of little children; and when, at last, the beautiful Pandora was brought before Zeus, his stern face grew tender; and, rising from his golden throne, he placed his hand upon her shining head, and there was added unto her beauty and gentleness a reverence henceforth for all that was pure and high and god-like in the earth or in Olympus.

Then Iris spread her beautiful arch across the sky; and hand in hand the messenger of Hera and the loving-hearted Pandora passed out from Olympus, down the shining bridge of color, to the abode of man.

And when Pandora stood before Prometheus and the people he had made, there fell a hush upon man's war-like spirit; and sprang up in his heart the tenderness and love and protection of the weak that made man forever more a being above the brute, and tending always towards the god-like.

But it was the will of Zeus that sorrow should come into man's world; and so it was Pandora who, as time went on, lifted the lid from the chest in which lay her parting gifts of the gods—joy, happiness, health, success, comfort, prosperity—and alas, they all escaped—all except hope. That, Pandora saved; and so it is that while all other blessings come and go, leaving the heart of man sometimes sad and heavy, hope never fails, but abides eternal, upholding, and encouraging to new endeavor, even the most heavily laden life.

Pygmalion and Galatea

(Mara Pratt)

Pygmalion was a most wonderful sculptor. Never was he so happy as when with a great block of pure white marble he seated himself, chisel in hand, to carve out some beautiful creation.

His work was the admiration of all the world, and kings came to him from all the countries round about, begging him to make beautiful their palaces with his wonderful carvings. For the vines that he carved, the flowers, the leaves, were true vines and flowers and leaves in grace and beauty.

But one day he set himself to carve from the white, transparent marble the figure of a maiden, who should show forth the perfection of all the maidenly beauty that had ever been.

Day after day, week after week he worked, from early morn till late at night; and when he went out among his comrades, he walked and listened as one in a dream.

"Pygmalion sees visions," the people began to whisper among themselves.

By and by, the sculptor began to work by night as well as by day; no one could win him away; neither would he permit his closest friends to look upon his work.

"The youth is mad," they said, and began to draw away from him. Still he worked on, till by and by there came a time when no sound of hammer was heard in the sculptor's chamber, and the great door was barred against the world. Still,

Pygmalion dwelt alone, and no one dreamed the secret of his heart.

But one day, when the people were celebrating with festivities the glory of the goddess Venus, Pygmalion threw himself before the altar and cried, "O most kind Venus, give me for my wife, my beautiful marble Galatea! give me my beautiful marble Galatea!"

The people wondered. "It is the ravings of a madman," they said, and tried to lead him away from the altar. But Pygmalion knew, and Venus knew what his strange words meant, and she took pity upon the sculptor who had made a marble maiden so beautiful that he had grown to love her and to long to have her dwell with him, a real, speaking, thinking, living maiden.

When the festivities were over, and Pygmalion had laid upon the altar the richest gifts of all who had gathered there, he hurried back to his home. Would Venus grant his prayer? He hurried to the great chamber. There in the niche the statue stood, tall and beautiful as Venus herself.

Pygmalion knelt before it; then he rose and folded his arms around it; he bent his head tenderly over the marble head. "O Galatea, Galatea," he whispered; "my beautiful Galatea!"

Then Pygmalion threw himself upon the rug before the statue and lay looking up at the beautiful face.

By and by a change began to creep over the marble; a pink glow flushed the pale face and arms; the hair softened and took on a hue of golden bronze; the eyelids quivered, opened —and there looked down upon the youth eyes of most tender, loving blue.

Slowly, slowly one hand was raised—then the other one foot advanced—then the other. Pygmalion's heart beat fast.

Down from the niche the marble Galatea now the beautiful, rosy, flesh and blood Galatea stepped. Pygmalion sprang to his feet. Galatea came towards him; she stretched out her arms to him; and Pygmalion, lifting his eyes towards heaven, drew her to him saying, "O goddess Venus, I thank thee that thou hast given me my Galatea."

And Galatea proved to be as good as she was beautiful. A long, long, happy life they lived together; and it was from Pygmalion that Galatea learned to build the altar fires, to spin and weave, and to have charge over her household, as a goodly matron should; and never in all the land, even among the princesses, was a woman so beautiful, so wise, so good as the Galatea of the sculptor Pygmalion.

Wax Wings

(Lawton Evans)

A long time ago there lived a man named Daedalus who was such a genius that he could make anything. The king of the country became angry and jealous because Daedalus could do so many wonderful things, and so he shut him up in a tower and kept him prisoner on an island out in the ocean. He shut up his little son, Icarus, along with his father.

This was a foolish thing to do for it should be the part of all wise kings to encourage their subjects to invent things, and to use them for the good of the others. But this was a foolish king, and so he put the inventor in prison.

Daedalus easily escaped from the prison, but he did not see how he could escape from the island because the king allowed no ships to take on passengers there. Daedalus decided to fly away like the birds he saw skimming along the waters and then high up in the air.

He made a frame of wood and fastened feathers on it with wax. He then fitted it on his back and made it to work like birds' wings. He made another small one for Icarus and fitted it on his back. They practiced flying on the island and would fly from one hill to another until they had learned how to manage their wings. They were then ready to fly away over the sea.

Daedalus and Icarus went to the top of a hill, and putting the wings on their shoulders they jumped off and began to fly.

Daedalus called to Icarus to fly low and keep close, and away they went over the water and up into the air.

It was very wonderful to fly like the birds. The blue water underneath sparkled; the fishermen looked up astonished; rowers stopped their boats to see the strange sight. Soon they came to the land, but they kept on flying. Farmers stopped plowing, and cattle ran round in the field. Hunters shot arrows as Daedalus and Icarus flew along over their heads. Then they flew over a great lake.

Icarus forgot the directions of his father and flew higher and higher. "Do not fly so high, Icarus," called out his father, "it is dangerous. You are too young to trust yourself to such high places."

But Icarus called back, "I can take care of myself," and flew on higher and higher. At last he came close to the sun, and all the wax melted off his feathers and they began to drop off. One by one they fell until only the frame was left. Then Icarus began to fall, and he fell and fell until he dropped right into the water—and that was the end of Icarus!

But Daedalus who had kept away from the sun flew on and landed in his own country.

Orpheus and Eurydice

(Mara Pratt)

Orpheus was the son of the god Apollo; and Apollo, proud of his beautiful son, gave him his own mellow-stringed lyre, and taught him to play so sweetly upon it, that not only men and women, but even the beasts of the field stopped to listen; and, listening, forgot their wicked, savage passions and became, one and all, gentle and loving as the lambs on the sunny hillside. Even the trees quivered and sighed, and the rocks melted before his tender strains.

When Orpheus became a man, he won with his sweet music the beautiful Eurydice for his wife; but alas, happy though they were, they were subject to an evil fate, and soon their joy was at an end. For one day, when Eurydice was wandering with her nymphs in the fields, she stepped upon a poisonous snake which turned and bit her, poisoning her so that she died from the cruel wound.

Poor Orpheus! For a time he had no heart to touch the lyre, and all the earth was sad and still. But one day he went out into the streets with it in his hand, and sang his grief out into the summer air.

Brave men wept great tears of sympathy, so tender and so touching was his music, and even the gods on Mt. Olympus looked softly down upon him.

"Go thou down into Hades," said Jupiter to Orpheus, "and thou shalt find thy wife; bring her back with thee up into the

light of day."

Gladly Orpheus obeyed. Down through the great cave, across the black river, Styx, into the abode of the shades, he boldly made his way, playing sweet music as he went; and there, in the midst of the great hosts that had left the earth, he saw his own Eurydice, most beautiful of them all.

"O Pluto," he sang; "give back to me my Eurydice, stolen from me and from the upper world while youth and beauty and happiness were yet full upon her." And so tender was his voice, so soft the tones of his lyre, that the shades gathered close around him; and even Pluto's stern heart was moved to tears. Afar off, white and shining, stood Eurydice, her arms stretched out towards him, and the tears pouring down her face.

"Take her, take her," said Pluto; "but one command you must obey. As you go out from this realm of mine, playing sweet music as you go—music that shall draw Eurydice forth, following in the wake of its melody, not once must you look back, over-eager or doubting my word with regard to her. If this command you disobey, she is lost indeed to you until such time as you yourself shall come to dwell among us forever."

With heart bounding with joy, Orpheus, with one radiant look of joy at Eurydice, raised his lyre, and turned his steps again towards the upper world.

On, on, through the great masses of shades he hastened, making most joyous music as he passed. Out into the darkness, even down to the River Styx, he had made his way. But alas, alas, in his love for Eurydice, and in his fear lest she should not have followed, he forgot the command of Pluto and turned his eager face to look upon her.

Poor Orpheus! poor Eurydice! There stood the stern Pluto, his deep gaze full upon the twain. And when Orpheus

turned, Pluto raised his sceptre; his deep voice rolled out into the darkness and Eurydice was lost again to her brave husband who had dared so much for her.

But the ferryman cared little for the grief that now fell upon the loving youth. Quickly and silently he rowed him across the Styx, and left him there upon the farther bank.

For many and many a day Orpheus sat by the riverside, his broken lyre in his hand, and often in the deep darkness of the night he would play music so sad and tender, so full of the wail of a broken heart, that even the stars grew dim and the trees sighed in sympathy for him.

Historical Stories

(Ages 8+)

Androclus and the Lion

(James Baldwin)

In Rome there was once a poor slave whose name was Androclus. His master was a cruel man, and so unkind to him that at last Androclus ran away.

He hid himself in a wild wood for many days; but there was no food to be found, and he grew so weak and sick that he thought he should die. So one day he crept into a cave and lay down, and soon he was fast asleep.

After a while a great noise woke him up. A lion had come into the cave, and was roaring loudly. Androclus was very much afraid, for he felt sure that the beast would kill him. Soon, however, he saw that the lion was not angry, but that he limped as though his foot hurt him.

Then Androclus grew so bold that he took hold of the lion's lame paw to see what was the matter. The lion stood quite still, and rubbed his head against the man's shoulder. He seemed to say—

"I know that you will help me."

Androclus lifted the paw from the ground, and saw that it was a long, sharp thorn which hurt the lion so much. He took the end of the thorn in his fingers; then he gave a strong, quick pull, and out it came. The lion was full of joy. He jumped about like a dog, and licked the hands and feet of his new friend.

Androclus was not at all afraid after this; and when night

came, he and the lion lay down and slept side by side.

For a long time, the lion brought food to Androclus every day; and the two became such good friends, that Androclus found his new life a very happy one.

One day some soldiers who were passing through the wood found Androclus in the cave. They knew who he was, and so took him back to Rome.

It was the law at that time that every slave who ran away from his master should be made to fight a hungry lion. So a fierce lion was shut up for a while without food, and a time was set for the fight.

When the day came, thousands of people crowded to see the sport. They went to such places at that time very much as people now-a-days go to see a circus show or a game of base-ball.

The door opened, and poor Androclus was brought in. He was almost dead with fear, for the roars of the lion could already be heard. He looked up, and saw that there was no pity in the thousands of faces around him.

Then the hungry lion rushed in. With a single bound he reached the poor slave. Androclus gave a great cry, not of fear, but of gladness. It was his old friend, the lion of the cave.

The people, who had expected to see the man killed by the lion, were filled with wonder. They saw Androclus put his arms around the lion's neck; they saw the lion lie down at his feet, and lick them lovingly; they saw the great beast rub his head against the slave's face as though he wanted to be petted. They could not understand what it all meant.

After a while they asked Androclus to tell them about it. So he stood up before them, and, with his arm around the lion's neck, told how he and the beast had lived together in

the cave.

"I am a man," he said; "but no man has ever befriended me. This poor lion alone has been kind to me; and we love each other as brothers."

The people were not so bad that they could be cruel to the poor slave now. "Live and be free!" they cried. "Live and be free!"

Others cried, "Let the lion go free too! Give both of them their liberty!"

And so Androclus was set free, and the lion was given to him for his own. And they lived together in Rome for many years.

Damon and Pythias

(James Baldwin)

In Syracuse there was so hard a ruler that the people made a plot to drive him out of the city. The plot was discovered, and the king commanded that the leaders should be put to death. One of these, named Damon, lived at some distance from Syracuse. He asked that before he was put to death he might be allowed to go home to say goodbye to his family, promising that he would then come back to die at the appointed time.

The king did not believe that he would keep his word, and said: "I will not let you go unless you find some friend who will come and stay in your place. Then, if you are not back on the day set for execution, I shall put your friend to death in your place." The king thought to himself: "Surely no one will ever take the place of a man condemned to death."

Now, Damon had a very dear friend, named Pythias, who at once came forward and offered to stay in prison while Damon was allowed to go away. The king was very much surprised, but he had given his word; Damon was therefore permitted to leave for home, while Pythias was shut up in prison.

Many days passed, the time for the execution was close at hand, and Damon had not come back. The king, curious to see how Pythias would behave, now that death seemed so near, went to the prison.

"Your friend will never return," he said to Pythias.

"You are wrong," was the answer. "Damon will be here if he can possibly come. But he has to travel by sea, and the winds have been blowing the wrong way for several days. However, it is much better that I should die than he. I have no wife and no children, and I love my friend so well that it would be easier to die for him than to live without him. So I am hoping and praying that he may be delayed until my head has fallen."

The king went away more puzzled than ever.

The fatal day arrived but Damon had not come. Pythias was brought forward and led upon the scaffold. "My prayers are heard," he cried. "I shall be permitted to die for my friend. But mark my words. Damon is faithful and true; you will yet have reason to know that he has done his utmost to be here!"

Just at this moment a man came galloping up at full speed, on a horse covered with foam! It was Damon. In an instant he was on the scaffold, and had Pythias in his arms. "My beloved friend," he cried, "the gods be praised that you are safe. What agony I have suffered in the fear that my delay was putting your life in danger!"

There was no joy in the face of Pythias, for he did not care to live if his friend must die. But the king had heard it all. At last he was forced to believe in the unselfish friendship of these two. His hard heart melted at the sight, and he set them both free, asking only that they would be his friends, too.

The Story of Regulus

(James Baldwin)

On the other side of the sea from Rome there was once a great city named Carthage. The Roman people were never very friendly to the people of Carthage, and at last a war began between them. For a long time it was hard to tell which would prove the stronger. First the Romans would gain a battle, and then the men of Carthage would gain a battle; and so the war went on for many years.

Among the Romans there was a brave general named Regulus—a man of whom it was said that he never broke his word. It so happened after a while, that Regulus was taken prisoner and carried to Carthage. Ill and very lonely, he dreamed of his wife and little children so far away beyond the sea; and he had but little hope of ever seeing them again. He loved his home dearly, but he believed that his first duty was to his country; and so he had left all, to fight in this cruel war.

He had lost a battle, it is true, and had been taken prisoner. Yet he knew that the Romans were gaining ground, and the people of Carthage were afraid of being beaten in the end. They had sent into other countries to hire soldiers to help them; but even with these they would not be able to fight much longer against Rome.

One day some of the rulers of Carthage came to the prison to talk with Regulus.

"We should like to make peace with the Roman people,"

they said, "And we are sure, that, if your rulers at home knew how the war is going, they would be glad to make peace with us. We will set you free and let you go home, if you will agree to do as we say."

"What is that?" asked Regulus.

"In the first place," they said, "you must tell the Romans about the battles which you have lost, and you must make it plain to them that they have not gained anything by the war. In the second place, you must promise us, that, if they will not make peace, you will come back to your prison."

"Very well," said Regulus, "I promise you, that, if they will not make peace, I will come back to prison."

And so they let him go; for they knew that a great Roman would keep his word.

When he came to Rome, all the people greeted him gladly. His wife and children were very happy, for they thought that now they would not be parted again. The white-haired Fathers who made the laws for the city came to see him. They asked him about the war.

"I was sent from Carthage to ask you to make peace," he said, "But it will not be wise to make peace. True, we have been beaten in a few battles, but our army is gaining ground every day. The people of Carthage are afraid, and well they may be. Keep on with the war a little while longer, and Carthage shall be yours. As for me, I have come to bid my wife and children and Rome farewell. Tomorrow I will start back to Carthage and to prison; for I have promised."

Then the Fathers tried to persuade him to stay.

"Let us send another man in your place," they said.

"Shall a Roman not keep his word?" answered Regulus. "I am ill, and at the best have not long to live. I will go back as

I promised."

His wife and little children wept, and his sons begged him not to leave them again.

"I have given my word," said Regulus. "The rest will be taken care of."

Then he bade them good-by, and went bravely back to prison and the cruel death which he expected.

This was the kind of courage that made Rome the greatest city in the world.

The Story of Cincinnatus

(James Baldwin)

There was a man named Cincinnatus who lived on a little farm not far from the city of Rome. He had once been rich, and had held the highest office in the land; but in one way or another he had lost all his wealth. He was now so poor that he had to do all the work on his farm with his own hands. But in those days it was thought to be a noble thing to till the soil.

Cincinnatus was so wise and just that everybody trusted him, and asked his advice; and when any one was in trouble, and did not know what to do, his neighbors would say—

"Go and tell Cincinnatus. He will help you."

Now there lived among the mountains, not far away, a tribe of fierce, half-wild men, who were at war with the Roman people. They persuaded another tribe of bold warriors to help them, and then marched toward the city, plundering and robbing as they came. They boasted that they would tear down the walls of Rome, and burn the houses, and kill all the men, and make slaves of the women and children.

At first the Romans, who were very proud and brave, did not think there was much danger. Every man in Rome was a soldier, and the army which went out to fight the robbers was the finest in the world. No one stayed at home with the women and children and boys but the white-haired "Fathers," as they were called, who made the laws for the city, and a small company of men who guarded the walls. Everybody

thought that it would be an easy thing to drive the men of the mountains back to the place where they belonged.

But one morning five horsemen came riding down the road from the mountains. They rode with great speed; and both men and horses were covered with dust and blood. The watchman at the gate knew them, and shouted to them as they galloped in. Why did they ride thus? And what had happened to the Roman army?

They did not answer him, but rode into the city and along the quiet streets; and everybody ran after them, eager to find out what was the matter. Rome was not a large city at that time; and soon they reached the market place where the white-haired Fathers were sitting. Then they leaped from their horses, and told their story.

"Only yesterday," they said, "our army was marching through a narrow valley between two steep mountains. All at once a thousand savage men sprang out from among the rocks before us and above us. They had blocked up the way; and the pass was so narrow that we could not fight. We tried to come back; but they had blocked up the way on this side of us too. The fierce men of the mountains were before us and behind us, and they were throwing rocks down upon us from above. We had been caught in a trap. Then ten of us set spurs to our horses; and five of us forced our way through, but the other five fell before the spears of the mountain men. And now, O Roman Fathers! send help to our army at once, or every man will be slain, and our city will be taken."

"What shall we do?" said the white-haired Fathers. "Whom can we send but the guards and the boys? and who is wise enough to lead them, and thus save Rome?"

All shook their heads and were very grave; for it seemed as if there was no hope. Then one said, "Send for Cincinnatus. He will help us."

Cincinnatus was in the field plowing when the men who had been sent to him came in great haste. He stopped and greeted them kindly, and waited for them to speak.

"Put on your cloak, Cincinnatus," they said, "and hear the words of the Roman people."

Then Cincinnatus wondered what they could mean. "Is all well with Rome?" he asked; and he called to his wife to bring him his cloak.

She brought the cloak; and Cincinnatus wiped the dust from his hands and arms, and threw it over his shoulders. Then the men told their errand.

They told him how the army with all the noblest men of Rome had been entrapped in the mountain pass. They told him about the great danger the city was in. Then they said, "The people of Rome make you their ruler and the ruler of their city, to do with everything as you choose; and the Fathers bid you come at once and go out against our enemies, the fierce men of the mountains."

So Cincinnatus left his plow standing where it was, and hurried to the city. When he passed through the streets, and gave orders as to what should be done, some of the people were afraid, for they knew that he had all power in Rome to do what he pleased. But he armed the guards and the boys, and went out at their head to fight the fierce mountain men, and free the Roman army from the trap into which it had fallen.

A few days afterward there was great joy in Rome. There was good news from Cincinnatus. The men of the mountains had been beaten with great loss. They had been driven back into their own place.

And now the Roman army, with the boys and the guards, was coming home with banners flying, and shouts of victory;

and at their head rode Cincinnatus. He had saved Rome.

Cincinnatus might then have made himself king; for his word was law, and no man dared lift a finger against him. But, before the people could thank him enough for what he had done, he gave back the power to the white-haired Roman Fathers, and went again to his little farm and his plow.

He had been the ruler of Rome for sixteen days.

The Boy Who Was Made King

(Carolyn Sherwin Bailey)

It happened a thousand years ago when England was not the pleasant place it is now. Instead of having one King in a fine castle to rule the land, England had a dozen or maybe twenty Kings scattered all over the island, and they oppressed the peasants, and fought among themselves, and stole the fruit of the orchards and the grain of the fields.

There had once been a good King named Pendragon, but he had died and the people could only just remember him.

They sat by their poor fires in the winter evenings and dreamed of a knight who should ride on a wonderful horse at the head of an army, his helmet and his shield glistening in the sunlight; and he would raise his sword, and deliver them from all their wrongs. But the Knight never came.

There was a queer old man who walked the earth in those days. Some people called him a fool and other people said that he knew everything that ever had been and everything that ever should be. Nobody knew from whence he had come. Some said that Merlin—that was his name—had been born of a spirit of the air. He was able to take any shape he wished. Now and then some one would tell how he had met a child, or a beggar and how they had told of strange things that were to happen soon, and then had vanished. Then one knew that it was Merlin who had taken upon himself a different form that he might prophesy to his people.

Merlin had known old King Pendragon. He had done wonderful things for the old King, and the peasants wondered that he did not help them now; but Merlin was waiting.

At last there came another cruel, cold, hungry winter. It was Christmas time when every one should be merry and glad, but there was nothing to eat, and there were no fires to keep warm by. Merlin looked about the land and then said:

"England must have one King."

There was a great church in London then. It was high, with towers and domes and steeples all wonderfully carved from great blocks of gray stone. The windows had the colors of a sunset or a rainbow after a shower, or a tinted shell when the sun shines through it. When Christmas came, Merlin sent messengers to all the lords and Kings of England to come to this great church in London to choose a new King.

They all came, partly because Merlin had sent for them, and partly because each one wanted to be the only King, and was quite sure that he would be chosen. As they argued among themselves as to which would make the best king, a strange thing happened. It was seen just near the end of the churchyard, outside the church. There had certainly been nothing there before, but there suddenly appeared a big, square block of stone. On the top of the stone there was an anvil, and a sword pierced straight through the anvil and the stone. The sword was the most beautiful one the lords had ever seen for it was made of a metal burnished like gold. The hilt was set with all sorts of precious jewels; pearls, and diamonds, and rubies, and topazes, and emeralds; and on the hilt were letters of gold which said:

"He who can draw this sword is the true King of England."

It seemed such a very easy thing to do. Every one of the lords wanted to try, and Merlin said they might have a chance,

but not one of them could move the sword. It was a great surprise to each one who had been so sure that he was the chosen King—but Merlin smiled, for he was carrying a secret in his heart.

"The true King is not here," he said. "But he will come soon, and we shall see him. I bid you all to come here again on Twelfth Day, and all may try once more to draw the sword, and any man in the whole world who will, may try also."

So Merlin had a tent built over the stone, and he chose ten strong knights to guard it night and day; and while the lords were waiting for Twelfth Day they decided to have a tournament in the fields outside London. It was a play battle, and yet not quite play either for often a good knight was killed in tournament. All the bravest lords and knights in England came to this yearly tournament, and among them came old Sir Ector with Kay and Arthur.

Sir Ector had been one of King Pendragon's men, and he still remembered how to be merciful and kind. Kay was Sir Ector's son, but Arthur was the son of King Pendragon. Kay was proud and haughty, but Arthur was gentle and pure and mild. He had seemed to forget always that he was a king's son, and he played with the village boys, and could run faster than any of them, and throw a stone farther, and shoot an arrow straighter than the most skillful of them all.

The three came riding into the tournament field on New Year's Day, and Kay would take part in the battle, but he had forgotten his sword, and so he sent Arthur back to fetch it.

Arthur did not want to go back. The tournament was a gay sight for any boy with all the banners and brilliant trappings and the glittering armor of the knights. But Arthur had learned to obey so he turned his horse toward home. He could not find Kay's sword in the house where they were staying. Then he remembered that he had seen a sword thrust into an

anvil by the great church in the town. Nobody had told him that it was a king's sword, and the ten knights had all gone to the tournament. It was a sword, beautiful enough, Arthur thought, for Kay. He reined his horse in front of the church, and he jumped off, and he pulled the sword by its jeweled hilt quite easily from the anvil and the stone for Kay.

"See, Kay, I bring you a new sword!" he cried as he galloped into the field.

Kay knew all about the sword.

"I am the King of England," he cried. "Behold, I am the King."

But Sir Ector sternly asked of Kay where he had found the sword.

"Arthur brought it to me," said Kay—"my brother Arthur."

"And where did you find it, my lad?" asked Sir Ector.

"Kay sent me for his sword," said Arthur, "and I could not find it so I drew this sword from the anvil to bring it to him instead."

"We shall see if you can put the sword back in the anvil," said Sir Ector.

Now there was no hole in the anvil where the sword had come out, but as soon as Arthur, followed by all the lords, returned to the church and touched the point to the iron it sank deep into it, and into the stone. Sir Ector and Kay both tried to draw it out, but they could not; and once more, Arthur drew it again, as easily as he would have drawn a common sword from its sheath.

Then Sir Ector and Sir Kay knelt at Arthur's feet; and with them the others, for Merlin told them the King of

England had been found. They took Arthur by the hand and led him into the church where he laid his sword upon the altar. Then he received his arms, and promised to be faithful, and gentle, and merciful; and they set a crown upon his head. The people inside the church shouted, and the people outside caught up the cry: "Long live King Arthur!"

And when it was all over, they marched in a procession, with Arthur at the head, through the churchyard that they might see again the place where the strange thing had happened. But when they reached it, they found that the stone and the anvil were gone.

The Coming of Arthur

(Richard Wyche)

One dark stormy night a long time ago, in a land beyond the seas, old King Uther lay upon his dead dying. He was weeping and lamenting, not so much because he was leaving this world, as because he had no son or daughter to come after him and rule England.

There were two old men who stood near the king, whose names were Bleys and Merlin. When they saw that their king was silent in death, they passed out into the black night and walked down toward the ocean where the great waves came rolling in from the deep.

The night was stormy, and they noticed that the waves grew larger and larger. They counted them—one, two, three, up to the ninth—which seemed to gather half the sea. Suddenly, on the highest crest of this wave, they saw a shining ship in the form of a dragon, and all from stem to stern the deck was covered with shining people. No sooner had they seen the ship than it disappeared. But nevertheless this great wave came rolling in and tumbled at their feet.

Strange to say out of this wave there rolled a little naked child, and Merlin picked it up and cried, "The King! The King! An heir for Uther!" Then the long wave swept up the beach, wrapped about the old man and flashed like fire. After which there was a calm, and the stars came out, and the elves and fairies blew their horns from cliff to cliff.

Merlin gave the little child to an old woman to nurse. He

was given the name of Arthur, and as the years passed by he grew into a beautiful boy with blue eyes and golden hair. Merlin, who was a very wise old man, became the boy's teacher.

But let me tell you a story about the boy. One day, as Arthur was walking out all alone in the sunny fields, he came upon a little girl sitting upon a bank of heath, weeping as if her heart would break, and saying: "I hate this fair world and all that's in it." She had been beaten for a fault of which she was not guilty. When she looked up there stood the boy, Arthur. Whether he could walk unseen like his old teacher Merlin, who was something of a wizard, she did not know, but there he stood smiling at her.

He dried her tears, comforted her heart, and was a child with her. But one day after that when she saw him again he was so dignified and cold she was afraid of him. She said then, "Some day he will be King."

As Arthur grew into manhood he wanted a sword, as all boys did in those days. One summer day he was in his boat on the lake. All around him spread the shining water, above him bent the sky, soft and blue. He moved to the center of the lake and stopped. It was noon, and he sat thinking. Perhaps he was wondering what he would do when he became a man. Suddenly he heard the water ripple, and near by he saw, rising from the lake a white arm and hand holding a sword. Arthur reached out and took the sword and then the hand disappeared.

The hilt of the sword was in the shape of a cross, studded with jewels that sparkled and flashed. He pulled it from the scabbard and the blade was so bright that it hurt his eye to look at it. On one side of the blade he saw cut in the steel in the oldest language of all the world, the words, "Take me," but on the other side, in the language of the people, "Cast me away."

It made him sad to think he must cast it away. He took it to his old teacher Merlin, who was then a hundred winters old. Merlin said: "'Take me' means that you must take the sword, clear the forest, let in the light and make broad pathways for the hunter and the knight; break up the robber bands and bandit holds; drive back the heathen that come swarming over the seas, burning the houses and killing the people."

Then he whispered into Arthur's ear and said: "Some day you may be king. After you have ruled the land and made it better, the time will come when you may cast the sword away, but that is a long way off."

The years passed. Not since the dark stormy night on which King Uther died had there been a strong ruler in England. The people fought among themselves. The heathen came swarming over the seas; the wild animals came from the woods and carried off the children. The land was going to ruin.

One day the people came together and said: "We must make one man king." Whom do you suppose they crowned? Merlin, with his knowledge and power, had Arthur lifted up and put on the throne. Many believed he was the rightful king, but others said: "Away with him, he is no king of ours, he is base-born."

But then Arthur spoke to the people in the hall, and asked all the young men who would help him rule the land to come forward. Many heard his manly voice and came and stood before him. He said to them: "Will you speak the truth; be pure; right the wrong; be strong, yet gentle; be true in love; obey the king and your conscience?" When they said "yes," they kneeled before him, and he made them his knights. When they arose from the knighting, he spoke to them in a low deep voice of authority and told them that he wished to make a good king, and that he wanted them to rule the land and make the world better, and the people happier.

While he stood speaking to them, for a moment every man seemed to favor the king; their faces were radiant. Then suddenly three rays of light fell as if from heaven, and lit up the faces of three tall queens, who stood near the throne to help the king and sent him to bring the Queen-to-be to his palace.

Sir Lancelot and the other knights with him rode away on horseback, while King Arthur stood and watched them from the gates as they disappeared. Guinevere was ready and came with Sir Lancelot. It was the first of May, when the earth was white with hyacinths. The woods were all abloom and seemed full of singing birds. Guinevere rode on horseback by Sir Lancelot.

Each day couriers went before and pitched a tent where the Queen-to-be might rest at noon. The journey was soon at an end. Sir Lancelot had entertained Guinevere with talk of the tourney, the chase, the hunt, and of King Arthur and his noble deeds. Sir Lancelot was so strong, yet gentle and tender, that she could not help but like him, and love him.

When King Arthur came out to meet her, clad in his kingly robes, he seemed so tall and dignified that she felt a little afraid of him. But she knew that she was to be his wife and queen. Straightway they went to the church, and there before the highest of altar shrines, the bishop made them man and wife, and blessed them.

Then as they went from the church King Arthur's Knights, clad in stainless white, marched before him with trumpets and song:

Blow trumpet, for the world is white with May! Blow trumpet, the long night hath rolled away! Blow thro' the living world, "Let the King reign!"

And that was the coming of King Arthur.

The Bell of Atri

(Adelle Emerson)

In the days of long ago there lived in the village of Atri a good King John. The people over whom he ruled were not always happy, and often they came to him and asked help because some one had done them a wrong. King John wanted his people to be happy, and so he had a big bell made and hung in the market place. Then he rode with his soldiers and attendants through the streets, and told all the people that whenever any one illtreated or did them a wrong, they could go and pull the bell rope and ring the bell. Then the judge would come and right the wrong.

Now in Atri there lived a man who had once been a knight, but who was no longer brave and kind as a knight ought to be. Instead, he was cruel and wicked; no one loved him, and he loved nothing in the world but gold. His horse and dogs, which he had once loved and cared for, he sold for money, and at last he had left only one horse, his favorite steed, who had carried him faithfully many miles. But the poor old horse was ill cared for in a cold stable, and his master gave him scarcely food enough to keep him alive.

At last the knight said: "What is the use of keeping this lazy steed in my stable and spending my precious gold to buy his food? I will turn him loose in the streets and let him care for himself."

So the poor old horse wandered about the streets and lanes, barked at by dogs, torn by briers and thorns, and finding

little to eat, until he was so poor and thin that his own master would scarcely have known him.

Now the old bell rope, hanging in the market place, had been pulled by so many hands that after a time the end of it became frayed and worn, and one day a man passing by thought he would mend it. So he took a long vine which grew near, and wound the stem about the end of the rope so that the leaves and blossoms hung down, as if the old rope itself were growing.

One day the people of Atri heard the old bell ring out, loud and clear, "Ding-dong, ding-dong!" The judge and the people rushed from their houses to the market place, and there they saw the old bell swinging from its crossbeam, and seeming to say, "Some one hath done a wrong—a wrong!"

But when they looked to see who was pulling the rope, what should they find but the old horse tugging at the vine and its leaves as they hung from the rope.

"The Knight of Atri's famous steed!" said the people. "He it is who calls for justice and kindness."

The judge called the knight and said to him: "Though you are called a knight, and have been brave and strong in battle, you can never be a true knight until you are kind to this old horse, which well deserves your care. Take him home and give him food and a warm place in which to sleep."

So the poor old horse was once more cared for, and no longer wandered about the streets. The Bell of Atri still rang to right the wrong, and became forever famous throughout the land.

Bruce and the Spider

Once upon a time there was a king of Scotland named Robert Bruce. He was a brave king, and had many brave soldiers, but he and his men had suffered defeat from the English, who had come into Scotland with a great army, and were driving Robert Bruce and his men out of their cities and towns.

Six battles had been fought, and each time Bruce led his brave little army into battle but each time he had been defeated. At last Bruce was so badly beaten, that his army was put to flight, and he himself had to flee through the woods to escape capture.

Bruce went in hiding in the mountains, and lived as best he could from hut to hut, while he was gathering a new army. One day he found refuge in a shed that was very old, and lay down on some straw to rest. He was very tired, and weary, and was glad to find anything to lie down on for awhile.

As he lay there he began to think of the six battles he had lost, and of his scattered army, and of Scotland and her enemies. Overhead a spider had begun to weave a web. The spider was trying to fasten a long thread to a beam to hold his web, and was having a lot of trouble.

Bruce saw him swing for the beam the first time and miss it; then the spider tried the second time and missed it; then the third time and missed it again. The spider rested awhile, and swung out bravely for the fourth time, but he was not far enough and back he came. Then he made a strong effort for the fifth time and came a little nearer, but still he fell back.

Bruce began to hope that the spider would succeed, and when he swung out the sixth time he rose up to watch him. But the spider missed it by a little bit and down he fell again. This was six failures.

"I wonder if he will give up," said Bruce to himself. But the spider had no idea of giving it up. So he gathered his thread together, and swung to the beam and fastened his thread.

"If a spider fails six times and succeeds the seventh, then surely the king of Scotland can," said Bruce thinking of the battles he had lost.

So Bruce went out and gathered his men and told them about the spider and said, "Now, for one more brave effort; for Scotland, and for freedom." The men cheered as they went into battle and they fought so bravely that the English were defeated and were glad to get back to England with their lives.

And from that day to this, no Scotchman by the name of Bruce will ever hurt a spider.

King Alfred and the Beggar

(James Baldwin)

At one time the Danes drove King Alfred from his kingdom, and he had to lie hidden for a long time on a little island in a river.

One day, all who were on the island, except the king and queen and one servant, went out to fish. It was a very lonely place, and no one could get to it except by a boat. About noon a ragged beggar came to the king's door, and asked for food.

The king called the servant, and asked, "How much food have we in the house?"

"My lord," said the servant, "we have only one loaf and a little wine."

Then the king gave thanks to God, and said, "Give half of the loaf and half of the wine to this poor man."

The servant did as he was bidden. The beggar thanked the king for his kindness, and went on his way.

In the afternoon the men who had gone out to fish came back. They had three boats full of fish, and they said, "We have caught more fish today than in all the other days that we have been on this island."

The king was glad, and he and his people were more hopeful than they had ever been before.

When night came, the king lay awake for a long time, and thought about the things that had happened that day. At last

he fancied that he saw a great light like the sun; and in the midst of the light there stood an old man with black hair, holding an open book in his hand.

It may all have been a dream, and yet to the king it seemed very real indeed. He looked and wondered, but was not afraid.

"Who are you?" he asked of the old man.

"Alfred, my son, be brave," said the man; "for I am the one to whom you gave this day the half of all the food that you had. Be strong and joyful of heart, and listen to what I say. Rise up early in the morning and blow your horn three times, so loudly that the Danes may hear it. By nine o'clock, five hundred men will be around you ready to be led into battle. Go forth bravely, and within seven days your enemies shall be beaten, and you shall go back to your kingdom to reign in peace."

Then the light went out, and the man was seen no more.

In the morning the king arose early, and crossed over to the mainland. Then he blew his horn three times very loudly; and when his friends heard it they were glad, but the Danes were filled with fear.

At nine o'clock, five hundred of his bravest soldiers stood around him ready for battle. He spoke, and told them what he had seen and heard in his dream; and when he had finished, they all cheered loudly, and said that they would follow him and fight for him so long as they had strength.

So they went out bravely to battle; and they beat the Danes, and drove them back into their own place. And King Alfred ruled wisely and well over all his people for the rest of his days.

Gideon and His Valiant Three Hundred

(Caroline Kellogg)

Stealthily Gideon worked in his father's field, looking furtively about from time to time to see if any one watched him.

Presently a man came running toward him.

"Run! Run for your life," shouted the man, as he came near. "The Midianites are coming."

Gideon dropped his work and fled. In a deep dark cave across the fields he found his mother, and in a few moments his father and brothers came running in. Deep in the cave they hid in terror, for the rest of the day and all through the night. When they came out cautiously and fearfully in the morning, their enemies were gone, but all of their grain had been destroyed.

There was a great host of the Midianites camped round about the people of Israel, and again and again they came down upon them, destroying the grain, stealing the cattle, and filling the Israelites with terror for their lives.

Gideon was only a boy and he could not understand the reason for all this.

"Why don't we go out and fight them and drive them away?" he asked his mother. "Look! I am big and strong. I could fight."

But his mother sighed and shook her head.

"No, no, son," she said. "They are too many for us. And

we have no leader. Our people have forsaken the laws of Jehovah, and have become idol worshipers like the people about us. Ah, if we but had a leader, brave and true and trusting in Jehovah, like Moses and Joshua of old."

"Tell me stories of Moses and Joshua," begged Gideon, and his mother told him fascinating tales her grandfather had told her of Moses who had led the people out of Egypt, and of Joshua who had led them into Canaan.

Gideon, working in the fields, and watching always for the enemies about them, fearing to be surprised and attacked, wished there might be another Moses or another Joshua to lead the Israelite people out against the Midianites, and that he might go with them.

So, working in the fields when he could, and hiding in the caves when the Midianites came down upon them, destroying their grain, stealing their cattle and killing any of the people who could not escape, Gideon grew to be a man.

One day he was beating out grain in the wine press. That was not the right way to do it, but he did it that way so the Midianites would not see him. As he worked he heard a sound, and turning saw some one standing under a great oak tree near him. It was not a Midianite nor a man of Israel. He was a stranger, and though Gideon knew not why, his heart leaped within him as he looked upon this strange visitor.

"I am a messenger from Jehovah," said the stranger.

"He must be an angel," thought Gideon, and bowed down and worshiped him.

"Jehovah has chosen you," said the angel, "to be the leader of Israel. You are to lead the people out and drive away the Midianites."

"Oh, no, no," said Gideon excitedly. "How could I be

chosen for a leader? My father's family is poor in Israel, and I am the least in my father's house."

"But Jehovah knows you are brave and true, and He will be with you and help you."

The angel talked a long time with Gideon, to prove to him that Jehovah had really and truly chosen him to be the leader of Israel against the hosts of Midian.

Then the angel set for Gideon a hard and dangerous task. He was to go in to the city and destroy the altar which the people had built there for their heathen gods. Gideon chose ten men to help him and in the night they cut down and destroyed the altar.

Early in the morning the men of the city saw what had been done, and they began to inquire about it.

"Whoever has done this terrible thing," they said, "shall be put to death."

When they found out that it was Gideon who had cut down the altar, they said to his father, Joash:

"Bring out thy son that he may die."

But Joash said:

"If the heathen gods are angry because their altar has been destroyed, let them put him to death if they are able to do it."

Of course idols have no life nor power nor strength, so Gideon's life was saved.

He sent word to the north and to the south, to the east and to the west, to all the men of Israel to come to help him drive out the Midianites, and thirty-two thousand men gathered together to fight with him.

"There are too many," Jehovah told Gideon, for Jehovah wanted Israel to learn that He would fight their battles for

them, if they would worship Him and trust and obey Him. "Send back all who are afraid."

So Gideon took the men up where they could overlook the camp of the Midianites, and when they saw what a great host was there, many of them became afraid, and twenty-two thousand went back to their homes. This left ten thousand men to fight with Gideon, but Jehovah said:

"There are still too many. When you start out on your march, and come to the brook, watch the men, and those who get down on their knees to drink are to go back, while those who lap the water from their hands as they run, are to go on."

The men had marched a long and weary way, and were tired and thirsty when they came to the brook. Many of them dropped down on their knees and drank long and eagerly, to quench their burning thirst. But some, eager to be on their way to drive out the Midianites, dipped the water in their hands and lapped it as they ran. Soon these men were across the stream, while the others were still on their knees drinking. Gideon told the men who went down on their knees to drink that they might camp there by the brook, and wait while the others went on with him.

When they started again on their march, Gideon counted the men who were with him, and there were only three hundred men to go up against that great host of the Midianites.

"Never fear," said Jehovah. "By the three hundred that lapped will I save you and deliver the Midianites into thine hand."

That night Gideon took Phurah, his servant, and crept stealthily down through the darkness, to the camp of the enemy. They saw the Midianites camped all along the valley like grasshoppers for multitude, and their camels were without number as the sands by the sea. As Gideon looked at them

he thought of his little band of only three hundred men, waiting back there in the night, and his heart was filled with fear.

He and Phurah crept closer and they heard two of the sentinels talking softly.

"Last night I had a strange dream," said one, "and it worries me. I dreamed I saw a loaf of barley bread roll down the hill into our camp and overturn a tent."

"You may well worry," said the other man, "for that means that the great army of Israel is come out against us, to slaughter us and drive us out of their land."

Gideon smiled in the darkness as he and Phurah slipped away.

"They think we have a great army," he whispered. "They are afraid of us. Jehovah is on our side and we shall conquer."

Gideon returned to his three hundred brave men and gave them new courage, saying:

"Jehovah hath delivered into your hands the hosts of Midian."

He gave to every man his weapons; strange weapons they seemed: an empty pitcher and a torch. He divided his three hundred into three companies, one hundred in each company. Gideon led one company, and sent the other two companies to different sides of the camp of the Midianites.

"Whatever I and my company do," he commanded, "do thou likewise."

In the dark when all the camp of the Midianites were asleep except the sentinels, Gideon led his little band of brave and valiant men down to the camp.

Suddenly the deep silence of the night was broken by a great crash which wakened all the Midianites and filled them

with terror. How could they know that it was only the pitchers in the hands of the men of Israel, all broken at the same time? How could they know that the dazzling flare of light was not a great fire consuming their camp, but merely torches in the hands of three hundred men.

These three hundred men were blowing upon their trumpets with a great noise, and shouting with all their might, "The sword of the Lord and Gideon." And with a terrible fear in their hearts, the Midianites ran from their tents, each man drawing his sword as he ran. Thinking that the enemy was in their midst, they plunged swords into any one who came near them in the darkness, and killed great numbers of their own people.

So it happened that when the morning came, the only living people left in the valley were Gideon and his brave three hundred. Now they could go back to the people of Israel and tell them that the enemy was gone, and that they could safely live in their own homes and till their fields and raise their cattle.

And I think that perhaps Gideon went home to his mother's house, and that she put her arms about him and said:

"My brave, brave son! You are a great leader in Israel like unto Moses and Joshua."

And that Gideon shook his head and said: "No, no, mother, it was not I but Jehovah who delivered us from the Midianites."

Dick Whittington and His Cat

(Carolyn Sherwin Bailey)

There was once a little boy whose name was Richard Whittington; but everybody called him Dick. He had been all alone in the world ever since he was a baby, and the people who had the care of him were very poor. Dick was not old enough to work, and so he had a hard time of it indeed. Sometimes he had no breakfast, and sometimes he had no dinner.

In the town where Dick lived the people were always talking about London. None of them had ever been to the great city, but they seemed to know all about the wonderful things which were to be seen there.

Dick wished that he could go to London.

One day a big wagon drawn by eight horses, all with bells on their heads, drove into the little town. Dick saw the wagon standing by the inn, and he thought that it must be going to the fine city of London. When the driver came out and was ready to start, Dick ran up and asked if he might walk by the side of the wagon. And when the driver learned how poor Dick was, with no father, nor mother, he told him that he might do as he liked.

It was a long walk for the little lad; but by and by he came to the city of London. He was in such a hurry to see the wonderful sights that he forgot to thank the driver of the wagon. He ran as fast as he could from one street to another, until he was tired, and could run no farther. By and by Dick

grew so faint and weary that he could go no farther. He sat down by the door of a fine house and wished he were back again in the little town where he was born.

Just then the master of the house, whose name was Mr. Fitzwarren, came home to dinner. When he saw the ragged little fellow at his door he said, "My lad, what are you doing here?"

"I should like to work," Dick said, "if I could find anything to do."

"Poor little fellow!" said Mr. Fitzwarren. "Come in, and I will see what I can do for you." And he ordered the cook to give the lad a good dinner and then to find some light work for him to do.

So Dick carried out the ashes, washed the dishes, swept the floor and brought in the wood. His bed was in a garret at the top of the house, far away from the rooms where the other people slept. There were many holes in the floor and walls, and every night a great number of rats and mice came in. They tormented Dick so much that he did not know what to do.

One day a gentleman gave Dick a penny for cleaning his shoes, and he made up his mind that he would buy a cat with it. The very next morning he met a girl who was carrying a cat in her arms.

"I will give you a penny for that cat," said Dick.

"All right," the girl said; "you may have her, and you will find that she is a good mouser, too!"

Dick hid his cat in the garret, and every day he carried a part of his dinner to her. It was not long before she had driven away all the rats and mice, and Dick could sleep soundly every night.

Some time after that, a ship that belonged to Mr. Fitzwarren was about to start on a voyage across the sea. It was loaded with goods which were to be sold in lands far away. Mr. Fitzwarren wanted to give his servants a chance for good fortune, too, and so he called all of them into the parlor, and asked if they had anything they would like to send out in the ship for trade.

Every one had something to send—every one but Dick.

"I have nothing in the world," he said, "but a little cat which I bought for a penny."

"Fetch your cat, then," said Mr. Fitzwarren, "and let her go out. Who knows but what she will bring you some profit."

So Dick, with tears in his eyes, carried poor puss down to the ship, and gave her to the captain and everybody laughed at his queer venture.

Mr. Fitzwarren's ship made a long voyage, and at last reached a strange land on the other side of the sea. The people had never seen any white people before, and they came in great crowds to buy the fine things with which the ship was loaded, and it was not long before the King sent word for the Captain to come to the palace.

The Captain came. He was shown into a beautiful room, and given a seat on a rich carpet all flowered with silver and gold. The King and Queen were seated not far away; and soon a number of dishes were brought in for dinner. They had scarcely begun to eat when an army of rats and mice rushed in and devoured all the meat before any one could hinder them. The Captain wondered at this, and asked if it were not very unpleasant to have so many rats and mice about.

"Oh, yes!" said one of the servants. "It is indeed unpleasant, and the King would give half his treasure if he could get rid of them."

The Captain jumped for joy. He remembered the cat which little Dick Whittington had sent out; and he told the King that he had a little creature on board his ship who would soon make short work of the pests.

Then it was the King's turn to jump for joy; and he jumped so high that his yellow turban dropped off his head.

"Bring the creature to me," he said; "if she will do what you say, I will load your ship with gold."

The Captain pretended to be very sorry to part with the cat; but at last he went down to the ship to get her, while the King and Queen made haste to order another dinner.

The Captain, with puss under his arm, reached the palace just in time to see the table crowded again with rats. The cat leaped out upon them, and oh, what havoc she made among them! Most of them were soon stretched dead upon the floor, while the rest scampered away to their holes, and did not dare to come out again.

The King had never been so glad in his life; and the Queen asked that the creature who had done so much good might be brought to her. The Captain called, "Pussy, pussy, pussy!" and the cat came up and rubbed against his legs. At first the Queen was afraid to touch her, but the Captain put her down on the Queen's lap where she purred and purred until she went to sleep.

The King at once made a bargain with the Captain for all the goods on board the ship; and then he gave him ten times as much for the cat as all the rest came to.

Then the Captain bade the King and Queen good-bye, and the very next day set sail for England.

One morning Mr. Fitzwarren was sitting at his desk in his office. He heard some one tap at his door and he said, "Who's

there?"

"A messenger," was the answer. "I have come to bring you news of your ship."

Mr. Fitzwarren jumped up quickly and opened the door. Whom should he see waiting there but the Captain with a bill of lading in one hand and a box of jewels in the other. He was full of joy as he told the story of the cat and showed the rich present which the King and Queen had sent Dick in payment. As soon as Mr. Fitzwarren heard the Captain's story he sent for Dick.

Dick was scouring the pots when word was brought to him that he should go to the office.

"Oh, I am so dirty," he said, "and my shoes are full of hob-nails," but he was told to make haste.

Mr. Fitzwarren ordered a chair to be set for him, and Dick began to think they were making fun of him.

"I beg that you won't play tricks with a poor boy like me," he said. "Please let me go back to my work."

"Mr. Whittington," said Mr. Fitzwarren, "this is no joke at all. The Captain has sold your cat, and has brought you in return for her more riches than I have in the whole world."

Then he opened the box of jewels, and showed Dick his treasures.

The poor boy did not know what to do. He begged his master to take a part of it; but Mr. Fitzwarren said, "No, it is all your own, and I feel sure that you will make good use of it."

But Dick was too kind-hearted to keep everything for himself. He gave presents to the Captain and the sailors and to all the servants. Then Dick had his face washed, and his

hair curled, and he was dressed in a nice suit of clothes; and he was as handsome a lad as ever walked the streets of London.

Do you wonder what became of him? Why, he became a great merchant in London. Three times did the people make him Lord Mayor, and then King Henry V made him a knight. He built a famous archway near London, and for three hundred years, one could see, cut in stone at the top of the arch—Sir Richard Whittington and his good little cat.

The Lame Boy

(Ella Lyman Cabot)

He was little. He was lame. He was only six years old. His mother was a poor washerwoman, and they lived in a tiny room on a narrow street of a great city.

All day long he sat in his high chair, looking down into the narrow street. He could see, by leaning forward, a bit of blue sky over the tall warehouse opposite. Sometimes a white cloud would drift across the blue. Sometimes it was all dull gray.

But the street was more interesting. There were people down there. In the early morning men and women were hurrying to their work. Later the children came out, and played on the sidewalk and in the gutters. Sometimes they danced and sang, but often they were quarrelsome. In the spring came the hand-organ man, and then everybody seemed happy.

The boy's sad little face looked out all day long. Only when he saw his mother coming did he smile and wave his hand.

"I wish I could help you, mother," he said one night. "You work so hard, and I can't do anything for you."

"Oh, but you do!" she cried quickly. "It helps me to see your face smiling down at me from the window. It helps me to have you wave your hand. It makes my work lighter all day to think you will be there waving to me when I go home."

"Then I'll wave harder," said the little fellow.

And the next night a tired workman, seeing the mother look up and answer the signal, looked up too. Such a little, pinched face as he saw at the high window; but how cheery the smile was!

The man laughed to himself and waved his cap, and the boy, a little shyly, returned the greeting.

So it went. The next evening the workman nudged his comrade to look up at the "poor little chap sitting, so patient, at the window," and again the gay smile shone out as two caps waved in the air below him.

Days came and passed, and the boy had more friends. Men and women went out of their way to send a greeting to him. Life didn't seem quite so hard to them when they thought how dreary it must be for him. Sometimes a flower found its way to him, or an orange, or a colored picture. The children stopped quarreling when they saw him watching them, and played games to amuse him. It pleased them to see how eager he was to share in their good times.

"Tell the lad we couldn't get on without him," said one of the weary laborers to the mother one night. "'Tis a great thing to have a brave heart. It makes us all brave, too. Tell him that."

And you may be sure she did.

Partners

(James Baldwin)

Little Mackie, as his friends called him, was an inmate of the Hospital for Crippled Children. He was a small boy and his years were few, yet his face was already drawn and seamed with lines of suffering. One of his feet was twisted and the other almost useless; yet he could hobble around very nimbly on his crutches, and he took great pleasure in helping other boys who were worse off than himself.

His particular friend was Dannie O'Connell, whose cot adjoined his own. Dannie was a helpless little fellow, with legs that were no better than none and a back so weak that he could not sit up without props. Many were the hours which little Mackie spent at Dannie's bedside, and many were the words of encouragement and hope that he poured into the ears of the helpless child.

"We're partners, Dannie," he would say. "When I get bigger I'll be a bootblack down on the Square, and you and me'll go halvers in the profits."

"But what could I do?" queried Dannie. "I couldn't help with the business. Why, I can't even hold myself up."

"Oh, you'll be lots better by that time," answered the ever hopeful Mackie. "I'll get you a high chair with wheels under it, so that I can trundle you around. And I'll get a little candy stand at the corner for you to 'tend to. I'll shine 'em up for the fine gentlemen that come that way, and you'll sell candy

to the ladies. They'll all want to trade with you when they see you sitting there in your high chair."

"I think it will be very nice," sighed Dannie; and he lay gazing up toward the ceiling and trying to forget his troubles.

"Of course it will be nice," said Mackie; "and don't you forget that we'll be partners."

One night when all the children were in their cots an alarm was sounded. What could it mean? Soon the cry of fire was heard, and then a great rushing and hurrying in the halls and on the stair ways. Little Mackie jumped up and seized his crutches, and all the other boys in the ward began to cry out in alarm. But their nurse soothed them and told them that they need not be afraid, for she was quite sure that the fire was in a distant part of the building, and would soon be put out.

Little Mackie lay down again, but he kept his eyes wide open. "Hey, Dannie, partner," he whispered, very softly, "don't be scared. I'm watching out for you, and the nurse says there's no danger."

The noise outside grew louder, and there was more of it. Mackie could hear the people running. He could hear the children screaming in the other wards. Soon he saw the red light of the flames shining through the narrow window above the door. Then he smelled the smoke and saw it coming into the room through every crevice and crack. The nurse turned pale with fear and did not seem to know what to do.

Then three men rushed in—firemen with big hats on their heads and waterproof capes on their shoulders. Each took two children in his arms and with the fainting nurse hurried away through the strangling smoke.

"Be brave! We'll be back for you in a minute," said one of them as he ran past Dannie and Mackie.

The two "partners" were left alone in the room. Mackie could hear the crackling and roaring of the flames. He could even see them creeping along the floor and licking up the carpet in the lower hallway. He could feel their hot breath. In another minute they would reach the wooden stairs, and then how could any one ever come up to save the children that were still in the wards?

"Run, Mackie!" cried Dannie, trying in vain to sit up. "I guess they forgot to come back. Run, Mackie, and don't wait for me."

"No, I don't run, so long as you're my partner," said Mackie.

He was leaning on his crutches by the side of Dannie's cot.

"Put your arms round my neck, Dannie. That's how. Now hold on, tight! Snuggle your face down over my shoulder. That's right; now we'll go. Hold fast, and don't swallow any more smoke than you can help, Dannie."

Clack! clack! clack! Through the smothering smoke the little crutches clattered out of the room and into the burning hallway. And Dannie, with his arms clasped around his partner's neck, and his shriveled legs dangling helplessly behind, was borne half-fainting through the fearful din.

Clack! clack! clack! Mackie was so short and his head was so near to the floor that he escaped the thickest part of the smoke, which rolled in clouds toward the ceiling. He hurried to the stairway, keeping his face bent downward and his eyes half closed. He did not dare to speak to Dannie, for he had no breath to spare.

Outside of the building there were many busy hands and many anxious faces.

"Have all the children been saved?" asked one of the managers of the hospital.

"Oh, sir, not all," was the sad answer. "There were a few in the upper wards who could not be saved, the fire spread so rapidly. And there are still two little boys in the lower ward whom it is impossible to reach."

"Surely those boys ought to be rescued," cried the manager. "Won't some one try to reach them?"

"Sir," answered a helper who had already carried ten children out of the flaming building, "it is too late. The stairways are all blazing, and the ward itself is full of fire."

In fact, the flames could now be seen bursting out of every window.

Clack! clack! clack!

What sound was that on the marble steps before the smoke-filled door of the doomed hospital? It was not a loud noise, but those who stood nearest heard it quite plainly amid all the other sounds, the snapping of the burning wood, the roaring of the flames, the falling of heavy timbers.

Then right out from beneath the cloud of smoke came little Mackie, bearing Dannie upon his shoulders. Helping hands were stretched forth to receive him, and the brave lad fell fainting in the arms of a big policeman.

Dannie was scarcely harmed at all, though dreadfully frightened. But Mackie's poor hands were badly scorched and his eyebrows were singed off. His nightshirt was burned through in a dozen places. His bare, crippled feet were blistered by the fallen coals he had stepped upon. His little body was full of hurts and burns. Kind arms carried him to a place of safety; but for a long time he lay senseless to all that was happening around him.

When at last he awoke to consciousness his first thought was to inquire for Dannie. Then, as he turned painfully in the little bed where they had laid him, he closed his eyes again and said, "Me and Dannie are partners, don't you know?"

Why He Carried the Turkey

(James Baldwin)

In Richmond, Virginia, one Saturday morning, an old man went into the market to buy something. He was dressed plainly, his coat was worn, and his hat was dingy. On his arm he carried a small basket. "I wish to get a fowl for tomorrow's dinner," he said.

The market man showed him a fat turkey, plump and white and ready for roasting.

"Ah! that is just what I want," said the old man. "My wife will be delighted with it."

He asked the price and paid for it. The market man wrapped a paper round it and put it in the basket.

Just then a young man stepped up. "I will take one of those turkeys," he said. He was dressed in fine style and carried a small cane.

"Shall I wrap it up for you?" asked the market man.

"Yes, here is your money," answered the young gentle man; "and send it to my house at once."

"I cannot do that," said the market man. "My errand boy is sick today, and there is no one else to send. Besides, it is not our custom to deliver goods."

"Then how am I to get it home?" asked the young gentleman.

"I suppose you will have to carry it yourself," said the market man. "It is not heavy."

"Carry it myself! Who do you think I am? Fancy me carrying a turkey along the street!" said the young gentleman; and he began to grow very angry.

The old man who had bought the first turkey was standing quite near. He had heard all that was said.

"Excuse me, sir," he said; "but may I ask where you live?"

"I live at Number 39, Blank Street," answered the young gentleman; "and my name is Johnson."

"Well, that is lucky," said the old man, smiling. "I happen to be going that way, and I will carry your turkey, if you will allow me."

"Oh, certainly!" said Mr. Johnson. "Here it is. You may follow me."

When they reached Mr. Johnson's house, the old man politely handed him the turkey and turned to go.

"Here, my friend, what shall I pay you?" said the young gentleman.

"Oh, nothing, sir, nothing," answered the old man. "It was no trouble to me, and you are welcome."

He bowed and went on. Young Mr. Johnson looked after him and wondered. Then he turned and walked briskly back to the market.

"Who is that polite old gentleman who carried my turkey for me?" he asked of the market man.

"That is John Marshall, Chief Justice of the United States. He is one of the greatest men in our country," was the answer.

The young gentleman was surprised and ashamed. "Why

did he offer to carry my turkey?" he asked.

"He wished to teach you a lesson," answered the market man.

"What sort of lesson?"

"He wished to teach you that no man should feel himself too fine to carry his own packages."

"Oh, no!" said another man who had seen and heard it all. "Judge Marshall carried the turkey simply because he wished to be kind and obliging. That is his way."

The Little Loaf

(Ella Lyman Cabot)

Many years ago, there was a great famine in Germany, and the poor people suffered from hunger. A rich man who loved children sent for twenty of them and said to them: "In this basket there is a loaf of bread for each of you. Take it and come back again every day till the famine is over. I will give you a loaf each day."

The children were very hungry. They seized the basket and struggled to get at the largest loaf. They even forgot to thank the man who had been kind to them. After a few minutes of quarreling and snatching for bread, every one ran away with his loaf except one little girl named Gretchen. She stood there alone at a little distance from the gentleman. Then, smiling, she took up the last loaf, the smallest of all, and thanked him with all her heart.

Next day the children came again, and they behaved as badly as ever. Gretchen, who would not push with the rest, received only a tiny loaf scarcely half the size of the others. But when she came home and her mother began to cut the loaf, out dropped six shining coins of silver.

"Oh, Gretchen!" exclaimed her mother, "this must be a mistake. The money does not belong to us. Run as quick as you can and take it back to the gentleman."

So Gretchen carried it back, but when she gave the gentleman her mother's message, he said: "No, no, it was not

a mistake. I had the silver baked into the smallest loaf in order to reward you. Remember that the person who is contented to have a small loaf rather than quarrel for a larger one will find blessings that are better than money baked in bread."

The Three Cakes

(Carolyn Sherwin Bailey)

Once upon a time there was a little boy named Henry, who was away from his home at a boarding school.

He was a very special kind of boy, forever at his book, and he happened once to get to the very tip top of his class. His mother was told of it, and when it came morning, she got up early and went to speak with the cook as follows:

"Cook, you are to make a cake for Henry, who has been very good at school."

"With all my heart," said the cook, and she made a cake. It was as big as—let me see—as big as the moon. It was stuffed with nuts, and raisins, and figs, and candied fruit peel, and over it all was an icing of sugar, thick, and smooth, and very white. And no sooner was the cake home from the baking than the cook put on her bonnet and carried it to the school.

When Henry first saw it, he jumped up and down. He was not patient enough to wait for a knife, but he fell upon the cake tooth and nail. He ate and ate until school began, and after school was over he ate again with his might and main. At night he ate until bedtime, and he put the cake under his bolster when he went to bed and he waked and waked a dozen times that he might take a bite.

But the next day when the dinner bell rang, Henry was not hungry, and was vexed to see how heartily the other children ate. His friends asked him if he would not play at cricket,

tan, or kits. Ah! Henry could not; so they played without him, and Henry could scarcely stand upon his legs. He went and sat down in a corner, and the head master sent for the apothecary to come with all his phials of physic. After some days Henry was well again, but his mother said that she would never let him have another cake.

Now there was another scholar in the same school, whose name was Francis. He had written his mother a very pretty letter without one misspelled word or blot, and so his mother, like the mother of Henry, sent him a great cake.

Francis decided that he would not be so unwise as to follow the example of Henry, so he took the cake, which was so heavy that he could hardly lift it, and he watched to see that no one was looking, and he slipped up to his chamber and put the cake in his box under lock and key. Every day at play time he used to slip away from his companions, go upstairs on tiptoe, and cut off a tolerable slice of his cake which he would eat by himself. For a whole week did he keep this up, but alas —the cake was so exceedingly large! At last the cake grew dry, and quickly after it became moldy. Finally the maggots got into it, and Francis, with great reluctance, was obliged to throw it away.

There was a third little gentleman who went to the same school as Henry and Francis, and his name was Gratian. One day his mother, whom he loved very dearly, sent him a cake because she also loved him. No sooner had it arrived than Gratian called his friends all about him, and said: "Come! Look at what my mother has sent me. You must, each one, have a piece." So the children all got around the cake as bees resort to a flower, just blown, and Gratian divided the cake with a knife into as many pieces as he had invited boys, with one piece over, for himself. His own piece he said he would eat the next day, and he began playing games with the boys.

But a very short time had passed, as they were playing, when a poor man who was carrying a fiddle came into the school yard. He had a very long, gray beard, and he was guided by a little dog who went before him, for the old man was blind.

The children noticed how dexterous was the little dog in leading, and how he shook a bell which hung underneath his collar, as if to say:

"Do not throw down or run against my master!"

When the two had come into the yard, the old man sat down upon a stone, and said: "My dear little gentlemen, I will play you all the pretty tunes that I know, if you will give me leave."

The children wished for nothing half so much as to hear the music, so the old man put his violin in tune and then played over jigs and tunes that had been new in former times.

But Gratian, who was standing close to him, noticed that while he played his jolliest airs, a tear would often roll down his cheeks. And Gratian asked him why he wept.

"Because," said the old man, "I am hungry. I have not any one in the world to feed me, or my faithful dog."

Then Gratian felt like crying, too, and he ran to fetch the cake which he had saved to eat himself. He brought it out with joy, and as he ran along he said:

"Here, good man, here is some cake for you." Then Gratian put the cake into the old man's hands and he, laying down his fiddle, wiped his eyes and began to eat. At every piece he put into his mouth he gave a bit to his faithful little dog, who ate from his hand; and Gratian, standing by, had as much pleasure as if he had eaten the cake himself.

The Little Hero of Haarlem

(Sara Cone Bryant)

A long way off, across the ocean, there is a little country where the ground is lower than the level of the sea, instead of higher, as it is here. Of course the water would run in and cover the land and houses, if something were not done to keep it out. But something is done. The people build great, thick walls all round the country, and the walls keep the sea out. You see how much depends on those walls—the good crops, the houses, and even the safety of the people. Even the small children in that country know that an accident to one of the walls is a terrible thing. These walls are really great banks, as wide as roads, and they are called "dikes."

Once there was a little boy who lived in that country, whose name was Hans. One day, he took his little brother out to play. They went a long way out of the town, and came to where there were no houses, but ever so many flowers and green fields. By-and-by, Hans climbed up on the dike, and sat down; the little brother was playing about at the foot of the bank.

Suddenly the little brother called out, "Oh, what a funny little hole! It bubbles!"

"Hole? Where?" said Hans.

"Here in the bank," said the little brother; "water's in it."

"What!" said Hans, and he slid down as fast as he could to where his brother was playing.

There was the tiniest little hole in the bank. Just an air-hole. A drop of water bubbled slowly through.

"It is a hole in the dike!" cried Hans. "What shall we do?"

He looked all round; not a person or a house in sight. He looked at the hole; the little drops oozed steadily through; he knew that the water would soon break a great gap, because that tiny hole gave it a chance. The town was so far away—if they ran for help it would be too late; what should he do? Once more he looked; the hole was larger, now, and the water was trickling.

Suddenly a thought came to Hans. He stuck his little forefinger right into the hole, where it fitted tight; and he said to his little brother, "Run, Dieting! Go to the town and tell the men there's a hole in the dike. Tell them I will keep it stopped till they get here."

The little brother knew by Hans' face that something very serious was the matter, and he started for the town, as fast as his legs could run. Hans, kneeling with his finger in the hole, watched him grow smaller and smaller as he got farther away.

Soon he was as small as a chicken; then he was only a speck; then he was out of sight. Hans was alone, his finger tight in the bank.

He could hear the water, *slap, slap, slap*, on the stones; and deep down under the slapping was a gurgling, rumbling sound. It seemed very near.

By-and-by, his hand began to feel numb. He rubbed it with the other hand; but it got colder and more numb, colder and more numb, every minute. He looked to see if the men were coming; the road was bare as far as he could see. Then the cold began creeping, creeping, up his arm; first his wrist, then his arm to the elbow, then his arm to the shoulder; how cold it was! And soon it began to ache. Ugly little cramp-pains

streamed up his finger, up his palm, up his arm, till they reached into his shoulder, and down the back of his neck. It seemed hours since the little brother went away. He felt very lonely, and the hurt in his arm grew and grew. He watched the road with all his eyes, but no one came in sight. Then he leaned his head against the dike, to rest his shoulder.

As his ear touched the dike, he heard the voice of the great sea, murmuring. The sound seemed to say—

"I am the great sea. No one can stand against me. What are you, a little child, that you try to keep me out? Beware! Beware!"

Hans' heart beat in heavy knocks. Would they never come? He was frightened.

And the water went on beating at the wall, and murmuring, "I will come through, I will come through, I will get you, I will get you, run—*run*—before I come through!"

Hans started to pull out his finger; he was so frightened that he felt as if he must run for ever. But that minute he remembered how much depended on him; if he pulled out his finger, the water would surely make the hole bigger, and at last break down the dike, and the sea would come in on all the land and houses. He set his teeth, and stuck his finger tighter than ever.

"You shall NOT come through!" he whispered, "I will NOT run!"

At that moment, he heard a far-off shout. Far in the distance he saw a black something on the road, and dust. The men were coming! At last, they were coming. They came nearer, fast, and he could make out his own father, and the neighbours. They had pickaxes and shovels, and they were running. And as they ran they shouted, "We're coming; take heart, we're coming!"

The next minute, it seemed, they were there. And when they saw Hans, with his pale face, and his hand tight in the dike, they gave a great cheer—just as people do for soldiers back from war; and they lifted him up and rubbed his aching arm with tender hands, and they told him that he was a real hero and that he had saved the town.

When the men had mended the dike, they marched home like an army, and Hans was carried high on their shoulders, because he was a hero. And to this day the people of Haarlem tell the story of how a little boy saved the dike.

The Surveyor and the Little Boy

(Ella Lyman Cabot)

One spring day, a young surveyor, eighteen years of age, was eating his dinner with some companions in a forest in Virginia. Suddenly the sylvan stillness was startled by the piercing shrieks of a woman. The young surveyor sprang to his feet and leaped to the woman's side. "My boy! My boy! Oh, my darling boy is drowning and they will not let me rescue him," screamed the frantic mother as she tried to escape from the men who held her from springing into the rapids.

"No, we will not let her go," cried the men, "for she would be instantly killed on the sharp rocks and could not rescue her boy!"

"Why does not one of you rescue him then?" said the manly fellow eighteen.

"We are not ready to die yet," the men replied.

"O sir, won't you do something?" cried the mother to the young surveyor.

For an instant he stood measuring the rocks and the whirling rapids with his eye, and then, throwing off his coat, he plunged into the roaring torrent where he had caught sight of the drowning boy. With stout heart and steady hand he struggled against the seething waters which each moment threatened to engulf him or dash him to pieces against the sharp-pointed rocks. Just as they thought both would go over the falls the young engineer clutched the little fellow and swam

with him to the shore.

Then amid the praises of those who had witnessed his heroism, mingled with the gratitude of the overjoyed mother, he placed the unconscious but saved little boy in her arms. "God will reward you, young man," said the mother; "God will reward you some day for your heroism, and many will praise you for what you have done this day!"

And so it was; for this young surveyor who saved the little boy was George Washington.

William Tell and His Son

(Mrs. Charles Lane)

The sun already shone brightly as William Tell entered the town of Altorf, and he advanced at once to the public place, where the first object that caught his eyes was a handsome cap, embroidered with gold, stuck upon the end of a long pole. Soldiers were walking around it in silence, and the people of Altorf, as they passed, bowed their heads to this new sign of power. The cap had been set up by Gessler, the Austrian commander, for the purpose of discovering those who would not obey the Austrian power, which had ruled the people of the Swiss Cantons for a long time with great severity. He suspected that the people were about to break into rebellion, and with a view to learn who were the most discontented, he had placed the royal cap of Austria on his pole, publicly proclaiming that everyone passing near, or within sight of it, should bow before it, in proof of his homage to Austria.

Tell was much surprised at this new and strange attempt to humble the people, and, leaning on his cross-bow, gazed scornfully on them and the soldiers. Berenger, captain of the guard, at length observed this man, who alone amidst the bowing crowd carried his head erect. He ordered him to be seized and disarmed by the soldiers, and then conducted him to Gessler, who put some questions to him, which he answered so boldly that Gessler was both surprised and angry. Suddenly, he was struck by the likeness between him and the boy Walter Tell, whom he had seized and put in prison the

previous day for uttering some bold words; he quickly asked his name, which no sooner heard than he knew him to be the archer so famous, and the best marksman in the Canton.

Gessler at once resolved to punish both father and son at the same time, by an act which was perhaps the very worst method of torture which man ever thought of. As soon, then, as the youth was brought out, the governor turned to Tell, and said: "I have often heard of thy great skill as an archer, and I now intend to put it to the proof. Thy son shall be placed at a distance of a hundred yards, with an apple on his head. If thou strikest the apple with thy arrow, I will pardon you both; but if thou refusest this trial, thy son shall die before thine eyes."

Tell begged Gessler to spare him so cruel a trial, in which he might perhaps kill his beloved boy with his own hand. The governor would not alter his purpose; so Tell at last agreed to shoot at the apple, as the only chance of saving his son's life. Walter stood with his back to a linden tree. Gessler, some distance behind, watched every motion. His cross-bow and one arrow were handed to Tell; he tried the point, broke the weapon, and demanded his quiver. It was brought to him and emptied at his feet. He stooped down, and taking a long time to choose an arrow, he managed to hide a second in his girdle.

After being in doubt a long time, his whole soul beaming in his face, his love for his son rendering him almost powerless, he at length roused himself—drew the bow—aimed—shot—and the apple struck to the core, was carried away by the arrow.

The market-place of Altorf was filled by loud cheers. Walter flew to embrace his father, who, overcome by his emotion, fell fainting to the ground, thus exposing the second arrow to view. Gessler stood over him, awaiting his recovery, which speedily taking place, Tell rose, and turned away from

the governor in horror. The later, however, scarcely yet believing his sense, thus addressed him: "Wonder archer, I will keep my promise; but what needed you with that second arrow which I see in your girdle?"

Tell replied: "It is the custom of the bowmen of Uri to have always an extra one."

"Nay, nay," said Gessler, "tell me thy real reason; and, whatever it may have been, speak frankly, and thy life is spared."

"The second shaft," replied Tell, "was to pierce thy heart, tyrant, if I had chanced to harm my son."

The Burning of the Rice Fields

(Sara Cone Bryant)

Once there was a good old man who lived up on a mountain, far away in Japan. All round his little house the mountain was flat, and the ground was rich; and there were the rice fields of all the people who lived in the village at the mountain's foot. Mornings and evenings, the old man and his little grandson, who lived with him, used to look far down on the people at work in the village, and watch the blue sea which lay all round the land, so close that there was no room for fields below, only for houses. The little boy loved the rice fields, dearly, for he knew that all the good food for all the people came from them; and he often helped his grandfather watch over them.

One day, the grandfather was standing alone, before his house, looking far down at the people, and out at the sea, when, suddenly, he saw something very strange far off where the sea and sky meet. Something like a great cloud was rising there, as if the sea were lifting itself high into the sky. The old man put his hands to his eyes and looked again, hard as his old sight could. Then he turned and ran to the house. "Yone, Yone!" he cried, "bring a brand from the hearth!"

The little grandson could not imagine what his grandfather wanted of fire, but he always obeyed, so he ran quickly and brought the brand. The old man already had one, and was running for the rice fields. Yone ran after. But what was his horror to see his grandfather thrust his burning brand into

the ripe dry rice, where it stood.

"Oh, Grandfather, Grandfather!" screamed the little boy, "what are you doing?"

"Quick, set fire! Thrust your brand in!" said the grandfather.

Yone thought his dear grandfather had lost his mind, and he began to sob; but a little Japanese boy always obeys, so though he sobbed, he thrust his torch in, and the sharp flame ran up the dry stalks, red and yellow. In an instant, the field was ablaze, and thick black smoke began to pour up, on the mountain side. It rose like a cloud, black and fierce, and in no time the people below saw that their precious rice fields were on fire. Ah! how they ran! Men, women, and children climbed the mountain, running as fast as they could to save the rice; not one soul stayed behind.

And when they came to the mountain top, and saw the beautiful rice-crop all in flames, beyond help, they cried bitterly, "Who has done this thing? How did it happen?"

"I set fire," said the old man, very solemnly; and the little grandson sobbed, "Grandfather set fire."

But when they came fiercely round the old man, with "Why? Why?" he only turned and pointed to the sea. "Look!" he said.

They all turned and looked. And there, where the blue sea had lain, so calm, a mighty wall of water, reaching from earth to sky, was rolling in. No one could scream, so terrible was the sight. The wall of water rolled in on the land, passed quite over the place where the village had been, and broke, with an awful sound, on the mountain-side. One wave more, and still one more, came; and then all was water, as far as they could look, below; the village where they had been was under the sea.

But the people were all safe. And when they saw what the old man had done, they honored him above all men for the quick wit which had saved them all from the tidal wave.

Dolly Madison

(Ella Lyman Cabot)

"Dolly," asked President Madison of his wife, "have you the courage to stay here till I come back tomorrow or next day?"

"I am not afraid of anything if only you are not harmed and our army succeeds," was her reply.

"Good-bye, then, take care of yourself, and if anything happens, look out for the Cabinet papers," said the President, and rode away to where the militia was gathering.

There was good reason for Mrs. Madison to be anxious about her husband and about the success of the Americans. It was now 1814; America and England had been fighting for two years. Many people thought that the President had been wrong in resorting to war. Letters had been sent him which said, "If this war does not come to an end soon, you will be poisoned." The city of Washington, too, was in great danger. Four days earlier a messenger had ridden up at full speed to say, "Fifty British ships are anchoring off the Potomac." Nearly all the men hurried to the front to try to oppose the enemy. People in Washington were carrying their property away to the country. Still the little lady at the White House did not run away. She had the public papers to guard, and she would not go.

Besides the papers, there was another of the nation's treasures in the house, a fine portrait of George Washington by

the famous artist, Gilbert Stuart. The son of Washington's stepson came to Mrs. Madison to plan for its safety. "Whatever happens, that shall be cared for," she had promised him.

At last a note came to her from the President. "The enemy are stronger than we heard at first," it said. "They may reach the city and destroy it. Be ready to leave at a moment's warning."

Most of her friends had already gone, but her faithful servants were with her. "Bring me as many trunks as my carriage will hold," she ordered; and then she set to work to fill them with the Declaration of Independence and the other papers that were of value to the whole nation.

Night came, but there was no rest for the lady of the White House. As soon as the sun rose, she was at the windows with a spy-glass, gazing in every direction and hoping to catch a glimpse of her husband. All she could see was clouds of dust, here and there a group of soldiers wandering about, and little companies of frightened women and children, hurrying to the bridge, across the Potomac. She began to hear the roar of cannon, and she knew that a battle was going on; still the President did not come. There was nothing to do but wait. It was of no use to pack the silver and other valuables, for every wagon had been seized long before, and not one was left for even the wife of the President.

At three o'clock two men covered with dust galloped up and cried, "You must fly, or the house will be burned over your head."

"I shall wait here for the President," was her reply.

A wagon came rumbling along. Some good friends had at last succeeded in getting it for her. She had it filled with silver and other valuables. "Take them to the Bank of Maryland," she ordered; but she said to herself, "The Bank of Maryland

or the hands of the British—who knows which it will be?"

Two or three friends came to hurry her away. "The British will burn the house," they said. "They will take you prisoner; they boast that they will carry the President and his wife to England and make a show of them."

They were almost lifting her to her carriage, when she said, "Not yet. The picture of Washington shall never fall into the hands of the enemy. That must be taken away before I leave the house." This picture was in a heavy frame that was firmly screwed to the wall, and with what tools were at hand it could not easily be loosened. "Get an axe and break the frame," Mrs. Madison bade her servants. This was done, the canvas was taken from the stretcher, carefully rolled up, and sent to a safe place. Then the carriage with Mrs. Madison was driven rapidly away.

She left the house none too soon, for the British were upon the city. They broke into the White House. They stole what they could carry off with them, and set fire to the rest. They fired the navy yard, the Treasury building, the public libraries, and the new Capitol.

At night a fearful tempest swept over the city. Trees were blown down and houses were unroofed. When the storm burst, Mrs. Madison was pleading for shelter at a little tavern sixteen miles from Washington. She had seen the President, and he had told her to meet him at this place. The house was full of people who had fled from the city. "Stay out," they cried. "Your husband brought on this war, and his wife shall have no shelter in the same house with us." At last, however, they let her in. The President found his way to her later, almost exhausted; but before he had had an hour of rest, a man threw open the door, so out of breath that he could only gasp, "The British—they know you are here—fly!" Mrs. Madison begged him to go, and finally he yielded and escaped to a little

hut in the woods where he could be safe. "I will disguise myself and go to some safer place," she promised; and in the first gray of the morning she left the tavern. On the way she heard the best of news: "The British heard that reinforcements were coming and they have gone to their ships." Then she turned around and drove toward the city; but when she came to the bridge over the Potomac, it was afire. An American officer stood by. "Will you row me across the river?" she begged, for a little boat was moored to the bank. "No," he replied, "we don't let strange women into the city." In vain she pleaded, but he was firm. "Who knows what you are?" he demanded roughly. "We have had spies enough here. How do I know but the British have sent you to burn what they left? You will not cross the river—that is sure."

"But I am Mrs. Madison, the wife of your President," she said, and threw off her disguise.

Even then he could hardly be persuaded to row her across, but finally he yielded. Through clouds of smoke she made her way past heaps of smouldering ruins to the home of her sister, where she awaited the coming of the President.

Such were five days in the life of a "first lady of the land."

Margaret of New Orleans

(Ella Lyman Cabot)

If you ever go to the beautiful city of New Orleans, go to the old business part of the city, where there are banks and shops and hotels, and look at a statue which stands in a little square there. It is the statue of a woman, sitting in a low chair, with her arms around a child, who leans against her. The woman is not at all pretty: she wears thick, common shoes, a plain dress, with a little shawl, and a sun-bonnet; she is stout and short, and her face is a square-chinned face; but her eyes look at you like your mother's.

Now there is something very surprising about this statue: it was the first one that was ever made in this country in honor of a woman. Even in old Europe there are not many monuments to women, and most of the few are to great queens or princesses, very beautiful and very richly dressed. You see, this statue in New Orleans is not quite like anything else.

It is the statue of a woman named Margaret. Her whole name was Margaret Haughery, but no one in New Orleans remembers her by it, any more than you think of your dearest sister by her full name; she is just Margaret. This is her story, and it tells why people made a monument for her.

When Margaret was a tiny baby, her father and mother died, and she was adopted by two young people as poor and as kind as her own parents. She lived with them until she grew up. Then she married, and had a little baby of her own. But very soon her husband died, and then the baby died too, and

Margaret was all alone in the world. She was poor, but she was strong, and knew how to work.

All day, from morning until evening, she ironed clothes in a laundry. And every day, as she worked by the window, she saw the little motherless children from the orphan asylum, near by, working and playing about. After a while, there came a great sickness upon the city, and so many mothers and fathers died that there were more orphans than the asylum could possibly take care of. They needed a good friend, now. You would hardly think, would you, that a poor woman who worked in a laundry could be much of a friend to them? But Margaret was. She went straight to the kind Sisters who had the asylum and told them she was going to give them part of her wages and was going to work for them, besides. Pretty soon she had worked so hard that she had some money saved from her wages. With this, she bought two cows and a little delivery cart. Then she carried her milk to her customers in the little cart every morning; and as she went, she begged the left-over food from the hotels and rich houses, and brought it back in the cart to the hungry children in the asylum. In the very hardest times that was often all the food the children had.

A part of the money Margaret earned went every week to the asylum, and after a few years that was made very much larger and better. And Margaret was so careful and so good at business that, in spite of her giving, she bought more cows and earned more money. With this, she built a home for orphan babies; she called it her baby house.

After a time, Margaret had a chance to get a bakery, and then she became a bread-woman instead of a milk-woman. She carried the bread just as she had carried the milk, in her cart. And still she kept giving money to the asylum. Then the great war came, our Civil War. In all the trouble and sickness

and fear of that time, Margaret drove her cart of bread; and somehow she had always enough to give the starving soldiers, and for her babies, besides what she sold. And despite all this, she earned enough so that when the war was over she built a big steam factory for her bread. By this time everybody in the city knew her. The children all over the city loved her; the business men were proud of her; the poor people all came to her for advice. She used to sit at the open door of her office, in a calico gown and a little shawl, and give a good word to everybody, rich or poor.

Then, by and by, one day, Margaret died. And when it was time to read her will, the people found that with all her giving, she had still saved a great deal of money, and that she had left every cent of it to the different orphan asylums of the city—each one of them was given something. Whether they were for white children or black, for Jews, Catholics, or Protestants, made no difference; for Margaret always said, "They are all orphans alike." And just think, dears, that splendid, wise will was signed with a cross instead of a name, for Margaret had never learned to read or write!

When the people of New Orleans knew that Margaret was dead, they said, "She was a mother to the mother-less; she was a friend to those who had no friends; she had wisdom greater than schools can teach; we will not let her memory go from us." So they made a statue of her, just as she used to look, sitting in her own office door, or driving in her own little cart. And there it stands today, in memory of the great love and the great power of plain Margaret Haughery, of New Orleans.

The Little Persian

(Mrs. Charles Lane)

There lived in Persia many hundred years ago a famous scholar and saint whose name was Abdul Kaudir (ab'dool ka'der).

When he was still a little boy, he longed to go to the great city of Bagdad, to study and grow wise. His mother consented to his plan, and, when he had made ready for his journey, she said to him, "My son, promise me that whatever happens to you in the days that are to come, you will never tell a lie."

And when he had promised, she said: "Under your coat I have sewed forty gold coins. This is your share of the money which your father left to me. Spend it as wisely as you can, for I can give you no more."

Then she blessed him and bade him good-bye, and he set out for Bagdad.

On the way the caravan with which he was traveling was attacked by sixty robbers. One of them asked the boy if he had any money.

"I have forty gold coins sewed under my coat," said Abdul.

The robber laughed, for he thought the boy must be jesting with him.

Presently another asked the boy the same question, and turned away laughing when he received the same answer.

At last the boy was brought before the robber chief.

"How much money have you, my little fellow?" he asked.

"I have already told two of your people," said Abdul. "I have forty gold coins carefully sewed under my coat. This is all the money I have in the world."

The chief ordered that the coat should be ripped open, and the money was found.

"How came you to tell me so frankly," he said to the lad, "of what has been so carefully hidden?"

"Because," said Abdul Kaudir, "I promised my mother that I would never say what was false."

"Child," said the robber chief, "you are more faithful to your mother's teachings than I have been to God's. Give me your hand. From this day I will lead my men in the path of honesty and virtue as I have led them in crime."

The Honest Farmer

(Ella Lyman Cabot)

There was a war in Germany long ago and thousands of soldiers were scattered over the country. A captain of cavalry, who had a great many men and horses to feed, was told by his colonel that he must get food from the farms near by. The captain walked for some time through the lonely valley, and at last knocked at the door of a small cottage. The man who opened it looked old and lame. He leaned on a stick.

"Good-day, sir," said the captain. "Will you kindly show me a field where my soldiers can cut the grain and carry it off for our army?" The old man led the soldiers through the valley for about a mile, and in the distance they saw a field of barley waving in the breeze.

"This is just what we want. We'll stop here," exclaimed the captain.

"No, not yet," said the old man. "You must follow me a little further."

After another mile or two, they came to a second field of barley. The soldiers alighted, cut down the grain, tied it in sheaves, and rode away with it.

Then the captain said to the old farmer: "Why did you make us walk so far? The first field of barley was better than this one."

"That is true, sir," answered the honest old man; "but it was not mine."

The Persian and His Three Sons

(Mrs. Charles Lane)

There was once a Persian ruler who had three sons. The father owned a beautiful pearl, and he wished to give it to that one of his sons who had shown himself the noblest. Accordingly, he called them all together, and asked each of them what had been the most praiseworthy deed he had performed during the last three months.

The eldest son spoke first. He said: "On my journey last week I was entrusted with a number of valuable jewels. The merchant who sent them took no account of them. One or two would never have been missed, and I might easily have made myself rich. But I did no such thing. I carried the parcel as safely as if it had been my own."

"My son," said the father, "you were honest, it is true, and you have done well. But you could hardly have acted otherwise without shame."

Then the second son spoke. He said: "As I was walking the other day, I saw a child playing by the lake, and, while I watched him, he fell in. I swam in after him, and saved him."

"You also have done your duty," said the old man; "but you could hardly have left the child to drown."

It was now the third son's turn. He said: "As I crossed the mountains the other day, I saw near the edge of a dangerous precipice a man who has hated me and has done me harm. He had sat down to rest, and had fallen asleep. I would have

passed on my way without a word, but something within me called to me to go back and wake him. This I did, knowing all the time that he would not understand and that he would be angry with me, as indeed he was."

"My son," cried the father, "the pearl is yours! To do good, without hope of favor or reward, to those who have wronged us, is to be truly noble."

The Lover of Men

(James Baldwin)

In the Far East there was once a prince whose name was Gautama. He lived in a splendid palace where there was everything that could give delight. It was the wish of his father and mother that every day of his life should be a day of perfect happiness.

So this prince grew up to be a young man, tall and fair and graceful. He had never gone beyond the beautiful gardens that surrounded his father's palace. He had never seen nor heard of sorrow or sickness or poverty. Everything that was evil or disagreeable had been carefully kept out of his sight. He knew only of those things that give joy and health and peace.

But one day after he had become a man, he said: "Tell me about the great world which, you say, lies outside of these palace walls. It must be a beautiful and happy place; and I wish to know all about it."

"Yes, it is a beautiful place," was the answer. "In it there are numberless trees and flowers and rivers and waterfalls, and other things to make the heart glad."

"Then tomorrow I will go out and see some of those things," he said.

His parents and friends begged him not to go. They told him that there were beautiful things at home—why go away to see other things less beautiful? But when they saw that his mind was set on going, they said no more.

The next morning, Gautama sat in his carriage and rode

out from the palace into one of the streets of the city. He looked with wonder at the houses on either side, and at the faces of the children who stood in the doorways as he passed. At first he did not see anything that disturbed him; for word had gone before him to remove from sight everything that might be displeasing or painful.

Soon the carriage turned into another street, a street less carefully guarded. Here there were no children at the doors. But suddenly, at a narrow place, they met a very old man, hobbling slowly along over the stony way.

"Who is that man?" asked Gautama, "and why is his face so pinched and his hair so white? Why do his legs tremble under him as he walks, leaning upon a stick? He seems weak, and his eyes are dull. Is he some new kind of man?"

"Sir," answered the coachman, "that is an old man. He has lived more than eighty years. All who reach old age must lose their strength and become like him, feeble and gray."

"Alas!" said the prince. "Is this the condition to which I must come?"

"If you live long enough," was the answer.

"What do you mean by that? Do not all persons live eighty years, yes, many times eighty years?"

The coachman made no answer, but drove onward.

They passed out into the open country and saw the cottages of the poor people. By the door of one of these a sick man was lying upon a couch, helpless and pale.

"Why is that man lying there at this time of day?" asked the prince. "His face is white, and he seems very weak. Is he also an old man?"

"Oh, no! He is sick," answered the coachman. "Poor

people are often sick."

"What does that mean?" asked the prince. "Why are they sick?"

The coachman explained as well as he was able; and they rode onward.

Soon they saw a company of men toiling by the roadside. Their faces were browned by the sun; their hands were hard and gnarly; their backs were bent by much heavy lifting; their clothing was in tatters.

"Who are those men, and why do their faces look so joyless?" asked the prince. "What are they doing by the roadside?"

"They are poor men, and they are working to improve the king's highway," was the answer.

"Poor men? What does that mean?"

"Most of the people in the world are poor," said the coachman. "Their lives are spent in toiling for the rich. Their joys are few; their sorrows are many."

"And is this the great, beautiful, happy world that I have been told about?" cried the prince. "How weak and foolish I have been to live in idleness and ease while there is so much sadness and trouble around me. Turn the carriage quickly, coachman, and drive home. Henceforth, I will never again seek my own pleasure. I will spend all my life, and give all that I have, to lessen the distress and sorrow with which this world seems filled."

This the prince did. One night he left the beautiful palace which his father had given to him and went out into the world to do good and to help his fellow men. And to this day, millions of people remember and honor the name of Gautama, as that of the great lover of men.

Sir Philip Sidney

(James Baldwin)

A cruel battle was being fought. The ground was covered with dead and dying men. The air was hot and stifling. The sun shone down without pity on the wounded soldiers lying in the blood and dust.

One of these soldiers was a nobleman, whom everybody loved for his gentleness and kindness. Yet now he was no better off than the poorest man in the field. He had been wounded, and would die; and he was suffering much with pain and thirst.

When the battle was over, his friends hurried to his aid. A soldier came running with a cup in his hand.

"Here, Sir Philip," he said, "I have brought you some clear, cool water from the brook. I will raise your head so that you can drink."

The cup was placed to Sir Philip's lips. How thankfully he looked at the man who had brought it! Then his eyes met those of a dying soldier who was lying on the ground close by. The wistful look in the poor man's face spoke plainer than words.

"Give the water to that man," said Sir Philip quickly; and then, pushing the cup toward him, he said, "Here, my comrade, take this. Thy need is greater than mine."

What a brave, noble man he was! The name of Sir Philip Sidney will never be forgotten; for it was the name of a

Christian gentleman who always had the good of others in his mind. Was it any wonder that everybody wept when it was heard that he was dead?

It is said, that, on the day when he was carried to the grave, every eye in the land was filled with tears. Rich and poor, high and low, all felt that they had lost a friend; all mourned the death of the kindest, gentlest man that they had ever known.

The Price of a Song

(Sophie Woods)

In one of the great tenement houses in Paris, a cobbler lived in the basement, and just above him, on the first floor, a very rich man. The cobbler was poor but happy. He sang all day as he made or mended shoes.

The rich man had much money, and at night he lay awake planning how to invest it so as to make more, and often wondering if it were all quite safe.

Usually it was morning when he fell asleep. But the cobbler was up at daylight and began his work and his singing almost as soon as he could see.

This troubled the rich man, and he said to a wise friend: "What am I to do? I can't sleep at night for thinking about my money, and I can't sleep in the morning because of that cobbler's singing."

Together they formed a plan.

Next day the rich man came down to the basement where the cobbler was working and singing as usual. The cobbler was glad when he saw him come in. "Now," thought he, "I shall have an order for a fine pair of boots, and he will pay me well for my work."

But the rich man had another purpose in his mind.

He carried a small bag in his hand. Out of it he took a purse and gave it to the cobbler, saying: "I have brought you

one hundred crowns as a present."

The astonished cobbler said: "I cannot take the money, sir, I have done nothing to earn it. Why do you give it to me?"

"Because you are the happiest man I know, and the most contented."

"It is to be all mine, and you will never ask for it again?"

"Never."

"O, thank you, sir, thank you. You are so very kind."

After the rich man had gone, the delighted cobbler was about to count the money, when he saw a man in the street looking in through the window. He hastily put the purse into his pocket, went into his bedroom, and poured the coins on the bed. He had never seen so much money before, and he began to be anxious as to where he should hide it for safe-keeping.

The sudden coming of his wife into the room scared him so that he covered the money quickly, and scolded her for the first time in his life. He hid the purse under the pillow, and left the door open so that he could see the spot from his work-bench. Then he thought that since he could see it, others might see it. He changed it to the foot of the bed. An hour later he put it under the sheets.

His wife asked what was wrong with the bed, and the fret-ful cobbler told her to mind her own business—as if the care of beds was not her business. He kept moving the purse from place to place, growing more anxious each day. The foolish man began to suspect even his own wife. He no longer sang as he worked. His friends saw that he left his bench every hour or so.

But the rich man was happy. He slept long and soundly each morning. Day after day he rejoiced at the success of his

plan.

When a week had passed, the cobbler could bear his worry no longer. He told his wife the whole story. That day he carried the purse up to the rich man's office, put it upon the desk and said: "Here is your money, sir. I cannot live without my song."

The Boy Whose Dreams Came True

(Arthur Spaulding)

Long, long time ago there lived a boy named Joseph. He had ten half brothers, and he had one own brother, and he had a father; but he had no mother, for his mother was dead.

And now that he had no mother, his father loved him very much, but his half brothers hated him. His father made him a beautiful coat of many colors, such as none of his brothers had; and so they hated him all the more. And his father used to tell him stories, wonderful stories; for his father was a wonderful man, who had dreamed dreams, and seen angels, and talked with God. And little Joseph used to wish he could dream dreams, just as his father had. And so one night, he did. He dreamed that he was out in the harvest field, binding wheat with his brothers, and his sheaf stood right up in the middle, and all his brothers' sheaves came around and bowed down to his sheaf. And that meant that his brothers should bow down to him. Then he went and told this dream to his brothers. But they scowled at him, and they said, "Do you think you will rule over us?" And they hated him all the more.

Then another night he dreamed another dream. He dreamed that he stood out under the sky, and the sun and the moon and the eleven stars bowed to him. And that meant that his brothers, and their mother, and their father should all bow down to him. Then he went and told this dream to his brothers. But they scowled at him, and they shook their fists at him; and they said, "Do you think that we and our mother and your father will come and bow down to you?"

And they hated him yet more and more.

Then one day, the ten half brothers all went far away to Shechem, with their sheep; and they were gone for many, many days. So their father sent Joseph to find them. And he walked and he walked.

He walked all day, till he came to Shechem. But he didn't find them there. Then a man told him they were at Dothan. And he walked and he walked and he walked till he came to Dothan; and there he saw them. And they saw him. They saw him coming, all tired out and hungry; but they didn't pity him a bit, for they hated him. And they said: "Here comes this dreamer. Let's kill him, and tell our father that some beast killed him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams."

So they caught him, and they scowled at him, and they struck him, and they pulled off his beautiful coat of many colors, and they threw him down into a deep hole, and left him there to die.

But pretty soon they saw some merchants coming; and they pulled Joseph up out of the hole, and sold him to the merchants for a slave. Poor Joseph begged them not to sell him; but they would not hear, for they hated him.

The merchants took Joseph away off into Egypt, and there they sold him for a slave. But he grew to be a great man in Egypt, till he was next to the king. And one day, when there was a famine over all the land, his ten wicked brothers came down to Egypt to buy corn. And they came to Joseph, who was ruler over all the land. But they didn't know it was Joseph, for he had grown to be a man; and besides, they thought Joseph must be dead. So they came and bowed down to him, just as his dreams had said they would. He was good to them. He didn't tell them he was Joseph; but he gave them corn, and he sent back their money with them. But he said they must bring their youngest brother with them the next time

they came.

So the next time they came, they brought his brother. And when they started to go home this time, Joseph put his silver cup in his brother's sack, and then he sent a man after them to catch them and bring them back, as though they had stolen his cup. And he said that the one in whose sack the cup was found should be his slave. He said this to try them; for he wanted to know if they hated his brother as they had hated him, and if they would let that brother be a slave, too. Then they all came and fell down before him again, and one of them, whose name was Judah, begged him to let their brother go, for he said it would kill their father to lose this son too. And Judah said he would stay in his place, and be a slave.

Then Joseph knew that they were no more so cruel as they had been to him.

He sent back their money with them.

And he burst out crying, and said: "I am Joseph. Does my father yet live?" Then they were so frightened they didn't know what to say. But Joseph said: "Don't be afraid. I will not hurt you. I will help you."

And he came and kissed his brother, and then he kissed them all; for he had forgiven them.

And Joseph told them to go and get his father, and bring him down to Egypt, and to get all their families, and he would care for them while the famine lasted. So they went and got their father and all their families, and came down to Egypt. And they all bowed down before Joseph; and so his dreams came true. But Joseph bowed down before his father, and he kissed him, and he took him and he took them all, and he gave them houses, and he gave them pastures, and he gave them fields, all in the best part of the land. So he took care of them, and they were happy all their lives.

Picciola

(James Baldwin)

Many years ago there was a poor gentleman shut up in one of the great prisons of France. His name was Charney, and he was very sad and unhappy. He had been put into prison wrongfully, and it seemed to him as though there was no one in the world who cared for him.

He could not read, for there were no books in the prison. He was not allowed to have pens or paper, and so he could not write. The time dragged slowly by. There was nothing that he could do to make the days seem shorter. His only pastime was walking back and forth in the paved prison yard. There was no work to be done, no one to talk with.

One fine morning in spring, Charney was taking his walk in the yard. He was counting the paving stones, as he had done a thousand times before. All at once he stopped. What had made that little mound of earth between two of the stones?

He stooped down to see. A seed of some kind had fallen between the stones. It had sprouted; and now a tiny green leaf was pushing its way up out of the ground. Charney was about to crush it with his foot, when he saw that there was a kind of soft coating over the leaf.

"Ah!" said he. "This coating is to keep it safe. I must not harm it." And he went on with his walk.

The next day he almost stepped upon the plant before he

thought of it. He stooped to look at it. There were two leaves now, and the plant was much stronger and greener than it was the day before. He staid by it a long time, looking at all its parts.

Every morning after that, Charney went at once to his little plant. He wanted to see if it had been chilled by the cold, or scorched by the sun. He wanted to see how much it had grown.

One day as he was looking from his window, he saw the jailer go across the yard. The man brushed so close to the little plant, that it seemed as though he would crush it. Charney trembled from head to foot.

"O my Picciola!" he cried.

When the jailer came to bring his food, he begged the grim fellow to spare his little plant. He expected that the man would laugh at him; but although a jailer, he had a kind heart.

"Do you think that I would hurt your little plant?" he said. "No, indeed! It would have been dead long ago, if I had not seen that you thought so much of it."

"That is very good of you, indeed," said Charney. He felt half ashamed at having thought the jailer unkind.

Every day he watched Picciola, as he had named the plant. Every day it grew larger and more beautiful. But once it was almost broken by the huge feet of the jailer's dog. Charney's heart sank within him. "Picciola must have a house," he said. "I will see if I can make one."

So, though the nights were chilly, he took, day by day, some part of the firewood that was allowed him, and with this he built a little house around the plant.

The plant had a thousand pretty ways which he noticed. He saw how it always bent a little toward the sun; he saw how

the flowers folded their petals before a storm.

He had never thought of such things before, and yet he had often seen whole gardens of flowers in bloom.

One day, with soot and water he made some ink; he spread out his handkerchief for paper; he used a sharpened stick for a pen—and all for what? He felt that he must write down the doings of his little pet. He spent all his time with the plant.

"See my lord and my lady!" the jailer would say when he saw them.

As the summer passed by, Picciola grew more lovely every day. There were no fewer than thirty blossoms on its stem.

But one sad morning it began to droop. Charney did not know what to do. He gave it water, but still it drooped. The leaves were withering. The stones of the prison yard would not let the plant live.

Charney knew that there was but one way to save his treasure. Alas! how could he hope that it might be done? The stones must be taken up at once.

But this was a thing which the jailer dared not do. The rules of the prison were strict, and no stone must be moved. Only the highest officers in the land could have such a thing done.

Poor Charney could not sleep. Picciola must die. Already the flowers had withered; the leaves would soon fall from the stem.

Then a new thought came to Charney. He would ask the great Napoleon, the emperor himself, to save his plant.

It was a hard thing for Charney to do—to ask a favor of the man whom he hated, the man who had shut him up in

this very prison. But for the sake of Picciola he would do it.

He wrote his little story on his handkerchief. Then he gave it into the care of a young girl, who promised to carry it to Napoleon. Ah! if the poor plant would only live a few days longer!

What a long journey that was for the young girl! What a long, dreary waiting it was for Charney and Picciola!

But at last news came to the prison. The stones were to be taken up. Picciola was saved!

The emperor's kind wife had heard the story of Charney's care for the plant. She saw the handkerchief on which he had written of its pretty ways.

"Surely," she said, "it can do us no good to keep such a man in prison."

And so, at last, Charney was set free. Of course he was no longer sad and unloving. He saw how God had cared for him and the little plant, and how kind and true are the hearts of even rough men. And he cherished Picciola as a dear, loved friend whom he could never forget.

The Fiery Furnace

(Isabel Byrum)

One time Nebuchadnezzar made a very large image out of gold. It took a great deal of labor to make it, and it was higher than a very tall tree. It was placed out of doors, and the king sent for all the great and rich people to come and see it. And he said all the captains, governors, and judges must be there.

Now Nebuchadnezzar had made judges of the three young men that were with Daniel, and they were obliged to come and see the golden image.

When all the people were gathered around the image, a man cried, "O people, when the music begins, you must all fall down and worship the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar has set up." And the man said that whoever would not fall down and worship should be cast into a burning fiery furnace. This was a place like a large oven full of fire. What a terrible threat!

At the appointed time the music began, and the people fell down before the image and worshiped it—that is, all except Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Then some men came to Nebuchadnezzar and said, "O king, live forever." And then they asked if he did not say that whoever would not fall down and worship the image should be cast into the fiery furnace. Then they told him that there were three Jews who had not done this.

It made Nebuchadnezzar very angry not to be obeyed, and

so called these men and said, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?" Nebuchadnezzar said he would give them one more chance, and then if they still refused to worship the image, they must be cast into the furnace.

But they answered, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, king. But if not, be it known unto thee, king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Oh, how angry this made Nebuchadnezzar! His face grew dark with rage, and he commanded his men to heat the furnace seven times more than they usually did. The young men were then bound and thrown into the fire.

The heat was so great that those who threw the men into the furnace died before they could get away; but the three young men fell down into the midst of the fire.

Then as the king was watching to see them burn up, he rose suddenly and asked, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered, "True, king." But he said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Then Nebuchadnezzar went to the mouth of the furnace and called, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither." And they came forth out of the fire.

"And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell

of fire had passed on them."

Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

"Therefore I make a decree. That every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

"Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon." Dan. 3:27-30.

A Hero of Valley Forge

(James Baldwin)

It was winter at Valley Forge. Indeed, it was that famous and dreadful winter when Washington and his little army of patriots were encamped there. Half-clad, half-fed, chilled by the raw, cold winds, is it not a wonder that these brave men did not lose all hope and disperse to their homes? Every one of them performed a golden deed when he kept up his courage and stuck to his post and thus did his part towards keeping the American army together. But the hero of whom I shall tell you was not a soldier; he did not even believe it right to fight.

One day a Tory, who was well known in the neighborhood, was captured and brought into the camp. His name was Michael Wittman, and he was accused of having carried aid and information to the British in Philadelphia. He was taken to West Chester and there tried by court-martial. It was proved that he was a very dangerous man and that he had more than once attempted to do great harm to the American army. He was pronounced guilty of being a spy and sentenced to be hanged.

On the evening of the day before that set for the execution, a strange old man appeared in Valley Forge. He was a small man with long, snow-white hair falling over his shoulders. His face, although full of kindliness, was sad-looking and thoughtful. His eyes, which were bright and sharp, were upon the ground and lifted only when he was speaking.

Many of the soldiers seemed to know him, for they greeted

him kindly as he passed.

"Who is that old fellow?" asked a young sergeant from Virginia.

"Why, he is one of our best friends," was the answer. "He lives at the Dunker settlement, over near Lancaster, and many are the wounded soldiers that he has nursed and brought to life. He has a hospital there of his own, and if I were hurt or sick I shouldn't want any better place to go. He doesn't believe in fighting, but he surely believes in helping the fighters."

"Yes," said another soldier, "but the worst of it is that he would just as leave nurse a sick Britisher as a sick American. All are the same to him."

Then, one after another, the soldiers began to give the old man's history.

His name was Peter Miller.

He was the finest scholar in the thirteen colonies. He had translated the Declaration of Independence into seven European languages, and the Continental Congress had sent copies of these translations into every country where they could be read.

He had charge of a printing press in the Dunker settlement.

He had translated into English a wonderful German book and had printed it upon his own press. The book was a huge thing, so large and heavy that a man would not wish to carry more than one volume at a time. And what do you think it was about?

It was entitled "The Martyrs' Mirror," and was mostly about the cruelties of war. Its object was to show that all fightings are wrong and unnecessary.

To translate it and print it was the work of three years, and it is said that during all that time Peter Miller never slept more than four hours a night.

"I think I have seen that wonderful book," said a soldier. "I think I rammed a part of it down my musket when I loaded it yesterday."

"That is very likely," said another. "About a week ago, six of us drove over to the settlement in two wagons, and brought back all the "Martyrs' Mirrors" we could find. The paper makes fine wads for the muskets, and you know that we have almost nothing else that can be used."

In the meanwhile, Peter Miller, with bowed head, had made his way to the door of Washington's headquarters.

His name was announced.

"Peter Miller?" said Washington. "Certainly. Show him in, at once."

The old man went in, scarcely raising his eyes to meet the welcoming and inquiring look of the general.

"General Washington, I have come to ask a great favor of you," he said, in his usual kindly tones.

"I shall be glad to grant you almost anything," said Washington; "for we surely are indebted to you for many favors. Tell me what it is."

"I hear," said Peter, "that Michael Wittman has been found guilty of treason and that he is to be hanged at Turk's Head tomorrow. I have come to ask you to pardon him."

Washington stared back, and a cloud came over his face. "That is impossible," he said. "Wittman is a bad man. He has done all in his power to betray us. He has even offered to join the British and aid them in destroying us. In these times we

dare not be lenient with traitors; and for that reason, I am sorry that I cannot pardon your friend."

"Friend!" cried Peter. "Why, he is no friend of mine. He is my bitterest enemy. He has persecuted me for years. He has even beaten me and spit in my face, knowing full well that I would not strike back. Michael Wittman is no friend of mine."

Washington was puzzled. "And still you wish me to pardon him?" he asked.

"I do," answered Peter. "I ask it of you as a great personal favor."

"Tell me," said Washington, with hesitating voice, "why is it that you thus ask the pardon of your worst enemy?"

"I ask it because Jesus did as much for me," was the old man's brief answer.

Washington turned away and went into another room. Soon he returned with a paper on which was written the pardon of Michael Wittman.

"My dear friend," he said, as he placed it in the old man's hands, "I thank you for this example of Christian charity."

It was a matter of fifteen miles, by the shortest road, from Valley Forge to West Chester which was then known as Turk's Head; and the road at that time was almost impassable. The evening was already far gone, and Michael Wittman was to be hanged at sunrise in the morning. How was the pardon to reach him in time to save his life?

The matter was so important that Peter would not entrust its management to any other person. With the pardon safely folded in his pocket he set out on foot for Turk's Head. All night long, through snow and slush and along unbeaten paths, he toiled. In the darkness he lost his way, and wandered far from the road. When day broke, he was not yet at the end of

his journey.

Old and feeble though he was, he began to run. From the top of a little hill a welcome sight appeared. The straggling village of Turk's Head was just before him, and the sun had not yet risen. He saw a commotion in the street; men were hurrying toward the village green; a body of soldiers was already there, drawn up in order beneath a tree.

Summoning all his strength, Peter ran on and soon entered the village. Close to the tree stood Michael Wittman with his hands tied behind him. A strong rope was dangling from one of the branches.

In another minute the sun would begin to peep over the snow-clad hills. An officer had already given orders to place the rope around the traitor's neck. Peter Miller, still running, shouted with all his might.

The officer heard and paused. The crowd looked around and wondered. Panting and out of breath, Peter came up, waving the paper in his hand.

"A pardon! a pardon!" he cried. "A pardon from General Washington!"

The officer took the paper and read it aloud.

"Unbind the prisoner and let him go," he commanded.

Peter Miller had saved the life of his enemy, perhaps of his only enemy. Michael Wittman, with his head bowed upon his breast, went forth a free man and a changed man. The power of Christian charity had rescued him from a shameful death, and the cause of patriotism need have no further fears of being harmed by him.

The Prince's Visit

(Horace Scudder)

It was a holiday in the city, for the Prince was to arrive. As soon as the cannon should sound, the people might know that the Prince had landed from the steamer, and when they should hear the bells ring that was as much as being told that the Prince, dressed splendidly, and wearing a feather in his cap, was actually on his way up the main street of the city, seated in a carriage drawn by four coal-black horses, and with the soldiers and music going on before.

It was holiday in the workshops, too, and little Job was listening for the cannon and the bells. He was only a poor, foolish little lad, and he did nothing all day long but turn the crank that worked a great washing machine; but when he heard the boom of the guns, he shuffled out and made his way home.

Ever since he had heard of the Prince's coming, Job had dreamed of nothing else. He bought a picture of the Prince and pinned it up on the wall over his bed; and when he came home at night, tired and hungry, he would sit down by his mother, who mended holes in the laundry clothes, and talk about the Prince until he could keep his eyes open no longer; and then his mother would kiss him and send him to bed.

Today he hurried so fast that he was quite out of breath when he reached the old house where he lived.

"The cannon went off, mother!" he cried. "The Prince is

come!"

"Everything is ready, Job," said his mother. "You will find all your things in a row on the bed." And Job tumbled into his room to dress for the holiday. Everything was there as his mother had said; all the old things renewed, and all the new things pieced together that she had worked on so long, and every stitch of which Job had overlooked and almost directed.

"Isn't it splendid?" he said as he looked at himself in a mirror. Round his throat was a white satin scarf that shone in contrast to his dingy coat, and it was pinned with an old broach which Job treasured as the apple of his eye.

"If you'd only let me wear the feather, mother," he said.

"You look splendidly, Job, and don't need it," said she cheerfully; "and, besides, the Prince wears one, and what would he think if he saw you with one, too?"

"Sure enough," said Job, and then he kissed her and started off.

"I don't believe," he said as he went up the court, "that the Prince would mind my wearing a feather; but mother didn't want me to. Hark, there are the bells! He must have started!"

It was a long way from Job's house to the main street, and he would have to hurry if he were going to see the grand procession. On he shambled, knocking against the flag-stones, and nearly falling down at every step. He was now in a cross street, which would bring him before long to the main street, and he even thought he heard the distant music and the cheers of the crowd.

But just then he stumbled upon something which tripped him. He would have hurried on, but he heard a cry, and a groan of pain. He looked back, and he saw what he had

stumbled over. It was a poor beggar boy, without home or friends, dirty and unsightly enough, and clad in ragged clothing, and he was lying on the sidewalk, too ill to move. As Job turned, the boy looked up at him and stretched out his hands, but he was too weak to speak.

"He is sick!" said Job. "Hallo!" but every one was intent upon the procession, and no one heard him.

"The Prince is coming," he said; and he turned as if to run. But the beggar would not look away from his eyes.

"He is sick," said Job again, bending down, "I will take him home to mother."

"Hurrah! Hurrah! There he is! The Prince! The Prince!"

In the carriage drawn by four coal-black horses rode the Prince; and he was dressed in splendid clothes and he wore a feather in his cap.

Job wiped the tears from his eyes as he heard the music and the cheering so far away, but he lifted the little beggar boy in his arms—and started for home.

And as he passed along the street with his burden, he heard a sound of beautiful music as if all the angels were singing together, and he looked up into the blue sky above the chimneys and roofs of the city, and he saw the angels with the Prince in the midst of them moving by, and they were all smiling on him, poor, simple Job.

So Job saw the Prince pass, too.

The Last Class

(Carolyn Sherwin Bailey)

That morning, Franz was taking his way very slowly to school. He had a great dread of being scolded, particularly as the school-master had said that the lesson for the day would be on participles about which Franz did not know a word. Suddenly an idea came to him. He would go through the fields.

It was so warm, so clear. He heard the blackbirds whistling on the borders of the wood, and in the meadow, behind the saw-mill, the Prussians were drilling. Then, as he passed on by the residence of the mayor, Franz saw them putting a notice on the gate. There, for two years, had been given out all the bad news; lost battles for Alsace, calls to arms, the orders of the command. The blacksmith and his apprentice were putting up the notice, and Franz called, "What has happened, that they are posting a bulletin again?"

But the blacksmith spoke gruffly, "Why do you loiter, little one? It is not safe. Run along quickly to school."

So Franz made haste at last, although he was sure that the blacksmith was not in earnest, and he arrived all breathless, at his class.

School seemed, somehow, very different to Franz that morning. There was ordinarily a good deal of noise as the children came in from the street, desks were opened, and lessons were repeated out loud and all in unison, and the

school-master pounded with his ruler on the table.

Now, however, there was silence.

Although Franz was late, the school-master looked at him without the least anger, and spoke softly as he said, "Go quickly to your place, my little Franz. We have already begun without you."

Franz seated himself at his desk. Only then, his fear gone, he noticed that the master had on his best green frock coat, his finely plaited shirt and the black silk cap that he never wore except on a day when there were prizes given out in school. All the children were extraordinarily quiet. But what surprised Franz the most was to see at the back of the room, seated on the benches which were ordinarily empty, the people of the village. There was an old soldier with his tri-colored flag, the old mayor of the town, the postman, and many others. Everyone seemed sad. And the old soldier had a spelling book, ragged on the edges, that he held open on his knees, as he followed the pages through his great spectacles.

As little Franz watched all this, astonished, the school-master rose from his chair, and in the same grave, soft voice in which he had spoken to the boy, he said, "My children, this is the last time that I shall teach your class. The order has come from Berlin that no language but German shall be taught in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine. Your new master arrives tomorrow. Today, you will have your last lesson in French. I pray that you will be very attentive."

Franz's last lesson in French! And he could not write it without mistakes! He remembered all the time that he had wasted, the lessons he had missed in hunting for birds' nests, or skating on the river. He thought of his books that would remind him, always now, of his laziness—his grammar, his history, a present from his friend, the school-master, from whom he must part now with so much pain. In the midst of

these thoughts, Franz heard his name called. It was his turn to recite.

He would have given a great deal to be able to recite the famous order of the participles, without a mistake, to give them clearly, and without a fault. But he confused them at the first word, and remained standing beside his desk, his heart trembling, not daring to raise his head. He heard the school-master speaking to him, "I am not going to rebuke you, little Franz. You are already punished. Every day you have said to yourself, 'Bah, I have plenty of time; tomorrow I will study.'

"Ah, that has been the great fault of our Alsace, that of always putting off learning until another day. In the meantime, all the world has been quite right in saying of us, 'How is it that you pretend to be French, and yet are not able to read and write your own language!' Of all who are here, my poor little Franz, you are not the only one at fault. We all must reproach ourselves."

Then the school-master told them of his longing to still teach the children the French language. He said that it would always be the most beautiful language of the world. He said that he wanted it treasured in Alsace and never forgotten, because, when a people fall into slavery it is almost like holding the key to their prison if they can speak to each other in the same tongue. Afterward he took a grammar and went over the lesson with the children. All that he read seemed suddenly quite easy to Franz; he had never attended so well, and never before had he understood how patient the school-master was in his explanations.

When the lesson was finished, writing was begun. For the last day, the master had prepared fresh copies.

France, Alsace, France, Alsace.

The copies were like little flags, floating all over the schoolroom from the tops of the desks. Nothing broke the great silence but the scratching of the pens upon the paper. Suddenly some May bugs flew in through the window, but no one noticed them. On the roof of the school some pigeons began to coo, and Franz thought to himself, "Will it be commanded that the birds, too speak to us in a foreign language?"

From time to time, as Franz lifted his eyes from his paper, he saw the school-master sitting quietly in his chair, and looking all about him, as if he wanted to remember always every child and every bit of furniture in his little schoolroom. Only think, for forty years, he had been there in his place, with the playground facing him, and his class always as full! Only the benches and the desks which had once been polished were worn from usage now; the walnut trees in the yard had grown very large, and the hop vine that he, himself, had planted twined now above the window and as far as the roof. It was breaking the heart of the schoolmaster to leave all these things.

But he had the courage to carry on the class to the very end. After the writing lessons, he began the lesson in history. Afterward, the little ones sang their A. B. C.'s all together and at the end of the room the old soldier took off his spectacles and, holding his spelling book in his two hands, he read off the letters with them.

Suddenly the clock in the tower of the village church sounded the hour of noon. Instantly, the trumpet call of the Prussians, returning from their drilling, burst through the windows. The schoolmaster rose, quite pale, in his place. Never had he seemed so great to the children.

"My friends," he said, "my little friends, I—"

But he could say no more; he was not able to speak the words. He turned to the blackboard and, taking a piece of

chalk, he wrote upon it,

"Vive la France!"

Afterward, he remained there, his head resting against the wall, and without speaking, he made a sign with his hand.

"It is finished. You are dismissed."

Suggested Readings

Circle of Storytelling Friends:
How to Tell Stories

(All of these public domain books can be read for free online at Internet Archive, archive.org.)

Bailey, Carolyn Sherwin. *For the Story Teller: Story Telling and Stories to Tell*. [Springfield: Milton Bradley Co., 1913].

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Stories to Tell

(These collections of stories were recommended by "the storytellers" and can be used freely, as they are in the public domain. You can find them at archive.org.)

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Bailey, Carolyn Sherwin. *Stories of Great Adventure*. [Springfield: Milton Bradley Co., 1919].

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Baldwin, James. *Fifty Famous People* [New York: American Book Co., 1912].

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Dillingham, Elizabeth. *"Tell-it-Again" Stories*. [Boston: Ginn & Co., 1911].

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Libraries of Hope

Forgotten Classics Family Library

(All stories are gathered and republished from the pre-1923 Golden Age of children's literature. Great read-aloud stories or many of them can be adapted for telling. They may be purchased or read online at librariesofhope.com.)

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