

Tales from France and Canada

IMAGINATIVE SERIES

SELECTED AUTHORS

Tales from France and Canada

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Libraries of Hope

Tales from France and Canada

Imaginative Series

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Libraries of Hope, Inc.
Appomattox, Virginia 24522

Website www.librariesofhope.com
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Printed in the United States of America

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Tales from France

Month 5

Cinderella; or, The Little Glass Slipper

Once there was a gentleman who married, as his second wife, a most proud and selfish woman, who had two daughters as overbearing as herself.

He, too, had a daughter—a charming girl, whose disposition was like that of her own mother, who had been loved by all for her gentleness and kindly ways.

When the daughter was christened a fairy had appeared to act as godmother, and as the child grew up it was clear that she had received the best gift of all—a character that could not easily be spoiled.

No sooner were the marriage festivities over than the new wife showed her true character by a violent outburst of temper against her stepdaughter. And all because the well-bred manners of the unfortunate girl made her own rude daughters seem hateful.

She determined to put her stepdaughter in her place, so she set her to do the most menial work of the house, to wash dishes, scour pots and pans and scrub the tables. It was she who had to polish the oak floors of the rooms where Madam and her two fine daughters slept.

A bare garret at the top of the house and a hard straw mattress were her portion, while their ladyships had soft beds, handsome furniture, and great mirrors in which they could see themselves from head to foot.

The poor girl bore it all very patiently. She dared not complain to her father; he would only have scolded her, being completely under his wife's thumb.

When she had finished her work, the poor girl was always so tired that she just sat down in a corner of the wide kitchen

fireplace, with her feet near the ashes for warmth. Because of this, all made game of her; the elder sister called her 'Cinder-scraper'; but the younger, who was not quite so rude, dubbed her 'Cinderella.'

None the less Cinderella, in her poor working clothes, was far more handsome than they in their splendid gowns.

Now it happened that the King's son was to give a ball, and all the nobility were invited. The two sisters were also invited, for the family cut quite a grand figure in the neighbourhood.

As you may suppose, this invitation pleased them mightily, but for Cinderella it meant more hard work, as it was she who ironed the linen her sisters wore, and who goffered their lace frills.

The stepsisters spoke of nothing else but how they would dress for the occasion.

"I," said the elder sister, "will wear my crimson velvet robe newly trimmed with my rare old lace."

"I," said the younger, "shall put on my usual skirt, but I shall wear an over-dress of gold brocade, and my diamond bodice-front, which is not unworthy of notice."

They engaged the services of the most fashionable dress-makers, and they bought their patches from the most noted maker.

They even talked over their attire with Cinderella, for they knew what good taste she had.

She not only gave them excellent advice, but she also offered to dress their hair herself. This offer they accepted gladly, and while she was brushing their tresses they unfeelingly asked her if she, too, would not like to go to the ball.

"Oh! please do not laugh at me!" she exclaimed. "You know that balls are not for the like of me!"

"You are quite right," said the elder sister. "People would roar with laughter if they saw a cinder-scraper entering the ball-room!"

Cinderella's beautiful eyes filled with tears. Any other girl would have revenged herself by dressing their hair badly, but Cinderella's kind heart was proof against the temptation, and she was so skilled that no hairdresser in the town could excel her.

For two whole days the sisters were too much excited to take their food. They broke a dozen laces trying to draw in their waists to make them look slender; they just spent all their time before their mirrors.

At last the great moment arrived. The unfeeling sisters set off in high spirits, with never a thought for Cinderella, who followed them with her eyes as long as she could see them. When the coach was quite out of sight her brave young heart failed her, and she burst into tears.

At that moment her Godmother appeared before her.

"What is the matter, dear child?" she asked.

"I wish… I wish…" Cinderella's sobs choked her voice, and she could get no farther.

"You wish that you also could go to the ball—do you not?" said her Godmother kindly.

"I do… I do…" sobbed Cinderella.

"Well, you are a good girl and I shall see to that," said the Godmother.

She led Cinderella to the hall and bade her go to the garden and fetch a pumpkin.

Cinderella looked for the biggest she could find, and brought it to her Godmother, secretly wondering how a pumpkin could help her to get to the ball.

The Godmother scooped out the inside, leaving only the rind, then she touched this with her magic wand, and lo! in its place stood a gorgeous gilded coach!

Then she went to the mouse-trap and found six mice all alive. Telling Cinderella to raise the trap-door only a little way to let the mice out one at a time, she touched each with her wand as it passed, and changed it into a beautiful horse. Thus

there stood a splendid team of six well-matched dapple-grey horses, which any king might have envied—but there was no coachman!

Cinderella, who had looked on with wonder, now cried: "I will run and see if there is anything in the rat-trap. If there is a rat in it, we might perhaps make a coachman of him!"

"You are right," said the Godmother; "go and see."

Cinderella brought the trap—it had three fine rats in it. Choosing the one that had the longest whiskers, with a touch of her wand the fairy changed him into a stately coachman, with the handsomest moustaches you ever saw.

Then she said: "Go to the garden and bring me the six lizards which you will find behind the watering-pot."

Cinderella brought them, and in a trice they were changed into six footmen with gold-laced liveries, who stepped up behind the coach, bearing themselves with as much dignity as if they had been fine lackeys all their lives.

Pointing to the coach with its splendid trappings, the fairy turned to Cinderella: "There is what is needed to take you to the ball—does it please you?"

"Oh, yes, dear Godmother, but how can I myself go in these ugly old clothes?"

Her Godmother touched her lightly with the wand, and lo! she stood dressed in cloth of gold and silver, all set with sparkling jewels, while a pair of fine glass slippers gave an exquisite finish to her magnificence.

Thus attired Cinderella now seated herself in the coach, but before starting she was warned by her Godmother that she must not stay after midnight, that if she remained at the ball one moment later her coach would again become a pumpkin, her horses would be mice, her footmen lizards, and she would find herself once more in her old clothes.

Cinderella promised faithfully to leave before midnight, and set off with a joyful heart.

Her arrival at the palace made a great stir; word was at

once brought to the King's son that a great princess whom no one knew had come, and he hastened to go himself to receive her.

He reached the courtyard in time to assist her to alight, and taking her hand he conducted her to the ballroom, where the brilliant company was assembled. As they entered there was a sudden hush—the musicians stopped, the dancers stood still, everyone's gaze was riveted on the dazzling beauty of the unknown princess. Then there was a low murmur of voices from every side: "How lovely she is!"

Even the aged King could not take his eyes off her, and he remarked softly to the Queen that it was many years since he had seen anyone so lovely and so lovable.

The ladies took every opportunity of studying the make of her garments, and the dressing of her hair, in order to have them copied if only they could find materials as rich and people clever enough to do it.

The King's son gave Cinderella the place of honour, and led her out as his partner in the dance. She danced so gracefully that everyone admired her more and more.

Delicious refreshments were served—fruits, ices, jellies, and wines—but the Prince quite forgot to eat, his mind being so full of the beautiful stranger, to whom he offered every dainty.

She had seated herself beside her sisters, and she showed them many polite attentions, giving them a share of the good things which the Prince had brought her.

This gave them a pleasant surprise, as they did not in the least recognize Cinderella in the seeming princess who was so gracious to them. The beautiful stranger was still talking to them when she heard the clock strike a quarter to twelve; she rose at once, and making a low curtsey to the company, she retired as quickly as possible.

On returning home Cinderella found her Godmother awaiting her; after thanking her warmly, she told her how

much she wished to go again the next evening, as the King's son had determined to give another ball and had pressed her to come.

She was still telling her Godmother of the happenings at the ball when her two sisters knocked at the door, so she ran to open it for them.

"How late you are!" she exclaimed, rubbing her eyes, yawning and stretching herself as if just newly awakened from sleep, though indeed sleep had not been in her thoughts since their departure.

"If you had been at the ball you would not have felt tired," said one of the sisters.

"There was a beautiful princess there—so beautiful that no one ever saw her equal. She was most polite and attentive to us, and gave us some of the choice dainties which the Prince had given to herself," said the other sister.

Cinderella could hardly hide her joy. She asked them the name of the princess, but they told her that no one knew it—that the King's son was so much in love with her that he would give all he had in the world to know who she was.

Cinderella smiled as she said, "She must have been beautiful indeed! How fortunate you are! Is it not possible for me also to see her? Oh! Miss Charlotte, could you not lend me the yellow frock which you wear every day?"

"Lend my frock to a mean cinder-scraper like you!" exclaimed Charlotte. "You must take me for a fool indeed!"

Cinderella expected some such answer and was quite pleased, for it would have placed her in a very difficult position if her sister had been willing to lend her the frock.

Next evening the two sisters were again at the ball, and so was Cinderella, even more richly dressed than upon the former occasion.

The King's son was constantly at her side, making pleasant little speeches and paying her compliments.

Far from getting weary, Cinderella enjoyed the ball so

much that she completely forgot her Godmother's warning, and the first stroke of twelve rang out when she thought it was only a little after eleven o'clock. She rose in a moment, and fled as lightly as a fawn.

In her haste one of her glass slippers dropped from her foot upon the stair; she could not stop to pick it up, and before she reached the hall the last stroke of twelve had sounded.

The Prince had followed her quickly; not a trace of her could he find but the little glass slipper on the stair. You may be sure that he picked this up with great care.

Cinderella got home quite out of breath, without carriage, horse, or servant, and without a vestige left of all her magnificence, except one slipper like the one she had dropped.

The guards at the palace gate were questioned, but they had seen no princess going out, nor indeed anyone but a young girl who was so poorly dressed that she looked more like a peasant than a fine lady.

When the sisters returned from the ball, Cinderella asked if they had again enjoyed themselves, and if the stranger princess was there.

They said she was, but that, when midnight had struck, she had gone off so hurriedly that she had dropped one of her little glass slippers—the prettiest little thing in the world; that the King's son had picked it up and had done nothing but look at it ever since, thus showing how deeply in love he must be with the beautiful lady to whom it belonged.

They were quite right, for a few days later the King's son had it proclaimed by sound of trumpet that he would wed the lady whose foot the glass slipper would fit exactly.

A gentleman of the court was sent round with the slipper to see it tried on. He took it first to the princesses, next to the duchesses, then to each of the ladies of the court, but all to no purpose. Then he brought it to the two sisters, who did their very best to pull it on, but in vain.

Cinderella, who had been looking on, now said, with a

laugh: "Let me try—perhaps I shall be the lucky girl!" At which the sisters burst into scornful laughter.

The gentleman who carried the slipper looked attentively at Cinderella, whose appearance pleased him very much. "It would only be fair," said he; "my orders are to let every girl try it, till the owner is found."

Making Cinderella sit down, he presented the slipper, and her neat little foot went into it quite easily—indeed, the slipper fitted it like wax.

Great was the amazement of the two sisters, but it was greater still when Cinderella drew the other slipper from her pocket and put it on!

At that moment the Godmother appeared, and with a touch of her wand she changed Cinderella's poor clothes into even more magnificent garments than the former ones.

The two sisters now recognized her as the beautiful stranger they had seen at the ball; they threw themselves at her feet, begging her to forgive all their bad treatment of her.

Cinderella raised them, and kissed them affectionately, saying she forgave them with all her heart, and that she hoped henceforth they would love her.

She then gave her hand to the gentleman, who conducted her with great ceremony to the palace. When the Prince beheld her, in all the magnificence of the attire which her Godmother had bestowed upon her, he thought her more lovely than ever, and a few days later they were married.

Cinderella, who was as kind and good as she was beautiful, gave her two sisters apartments in the palace, and in due course got each of them married to a nobleman of the court.

Little Red Riding Hood

Once in a village by the side of a forest there lived the very prettiest little girl in the whole wide world. Her mother loved her dearly, and her grandmother, who lived in a village on the other side of the wood, just adored her.

The good old woman got a little red cloak with a hood made for her darling, who looked so charming in it that everyone began to call her Little Red-Riding-Hood.

One day, when her mother was baking, hearing that Grandmother was not very well, and knowing that she liked girdle-cakes, she made one specially for her. She also put some newly churned butter in a little pot for her, to tempt her appetite.

These she put in a little basket, covered them neatly with a white napkin, and called Little Red-Riding-Hood.

"I want you to go to your grandmother's, my dear; she is not feeling well. Take her this cake and little pot of fresh butter from me. Say I hope she will enjoy them, and I should like to know how she is."

It was a lovely day, and Little Red-Riding Hood set off gaily, greatly pleased to be sent on such an errand all by herself.

Her road lay through the wood, which, to her, seemed always full of lovely and wonderful things.

The great trees threw patches of dappled shadows across the road, and as she went along she watched the butterflies flitting from flower to flower, the white-tailed rabbits scurrying off into the wood, and the gold-and-green-backed beetles shimmering by the edge of the grass.

A squirrel sprang from tree to tree, as if to keep her

company, peering at her slyly from behind the branches.

Birds sang, insects hummed, and the measured thud of the wood-cutters' axes beat time to the music with which the air was throbbing; everything seemed full of joyous life.

Near the middle of the wood, a great wolf stepped softly into the road, and bade the little girl "Good morning!"

He had seen her coming, and having had nothing to eat for three days would have liked to devour her at once, but he dared not for fear of the wood-cutters.

"Where are you going, my little girl?" he asked.

The poor child, who knew nothing of the danger of waiting to talk to a wolf, answered him at once:

"I am going to my grandmother's with a cake and a pot of butter from my mother."

"Does she live very far from here?"

"Oh! yes, farther than the mill you can see away over yonder; at the first house in the village."

"I think I shall go and see her, too," said the cunning wolf. "I see there are two paths to the village: suppose you take this one and I the other; we could see which one of us would get there first." So saying, the wolf made off as fast as his legs could carry him.

Little Red-Riding-Hood was in no hurry, but gathered some nuts which were growing within her reach, and picked the prettiest flowers she saw, to make a posy for her grandmother, so the wolf easily got to the house long before her.

He knocked—*rat-tat.*

"Who is there?" cried a voice from within.

In as soft a voice as he could, the wolf replied:

"Your Little Red-Riding-Hood, bringing you a girdle-cake and a pot of fresh butter from Mother."

The grandmother, feeling rather faint, had lain down to rest on her bed in the curtained recess.

"Pull the string," she cried, "and the latch will lift."

The wolf pulled the string and the door flew open. In a

moment he sprang on the poor old woman, and swallowed her at one gulp; but her nightcap fell off on the floor.

Shutting the door, the wolf picked up the cap and tied it on, pulling it forward almost over his eyes, but he could not hide his ears, so he got into bed, drew the curtain forward to shade his face, pulled the coverlet up round his head, and lay still, waiting for Red-Riding-Hood.

Now, after the wolf left the little girl in the forest, one of the wood-cutters noticed a movement in the long grass, a little way off, and saw something dark passing swiftly between the bushes. He had heard the day before that a wolf had recently been seen prowling near the forest.

"Ha!" he said to himself, "the brute knows better than to come near men with axes!"

Some time later, standing up for a moment to look around, he spied in the distance a speck of red moving along the road not far from the village.

"It is the Little Red-Riding-Hood going to see her grandmother," thought he. "The old lady will be pleased!"

Next moment he remembered the wolf! Clutching his axe, he ran with long, rapid strides in the direction of the moving red figure, hoping to overtake her before any harm should befall her. He had never run so fast, but he was still a little way off when Red Riding-Hood reached her grandmother's door. She knocked—*rat-tat-tat.*

A strange, hoarse voice asked, "Who is there?"

"What a bad cold poor Grannie has got," thought the little girl, but she answered, quite brightly:

"It is your Little Red-Riding-Hood. I am bringing you a cake which Mother has baked for you, and a little pot of sweet fresh butter to eat with it. I am to take her word how you are."

"Pull the string and the latch will lift," wheezed the wolf.

Little Red-Riding-Hood pulled the string, the door opened, and she went in.

The wolf drew the bed-clothes higher up round his head:

"Put the cake and the pot of butter in the bread-bin, set the basket on the lid, and come and lie down beside me."

Little Red-Riding-Hood did as she was told; then she took off her cloak and climbed on the bed, but suddenly sat back, amazed to see how strange her grandmother looked in her nightclothes. In a tone of wonder, she exclaimed:

"Oh! Grannie, what great, big arms you have got!"

"All the better to hug you with, my child."

"Oh! Grannie, what great legs you have got!"

"All the better to run with, my child."

"Oh! Grannie, what great, big ears you have got!"

"All the better for hearing with, my child."

"Oh! Grannie, what great, big eyes you have got!"

"All the better for seeing with, my child."

"But, Grannie, what terrible teeth you have got!"

"Just the right size for eating you up!"

With this, the wolf opened his great jaws—but hark!—heavy, rapid footsteps—a swift shadow crossing the window—a strong hand on the latch!

With one bound the wolf reached the door, only to be stretched dead on the threshold by the blow of an axe! The woodman was there—but had he been in time to save the inmates of the cottage?

A piteous wail, "My grannie! my grannie! where is my grannie?" showed him that Red Riding-Hood was safe, and, looking around for the old woman, his eye caught the night-cap trailing on the floor, the strings still round the wolfs neck. He understood.

Taking his big clasp-knife from his pocket he opened it, and slit the monster open from head to tail—there lay Grannie!

The woodman lifted her gently out—she was alive and unhurt!

The kettle she had put over the fire before lying down was boiling merrily, and in a very short time they were all three

enjoying a good cup of tea with girdle-cake and fresh butter.

Then, when the grandmother had kissed her darling to her heart's content, the woodman took Little Red-Riding-Hood up in his arms and carried her all the way home through the wood to her mother, who, you may be sure, could not make too much of her.

The Sleeping Beauty

A long time ago there lived a King and Queen, who for many years had no family, and, being very fond of children, they were almost heart-broken at their misfortune.

At last, to their great joy, the Queen had a little daughter.

The news of the birth of a Princess spread rapidly over the whole kingdom. Everyone kept holiday for a week. Bonfires blazed on the hilltops, and church bells rang merry peals to celebrate the event.

The King ordered that the christening should be the grandest ever known, and, in order that his daughter might have every charm and accomplishment, he invited all the fairies that could be found in the country, seven in number, to come and be sponsors to the little Princess—for every fairy godmother makes some rare gift to her godchild.

After the baptism, the whole company returned from the church to the palace, where a great banquet had been prepared for them, and, as was usual on state occasions, the covers—that is, the plates—drinking goblets, spoons, knives and forks were all of pure gold.

The seven fairies were given places of honour at the feast, and for each of them the King had got specially made a magnificent case of pure gold set with rubies and diamonds, to hold her knife, fork and spoon, which she was to take as a keepsake to remind her constantly of her royal goddaughter.

As the fairies took their places at table, there entered a very old fairy, who had not been invited because no one remembered her. As she had not been outside her tower for over fifty years, people thought her either dead or enchanted.

On seeing her the King welcomed her most kindly, and

led her to the table, causing a gold cover to be brought for her. But he could not give her a jewelled gold case like the others, as only seven had been made, and the old fairy considered this a slight and vowed vengeance in her heart. As she took her seat, she muttered some angry words between her teeth. The young fairy who sat next her noted this, and greatly feared that the old woman meant some harm to the little Princess.

During the feast this kind-hearted young fairy never thought of the grand dishes she was tasting—her mind was busy planning how to save the royal infant from the wrath of the older and more powerful fairy. She knew that the youngest, being the least important, would be asked to present her gift first, and each would follow in turn, finishing with the eldest, yet she saw that, to do any good, she herself must be the last to speak. Before the feast was ended she had planned what to do.

Fortunately, the young fairy was not very tall, and as the guests rose from the table and crowded into the great hall, she slipped behind the rich tapestry curtains which adorned the walls, no one missing her.

Then the ceremony of the Fairy-gifts began.

The first fairy endowed the Princess with dazzling beauty; the next with the tenderness and sweet temper of an angel; the third with such grace of movement and charm of manner that she would be loved by all who saw her; the fourth with the gift of dancing as lightly as a sunbeam.

The fifth gave her a voice of such beauty that no singing-bird could excel her; and the sixth gave her the art of playing every known instrument to perfection.

It was now the turn of the old fairy, who stepped forward with spiteful eagerness. Leaning on her ebony stick, her old head shaking more from temper than from age, she hissed out: "The child shall not grow up to womanhood—she will prick her finger with a spindle and die of the wound!"

As this announcement was made, the whole company drew back with shuddering horror; many burst into tears.

The King and Queen, who had been radiant with happiness while one good gift after another was showered on their darling, now clasped each other's hands and stood in mute agony, unable to relieve themselves by tears.

Just then, a clear young voice rang out from between the curtains which she was parting with her hands:

"Be comforted, my dear King and Queen! I have yet to speak—the worst shall not happen! True, I have not the power to undo all that my superior in age, rank, and power has decreed, but I can and I will lessen the misfortune.

"It must come to pass that the Princess shall prick her hand with the spindle of a distaff, but she shall not die of the wound; she will fall into a deep sleep, which shall last for a hundred years. At the end of that time the son of a King shall come to awaken her, and to claim her for his bride."

During this speech you could have heard a pin fall, and at its end a great sigh of relief seemed to escape from everyone in the hall; but on looking round not a fairy was to be seen! It was against the custom of Fairyland for one fairy thus to interfere with another, and every fairy dreaded the consequence.

The King and Queen were filled with gratitude to the young fairy whose kindness of heart had given her courage to speak last and save their daughter, though she could not wait to receive their thanks.

Much comforted, the King, who was a man of action, immediately took steps to postpone the calamity as long as possible, that the Queen and himself might enjoy the company of their beautiful child for some years at least. He issued a proclamation forbidding anyone in his dominions to spin with a distaff and spindle, or even to have a spindle in her possession, on pain of death.

Some fifteen or sixteen years later, the King, Queen, and young Princess went with their retinue to one of their country

seats, a very old castle, where they could enjoy some fine hunting and other sports.

The young Princess, who had read the history of the castle with great interest, amused herself by examining the old rooms with their beautiful tapestries, and trying to find out the hiding places and secret stairs behind the panelled walls which she had heard so many stories about; and one day she went up the high tower of the old keep. At the top of the winding stair was a small door, which she opened and passed through.

She found herself in a small garret, where, to her great surprise, sat an old woman spinning with her distaff—the old lady had never heard that the King had forbidden such spinning.

"Whatever is it that you are doing, my good woman?" asked the Princess.

"I'm spinning, my pretty girl," replied the old woman, who did not know, in the least, who it was who spoke.

"Oh, how lovely!" cried the Princess. "Let me try if I can do it, too!" So saying, the gay, impulsive girl caught hold of the spindle, and, not knowing how to use it, she pierced her hand with the sharp point, and fell fainting at the feet of the distressed and alarmed old woman, who called loudly for help.

People came running from all sides, and every means was tried to revive the Princess. Cold water was thrown on her face, the palms of her hands were slapped, her clothes were all unfastened, her temples were rubbed with toilet vinegar, but all was useless—nothing could restore her.

The King and Queen heard the running and the confused noise of voices as they came in from the garden, and went to find out what it meant. The sounds led them to the top of the tower, where the attendants stood aside to let them pass. There, on the floor of the garret, lay their beautiful daughter! They saw with dismay that the fairy-decree had begun to operate, and knew that nothing could be done to shorten the

long sleep now begun.

The King had his lovely daughter carried down to her own room, where the Queen herself assisted the maids-of-honour to rearrange her golden hair, and to dress her in the richest clothes in her wardrobe; then the King went to superintend the officers and men-servants while they prepared the most magnificent room in the palace to receive her.

When all was ready the Princess was carried there and laid on a gorgeously gilded bed, hung with curtains of cloth of gold, and with a coverlet closely embroidered with gold and silver.

As she lay there in her perfect beauty, one might have taken her for an angel. Her cheeks had not lost their exquisite rose tint, and her lips remained as red as coral. Her eyes, indeed, were closed, but the gentle heaving of her bosom and the soft sound of her breathing showed that, though unconscious, she was not dead.

The King and Queen gazed long and tenderly on their beloved daughter. They knew, however, that they could not alter her fate, so they made all arrangements to ensure her being undisturbed during her long, long sleep, and they comforted themselves with the knowledge that she would yet wake up to happy life, though they might not live to see it.

The kind young fairy who had saved the Princess from the sleep of death happened to be a thousand leagues away, in the Kingdom of Mattaquin, at the time; but a little dwarf, whose boots enabled him to spring over seven leagues at a stride, sped off at once to tell her. In her fiery chariot drawn by winged dragons she drove through the air at incredible speed, and reached the castle just as the arrangements were completed.

The King went to receive her, and after thanking her for coming so promptly to comfort them, he told her all that had been already done by the Queen and himself.

The fairy approved of all, but being possessed of great

foresight as well as sympathy, she imagined how lonely and shy the Princess was likely to feel on awaking a hundred years later, to find herself alone in the castle, with no one she knew to speak to her, or to do anything for her—only the young Prince, who would also be a stranger.

Quick as thought, she stepped lightly round, touching with her magic wand every living thing in the castle except the King and Queen, whose duties now called them elsewhere—governesses, maids-of-honour, chambermaids, officers, house-stewards, butlers, cooks, scullery-maids, errand-boys, guards, gate-keepers, footmen—and at the touch each one fell into a deep sleep, only to awake with their mistress at the end of a hundred years!

The fairy did not stop there. Going into the stables, she touched horses and grooms, corn, straw, and bran; in the courtyard she touched the great mastiffs; in the kitchen she touched the spits with the pheasants and partridges already half cooked, and all stood still in an instant—even the fire came under the spell, so that at the moment of awaking everything might go on as if it had never stopped. Finally, she touched the little lap-dog, Fluff, which had curled itself up beside its mistress on the gorgeous covering of the bed. All this had taken only a few moments—fairies do not loiter over their work!

Bidding the King and Queen farewell, the fairy re-entered her chariot, the dragons spread their wings, and the equipage shot through the air like a meteor, leaving a trail of brilliant light behind it. Then the King and Queen kissed their daughter many times without fear of awaking her and sorrowfully returned to the palace.

Before leaving, the King had given orders that no one whatever should be allowed to go near the castle, lest prying, inquisitive people should disturb its calm repose; but the kind fairy, unknown to him, had seen to that.

A quarter of an hour after their Majesties had left, the

great park was surrounded by a perfect forest of great trees of every description, standing up from a thicket of briers, thorns, and great trails of strong ivy, all entwined in a solid mass that neither man nor beast could penetrate. The trees were so high, and the thicket so dense, that no part of the castle was visible but the top of the tower, and that only from a considerable distance.

The King and Queen lived to a good old age, cheering each other by talking of all the pretty ways and clever sayings of their beloved child, who had left nothing but pleasant memories of her young life.

After their death, a King of quite a different family came to the throne. He was succeeded by his son, then by his grandson, who was reigning at the end of the hundred years. This King had a handsome, spirited young son, who was very fond of hunting, and one day this young Prince found himself in the neighbourhood of the castle, the tower of which he had seen from quite a long way off. He asked whose was the castle, and what it was called, but no one could tell him its name or that of its owner; each peasant whom he asked had some mysterious story to tell, but no two stories were the same. One said he had heard that it was haunted by ghosts of the dead; another that all the witches of the country held their weekly revels there; and others, that the castle belonged to an ogre, who carried off all the children he could find, to eat them there in safety, as no one but he could penetrate the thicket.

The astonished Prince did not know what to make of these tales, till an old peasant, who had lived in a cottage near the forest during his whole life, came forward, and respectfully asked if he might speak to the Prince, who, liking the old man's appearance, told him to speak on.

"Fifty years ago," said the peasant, "I remember hearing my father tell that, when he was a boy, people used to say that the most beautiful young Princess that eyes ever beheld lay in that castle under a spell which would keep her in a deep sleep

for a hundred years, at the end of which time the King's son would come to awake her, and to claim her for his wife, and I make bold to think, sire, that it must now be very near the time of her awaking."

The Prince believed the old man's story. Full of youthful enthusiasm, and fired with the desire to do knightly deeds, he resolved to overcome every obstacle, and not to allow another day to pass before he broke the spell under which the beautiful Princess was lying.

Calling his men to follow him, he rode straight toward the forest, and—wonder of wonders!—both the great trees and the underwood parted before him, disclosing a long avenue, with the walls of the castle visible through the opening at the end. He looked round for his men, but not one of them was to be seen, for the trees and the thicket had closed behind him as he passed. If danger there was, he saw he must face it alone.

Where youth and beauty are concerned, however, danger only inspires a lover with greater courage, so he pushed on, undaunted, till he reached the outer court of the castle.

There, the sight that met his eyes almost froze the blood in his veins.

All around, in awful silence, and in every possible position, lay, sat, or stood men and animals, motionless as stone statues. Close beside him at the gate one of the great mastiffs seemed to strain at its chain; while on the other side lay another, half out of its kennel, its head scarcely raised from its outstretched paws. One of the gate-keepers had a well-filled glass raised half-way to his lips, while another sat on the bench, his fingers still touching the empty glass he had set down.

For one dreadful moment the Prince halted, the next he strode on. As he passed the keepers his keen eye noted that their faces were red and their noses pimpled, and that their countenances seemed full of rough good humour.

His quick wit told him that they were not dead, but that motion must have been arrested in an instant, by the same spell which bound the Princess. This thought dispelled the dread which, for a moment, had gripped his heart.

Crossing the marble pavement of the inner court, among many spell-bound attendants, he ascended the great stairs and went through the guard-room between rows of armed guards, whose loud snoring was the only sound he had heard, save his own footsteps, since he entered the gates of the castle. Passing through room after room, he knew by the richer dresses of the ladies and the more brilliant uniforms of the officers that he was nearing the object of his search. Quickening his steps, almost before he knew he found himself in a gorgeous apartment, where, on a magnificent bed, draped with gold embroideries, lay the most lovely being he had ever seen or imagined. She looked about sixteen years old, but the charm of her radiant beauty gave her the appearance of belonging to heaven rather than to earth.

For a while he stood transfixed, gazing on the lovely vision with trembling admiration. Then slowly and softly he approached and knelt down beside the bed.

The appointed hour had come.

Under the influence of the loving gaze bent upon her the Princess awoke, and, turning toward the Prince, she held out her hand, saying in tones of affectionate tenderness:

"It is you, my Prince! How long you have kept me waiting!"

Charmed and surprised both with this speech and with the tone and manner in which it was spoken, the Prince kissed the extended hand and pressed it to his bosom, declaring that he loved her more than his life, and that he would never again leave her.

They were so absorbed in each other that the Prince did not even notice that the whole household waked up at the same moment as his Princess, and continued their work as if

it had never been interrupted.

The Prince listened more than he talked, as everything was new and strange to him, but the Princess had been prepared by many beautiful dreams sent by the kind fairy, and talked as if she had known the Prince for years.

Four hours passed, and the attendants, not being in love, began to be very hungry. One of the maids-of-honour could wait no longer, so she interrupted their long conversation by telling the lovers that supper was served.

The Prince assisted the Princess to rise, and gave her his arm to go down to supper—she did not need to change her dress, being already magnificently robed, though, like all her retinue, in the fashion of a bygone age. She was none the less beautiful for that!

They supped in the hall of mirrors, served by the officers of the Princess in their splendid uniforms. During supper the musicians played beautiful old music which had not been heard for many years.

During supper, the Prince and Princess consulted the chaplain, who supped with them, as to how soon their wedding could take place.

As the Princess was too young to live alone, and had no relative to be her guardian, the good man proposed that he should marry them that very evening, in the private chapel of the castle, which he did in the presence of the whole household.

The youngest maid-of-honour acted as bridesmaid, and the lords and ladies of highest rank signed the register.

The chief officer of the household suggested that they should celebrate the occasion by a ball for the nobility, and another for the servants. This proposal pleased everyone. The grand ball was held in the ballroom of the castle, the Prince and Princess leading the dance, while the rest of the retainers danced to their hearts' content in the great servants'-hall.

There were abundant refreshments for all, and, having

already slept so long (though they did not know it), they danced till morning without the least feeling of fatigue.

Before daybreak, riders on swift horses were dispatched by the Prince, with orders not to draw rein till they reached the palace, as he knew that his father must already be full of anxiety on his account. They also carried a letter from him, with some lines added by the Princess, telling the King of their great happiness, and how joyfully they looked forward to being with him before the day was over, when they should have the pleasure of sharing their happiness with him.

The King was no longer young, and since the Queen's death, some years before, he had often felt very lonely, so the news gave him great pleasure.

He ordered such festivities as the short interval permitted to celebrate the home-coming of the newly married pair, and everyone hailed the advent of a Princess with delight.

As the time when they were expected drew near, the King stood in the doorway of the palace, at the top of the wide marble steps, while the attendants stood in a deep circle round the court. When the royal couple rode through the gateway, and the people caught sight of the Princess, "Long live the Queen of Beauty!" echoed from every side.

The King had hastened down to welcome them, and amid the acclamations he assisted the Princess to dismount. He kissed her affectionately on both cheeks, saying: "A daughter needs no formal introduction to her father"; then, placing one of her hands in that of his son, while he held the other, he led the way, and all three ascended the steps together. Having reached the doorway, they turned and stood to acknowledge the cheers which greeted them. Then the King raised his hand to speak, and everyone was silent.

Turning to the Prince and Princess, he said:

"My people! I am old, and need rest. To-day I resign my throne. There, before you, stand your King and Queen! He is as brave as he is handsome; she is as good as she is beautiful!"

Then a great shout rent the air:
"Long live our King and his beautiful Queen!"

Diamonds and Toads

There was once upon a time a widow who had two daughters. The elder was so much like her mother, both in appearance and in nature, that people used to say, "If you see the one you see the other; they are exactly alike." And they were both so proud, and disagreeable, and ill-natured, that no one could bear them; in fact, there was no living with them at all.

The younger daughter, on the other hand, was the very image of her dead father, being courteous and sweet-tempered, and was also one of the most beautiful maidens ever born. Everyone sought her company and enjoyed talking with her. Indeed, whenever she went forth into the fields or into the forest it seemed as if even the birds and the butterflies and the little flowers were glad to see her. They fluttered and nodded, and circled about her head; the butterflies rested on her hands, and the birds sang more sweetly than ever.

She was loved by everything in nature, with the exception of her mother and sister, who well-nigh hated her. They tormented her in every possible way, and made her life so miserable, that at times she would shrink away, weeping bitter tears, and say: "Oh! I wish I were dead!"

She had to do all the heavy work; it was always she who scoured the kitchen, cleaned the hearth, did the cooking, washed the dishes; in fact, she scrubbed and polished all day long. She was never allowed to come into the parlour, nor to taste any of the nice dainties which she had cooked; all she got was potatoes, with now and again a few beans, and the dry bread which the others would not eat. At night she slept on a mat in the garret, and in winter she was so ill-provided with blankets that she often lay shivering with cold.

Yet the little maid did not complain, and performed willingly all the work that fell to her lot. And whenever she felt specially tired and sad a little white dove would suddenly make its appearance, a little friend of hers from the forest near by.

"*Cooc-cooroo, cooc-cooroo*, my dear!" the dove would say, as it perched on the windowsill of the kitchen. "Are you feeling doleful again to-day? Don't lose heart; there will be an end to all this by and by, and in the end you are sure to be happy."

Then the little girl would think of her dead father, who just before dying had taken her hand in his and had said: "Dear child, remain always good and lovable and patient, and think often of me; I shall be at your side." So, as the little white dove always appeared just at the time when she found her lot hardest to bear, she could not but think that it was her father who sent the dove to comfort her.

Perhaps the heaviest work among the poor girl's many tasks was when twice a day she was obliged to go and fetch water in a huge earthenware pitcher. The well was right in the forest, and nearly half an hour's walk from the house. At times she felt so tired that she did not know how she could ever carry the heavy pitcher home; many a time she had to sit down by the way and take breath before she could totter on again. And when at last, quite exhausted, she did reach her home, she was most often scolded by her mother or her sister for having taken so long.

One day, as she was at the well with her pitcher, a poor woman suddenly appeared, hobbling along a footpath, and begged to be allowed to drink from the pitcher. She said she had walked a long way and was very thirsty.

"Oh, yes, with all my heart, ma'am!" the girl answered, in her usual friendly manner; and after drawing and throwing away two or three pitcherfuls of water, in order to have it as fresh as possible, she offered it to the old dame, holding up

the pitcher the while, that she might drink more easily.

When the old woman had drunk and refreshed herself, she said to the little maid:

"You have been so kind, and friendly, and mannerly to me that I cannot help presenting you with a precious gift."

For you must know that this old dame was a fairy, who had taken the form of a poor peasant woman just to see how far the civility and good manners of this pretty girl would go. "I will bestow on you this gift," continued the fairy, "that at every word you speak there shall come out of your mouth either a flower or a jewel."

The maid was much abashed, and said that she wanted no reward, and had done nothing to deserve one, since nothing was more natural than to offer a drink to an aged woman who was thirsty.

But the fairy answered, with a laugh: "Yes, it is just because you find it so natural that I am presenting you with a gift. Out of goodness comes goodness—it is always so."

The next moment the fairy had disappeared in the thick underwood of the forest.

The little maid was much astonished, but she took up her pitcher, filled it anew, and set out for home.

When she got there her mother was standing at the door, waiting for her with a scowling face.

"Well! I thought you would never come home! You seem to make a holiday of these trips to the well. Now I warn you that henceforth you must be back within half an hour, and not idle away all your precious time."

"Oh! Mother, I'm so sorry; but this time it wasn't entirely my fault that I was so long in coming back, for . . ."

While she spoke these words there fell from her mouth a succession of roses, pearls, and diamonds.

"What is this!" cried her mother in amazement. "I really do believe that these pearls and diamonds are falling from her mouth! How is this, my dear?"

It was the first time in her life that she had called her daughter 'my dear.'

Then the little maid told her what had occurred in the forest, by the well, and during her narrative numbers of diamonds continued to drop from her mouth.

"So!" said the mother. "My elder daughter Fanny must also go to the well."

"Fanny, Fanny!" she cried, "come here, quick, and just look what drops out of your sister's mouth at every word that she speaks! Wouldn't it be splendid if you also could obtain this gift? It is quite easily done; you have only to go for water to the well, and when an old woman appears and asks you for a drink out of the pitcher you have only to offer it to her."

"No, thanks! Do you think I would go to the well and carry that heavy pitcher with me? I would not think of it. I want no gifts, and I am not going."

Then her mother got very angry with her, and stamped her foot and threatened, and ordered her to go that very minute.

Fanny had to go, grumbling and muttering, but she would on no account carry the pitcher, and took instead a silver tankard that usually adorned the parlour.

While she was on her way to the well the little white dove, which was perched on a high branch among the trees, saw her go by, and said: "C*ooc-cooroo, cooc-cooroo!* Does her mother really believe that precious gifts are to be won in this way? Nay, they must first be earned by good deeds. First be earned, and then…*cooc-cooroo, cooc-cooroo*, this one will come to no good."

Fanny was no sooner at the well than she saw coming out of the wood a lady most gloriously dressed, who came up to her and asked to be allowed to drink out of her tankard.

This was, you must know, the same fairy who had appeared to her sister, but who had now taken the appearance of a princess, to see how far this girl's rudeness would go.

"Do you really believe," she answered rudely, "that I have come here to give water to all and sundry? No, that was not my purpose in bringing my fine silver tankard. If you are thirsty, and want to drink, you may draw water for yourself."

"You do not appear to be very mannerly or obliging," answered the fairy, but without showing the least anger. "Well now, since you are so disagreeable, I shall bestow on you this gift, that at every word you speak a toad or a snake shall drop from your mouth."

"Nay, she cannot do that," thought Fanny, and without troubling herself further about the fairy she took up her silver tankard and returned home with it.

"*Cooc-cooroo, cooc-cooroo*," said the white dove, "she does not understand that goodness begets goodness, but that out of badness comes nought but evil."

The mother was standing at the door, impatiently awaiting her daughter's return. She was quite sure that her favourite must have received the same gift as her sister. To tell the truth, she had always been jealous of her younger daughter, and could not bear the thought that the latter should possess a gift that was not shared by the elder.

"Well, child!" she called out, as soon as Fanny appeared, coming out of the forest; "well, how did it go with you?"

"Why, how should it have gone?" answered Fanny—and at these words three toads and three serpents dropped out of her mouth!

"Oh, heavens! what is this?" cried her mother, terribly alarmed and as pale as death. Then, in a passion of anger, she shouted: "This must be the work of that wretch, her sister; but she shall pay for it!" And picking up a heavy stick she rushed forth to give her a beating.

The poor child fled as fast as she could run, and hid in the thickest part of the forest, among the dark underwood, where no one could see her.

Trembling and quaking, she crouched there for many

hours on end. If her mother and Fanny should find her, there was no more hope for her in this world. And yet, she was in no way to blame. How could her mother be so cruel and unjust? And the tears streamed down her cheeks.

While she sat thus in hiding, she suddenly heard the snorting of a horse close at hand, and a moment later, peeping through a small opening in the bushes, she saw a young rider appear on a magnificent white steed. He bore a small wounded hart in his arms, and appeared to be continually whispering fond words to the little animal.

The maid could not but look, her eyes wide open with astonishment. Forgetting everything else, she suddenly stood up, facing the Prince on his horse.

The young man was startled when he so unexpectedly saw the lovely maiden rise before him, with her eyes full of wonder and still wet with tears. Suddenly a great feeling of pity and sympathy came upon him.

"Who are you?" he asked, "and whence have you come? And why are you so sad?" Then he dismounted, gently laid the wounded hart among the cool grass, and taking her hand looked at her fondly with his deep-blue eyes.

To the maid it was as if suddenly the sun was shining on her with all its genial warmth, and she was thrilled with a new and unknown feeling of great happiness.

"I have been driven from home by my mother," she said, with a blush, "and have taken refuge here." While she spoke these words, seven pearls and seven diamonds fell from her mouth.

The Prince saw this with inexpressible surprise, and asked her where the pearls and diamonds came from.

So the maid told him the whole story of her life, from the time when her father had died. She told him all that her father had said to her before departing this life, the sad existence which she had led with her mother and sister, and the heavy work which she had been forced to do; she told him

about the white dove that always came to comfort her in her moments of greatest sadness, about her meeting with the fairy at the well, about the gift which had been bestowed on her, about Fanny, at whose every word a toad or a snake would now fall from her mouth, and about her last moments at home, when her mother had made ready to beat her with a stick.

The Prince listened open-eyed to her narrative, and loved her all the more, for this Prince, being himself good and noble-hearted, understood at once why the fairy had bestowed such a gift on her.

So the Prince took her in his arms and set her on his white horse. Then he lifted the wounded hart, which he had found in the forest by the side of a brook, and which he was taking home in order to tend it, and he placed it in front of her on the saddle. Then he took the horse's bridle, and led it, bearing these two, to his palace, where one and the other would need no better physician than his kind heart.

"*Cooc-cooroo, cooc-cooroo*," said the little white dove, "in the end you are sure to be happy."

And after the Prince had introduced the maiden to his father the King as his bride-elect, preparations were made right speedily for the wedding.

Of the mother and her daughter Fanny nothing more was ever heard. They died unloved and unregretted.

The Prince and his little wife devoted their whole lives to relieving and comforting all who were in distress or affliction within their kingdom, and whenever, toward evening, they took a walk in the forest to the spot where they had first met, they were attended by a lame deer, which must surely have been a great favourite with them both.

Puss in Boots

Once upon a time there was an aged miller who, when dying, left his property to his three sons, all he had being his mill, his donkey, and his cat.

An equal division of these was, of course, impossible, and to call in lawyers to try to do it would have eaten up the little there was, so the brothers wisely agreed that each should take a share as it stood, and make the best of it. The eldest son, therefore, got the mill, the second got the donkey, and only the cat was left for the youngest.

Very naturally he was grieved that his share was so small, and it puzzled him much to know what to do with it.

"My brothers," said he to himself, "can earn quite a decent living by working together—the one can grind the corn, and the other can carry it away in sacks when ground, but, as for me, even if I were to eat my cat and wear its skin, I might die of hunger afterward."

This speech made Puss, who was near, feel rather creepy, but he acted as if he had not overheard it, for he loved his master, who had always been kind to him, leaving him little bits of fish on the fish-bones he gave him, and letting him lie on his knee by the fire in the winter evenings.

With his tail in the air, he came forward and rubbed himself against his master's legs, purring his loudest to gain his attention; then, as the young man stooped to stroke him. Puss looked up in his face and said cheerily:

"Do not lose heart, sir; just give me a bag with draw-strings and a pair of high boots to tramp through the briers with, and perhaps you will find that a cat may be worth more to you than *both* a mill and a donkey!"

His master did not build his hopes too high on hearing this speech, but he had often seen his cat's agility and cleverness in tricking the rats and mice—hanging head downward, as if dead, lying quite motionless among the meal, and suchlike—so he did not quite despair of being helped a little by Puss in his dire poverty.

When the cat had got the things he asked for, he proudly drew on his boots, slung the bag round his neck, put a handful of bran and some lettuce leaves in it, took the strings in his forepaws, and went straight to one of the King's rabbit-warrens.

There he lay flat on the ground behind the bag, which he held open in front of him, and never moved till an unsuspecting young rabbit, smelling a good meal, crept into it. In a moment the strings were drawn tight—bunny was caught and killed. Another was enticed in the same way, and met the same fate.

Greatly pleased with his 'bag,' Puss set off for the palace, and asked to be allowed to speak to the King.

He was taken to his Majesty's apartment, where he made a low bow to the King, and said:

"Here, sir, is a pair of rabbits from the warrens of my lord, the Marquis of Carabas [this was the title he gave his master]. He has sent me to offer them to you, with his humble compliments."

"Tell your master from me," said the King, "that I thank him, and am pleased to accept his present."

On another occasion Puss went to hide in a field of wheat, his bag wide open as usual, and two unwary partridges ran into it. These he also went to present to the King, who was again graciously pleased to receive them, and told his purser to give Puss some money for his trouble.

The cat continued to act in this way for several months, every few days carrying game to the King, and you may be sure that he kept his master well supplied also.

Hearing from the servants at the palace one day that the King and his daughter, the most beautiful Princess in the world, were to take their drive along the road by the river, he said to his master:

"If you will take my advice, your fortune is made. You have only to go and bathe in the river, at the spot I shall show you, and leave the rest to me."

The young man did as his cat advised, though indeed he couldn't see what good it would do him.

Just as he was bathing the royal carriage passed, and the cat began to shout wildly: "Help! help!—the lord Marquis of Carabas is drowning!"

Hearing the cry, the King put his head out of the carriage-window, recognized the cat that brought him game so often, and at once ordered his guards to go to the assistance of his lordship the Marquis of Carabas.

Puss, in the meantime, had hidden his master's clothes under a heap of stones, and while the guards were helping our marquis out of the river, his cat, in a state of great excitement, ran toward the royal carriage and told the King that while his master, the marquis, was bathing, thieves had stolen his clothes and run off with them, though he had shouted "Stop thief! stop thief!" at the top of his voice. Wherefore, though his master's life was saved, he had no clothes to put on.

His Majesty was greatly concerned to hear of the plight of the poor marquis, and he ordered two of his equerries to ride back post-haste to the palace, to fetch from the royal wardrobe the finest clothes they could find for his lordship.

A grand suit was soon brought and handed to the cat, who hastened with it to his master, and having helped him to dress in it, Puss conducted him to the royal carriage, to pay his grateful respects to the King and to thank his Majesty for such timely help.

The miller's son, being healthy and well-built, was a good-looking young fellow at all times, but now, in his magnificent

court dress, he looked so stately that few, if any, of the young nobles could compare with him.

The King, who had never seen the marquis till that day, was much struck with his handsome appearance.

He embraced him again and again, then presented him to his daughter, who had been watching the fine-looking young stranger with secret admiration.

His Majesty insisted that our marquis should join the royal party in their drive, and gave him the seat next to himself in the coach.

During the drive, while her father was talking to the marquis, the Princess could not help noticing the frequent glances of respectful admiration which his lordship of Carabas bestowed upon her, and before the drive was ended she had fallen deeply in love with him.

The cat, overjoyed to see his plans succeeding so well, now went on in front of the party, taking short cuts wherever there was a bend in the road to keep ahead of the carriage.

Coming to some peasants who were mowing in a meadow by the roadside, he called to them:

"Listen, my good folk: the King is coming this way, and may ask you whose hay you are mowing. If he does, you must say it all belongs to his lordship the Marquis of Carabas. If you fail to say this, I shall have you all chopped into mince-meat."

As expected, the King stopped the carriage, when it reached the meadow, that he might ask the peasants who was the owner of the hay they were cutting.

"It all belongs to his lordship the Marquis of Carabas," they shouted with one voice, remembering the cat's dreadful threat.

"That is a fine bit of meadow-land," said the King, turning to the marquis. "Yes, sire," he replied, "it yields a very heavy crop every year."

Master Puss, who always kept well ahead, next came to a band of reapers. "My good men," shouted he, "if you do not

tell the King, who will pass shortly, that all the corn you are reaping belongs to the Marquis of Carabas, I shall have you all chopped into mince-meat."

The King, who passed shortly after, inquired to whom those splendid fields of wheat belonged.

"They belong to the Marquis of Carabas," they all shouted together, and the King again congratulated the marquis.

The cat, who kept well on in front, gave the same directions to everyone whom he met, and as one and all were too terrified to disobey, the King was astonished at the great possessions of his new friend, the Marquis of Carabas.

Finally the cat came to a grand castle, and, on inquiry, he found that it and all the country through which they had driven belonged to an ogre, whose wealth was uncountable.

From the servants Puss found out all he could about this Ogre, his riches, his power, his ferocity, and the many wonderful things he could do.

Then, saying he did not like to pass the castle without paying his respects to such a great person, he asked to see him.

The Ogre received the cat as politely as an ogre knows how to do, and asked him to rest a little while, and, if he had time, to stay to lunch with some friends whom he was expecting in a quarter of an hour.

The cat asked nothing better than the chance thus offered for carrying out his own plans.

"People tell me very wonderful things about your Highness," said the cat. "They even say that you can change your form when you like, and that you can turn yourself into a lion or an elephant at will. Is it so, really?"

"Certainly!" said the Ogre sharply. "And to satisfy you on that point I shall change myself into a lion." Which he did there and then.

No sooner did he see the lion before him than Puss jumped out of the window in terror, and, fearing pursuit, climbed up the gutter to the roof, not without both danger

and difficulty, the boots being sadly in his way. These, though good for tramping over briers, were useless for clinging to slanting tiles.

When the Ogre had resumed his own form. Puss clambered down and re-entered by the window, frankly confessing that he had been dreadfully afraid.

"That *was* a feat!" said the cat again; "but I have been told you can do a more wonderful one still. Is it true that you, who are so very big, can turn yourself as easily into quite a small animal like a rat or even a mouse? To my mind that would be quite impossible!"

"Impossible!" cried the Ogre scornfully. "You shall see!" A tiny mouse began to play on the floor! In a twinkling it was caught and eaten by the cat.

The royal party, by this time, had reached the castle, and the King made up his mind to call on the owner.

Puss heard the sound of the carriage on the drawbridge, and quickly went down to meet it. As it came through the gates, he made a sweeping bow to the King and said:

"Let me welcome your Majesty to the castle of his lordship the Marquis of Carabas."

"What! my lord Marquis," said the King, "this castle also is yours? Why, nothing could possibly be finer than this spacious courtyard and the noble buildings which surround it! Let us see the interior, if you please."

The marquis gave his hand to the Princess to help her to alight, and they followed the King into the castle.

They entered the stately dining-hall, where they found the feast prepared for the Ogre's friends, who arrived at that moment, but who dared not go in when they heard that the King was there.

The servants, to whom the cat had given the hint, quickly helped the marquis and his royal guests to all the good things on the table—savoury dishes, rich cakes, delicious ices, and the finest old wines from the Ogre's cellars.

The King and his daughter were not only charmed with the amiability and good looks of the marquis, but were also delighted to know of his wealth and great estates.

After having refreshed himself with a few glasses of wine, the King turned to his host and said: "My dear Marquis of Carabas, if you do not become my son-in-law, you will have yourself to blame!"

Our marquis rose and bowed low to the King, then turned to the Princess and, laying his hand on his heart, dropped on one knee before her.

With a pretty blush on her cheeks, the Princess got up from her seat, and holding out her hand, made him rise, and led him to her father, the King, who gave orders that their marriage should take place immediately.

Master Puss had been peeping and listening by the slightly open door of the room, hardly able to keep from mewing aloud with delight when he saw the turn things were taking; but now, when his hopes were crowned, he could hold himself no longer, and turned catherine-wheels from the top of the grand stair to the bottom in his joy.

The marriage was celebrated with great pomp and festivity, and the Marquis of Carabas and his bride lived happily to a good old age in the magnificent castle which had belonged to the Ogre.

The servants were delighted to have such a kind master and gentle mistress, for they had only served the Ogre from fear of what he might do to them.

The cat was made a great noble, and had part of the castle set apart for his own use.

Needless to say he never again had to catch rats or mice, except for the pleasure of having a day's hunting!

Beauty and the Beast

A very wealthy merchant was left, at his wife's death, with a family of three sons and three daughters. As he was a highly intelligent man, he determined to give his children the best education that money could procure for them, and he spared no expense to engage the very best masters to teach them.

The three daughters were exceedingly handsome both in face and person, but the youngest was especially admired for the sweetness of her countenance. When she was only a very little girl everyone called her the beauty of the family, and as she grew up the name was still used, and all friends addressed her as "My Beauty," to the disgust of her elder sisters, who were jealous of her.

Beauty was not only prettier than her sisters but she had a very much finer character, being good-tempered, gentle-mannered, obliging, and considerate.

The sisters, on the contrary, were haughty and purse-proud. They liked to imagine themselves great ladies, and they despised the daughters of the other merchants, refusing to visit them or to receive their visits. They spent all their time driving in the park or going to balls and theatres, and they amused themselves by making game of their younger sister because she spent her leisure painting, studying her music, or reading the works of the best authors.

As everyone knew of their great wealth, these young ladies had many suitors from among the families of the other rich merchants, but when these gentlemen asked them in marriage, the two sisters replied contemptuously that no one less than a duke, or at the very least an earl, need take the trouble to propose to them. When any gentleman proposed

marriage to Beauty, she thanked him politely for the honour he did her, but told him she was too young to marry, and wished to stay at home to cheer her father for some years yet.

Quite suddenly the merchant lost the whole of his great fortune, and all he had left was a few acres of land with a small cottage on it, quite far away in the country.

Almost broken-hearted, he called his children together and told them of the calamity, and that they must prepare to leave town and accompany him to the cottage, where, by industry and hard work, they would be able to live plainly, like the peasants, and pay their way honestly.

The two elder daughters laughed scornfully at the idea of living in such a place, and replied that they had lovers enough desirous of marrying them for their beauty, even if they had not a penny. They were woefully disappointed, however, for these very lovers refused to look at them now that they were poor. As they had always been so disdainful in their treatment of their neighbours, no one was sorry for them.

"They do not deserve to be pitied. It is a good thing to know their pride is humbled," was all one heard, but with regard to the youngest sister it was quite different, and on all sides one heard:

"Oh! how sorry we are for poor Beauty—she was always so gentle and kind, and she was so polite when she spoke to us!"

There were even several gentlemen who came, now when she had not a farthing, to ask if she would marry them; but while she thanked them from her heart, she told them that she could not leave her father in his misfortune, but would go with him to the country, where she would grudge no trouble to try to make him comfortable, and to help him all she could in his work.

Poor Beauty had certainly been grieved by the loss of their wealth—it could not have been otherwise; but when she felt inclined to cry over it, she said to herself:

"Why should I cry? An ocean of tears would not mend matters. I must try and be happy without riches, like the people I see round about me."

When they were settled in their country cottage, the merchant and his three sons set to work to dig and cultivate their land. Beauty rose at four o'clock every morning and busied herself cleaning the house and preparing and cooking food for the family.

At first she found it all very difficult, but it gradually became easier, and at the end of a few months she did not think it a trouble at all. Also, she was very much stronger—air and exercise had given her perfect health, so that she became more beautiful than ever. When she had finished her household tasks she read, played on the harpsichord, or sang to herself while spinning.

Her two sisters, on the contrary, were bored to death with their surroundings. They did not get out of bed till ten o'clock, and spent their time wandering aimlessly about, talking to each other about their former grandeur, and regretting their fine clothes and gay companions. They twitted their sister with being mean and poor-spirited because she was contented in her poverty. Their father did not think as they did. He knew that Beauty was better fitted than they were to shine in a high position. He greatly admired the character of his youngest daughter, and especially her gentle patience with her sisters, who not only left all the housework for her to do, but constantly insulted her while she was doing it.

When the family had lived about a year at the cottage, the merchant got a letter informing him that a ship in which he had valuable cargo had just arrived safely in port. The two elder girls nearly lost their heads with joy at the news, thinking that now they would be able to leave the cottage where time had hung so heavy on their hands, and when their father was ready to start upon the journey which he must make to town, they gave him a list of the dresses, mantles,

and hats that he was to bring them. Beauty asked for nothing, thinking to herself that the price of the cargo would hardly pay for all the things her sisters had asked.

"Do you not want me to bring you anything?" said her father.

"Oh! thank you!" said Beauty. "I should be so glad to have a rose, if you can get one, for there are none in our little garden."

It was not really that Beauty wanted a rose so much, but she did not want to look superior to her sisters for fear of hurting their feelings, and she knew a rose would not cost much.

The good father set off with hope in his heart, but when he arrived in town someone brought a lawsuit against him, and though he won his case, it took all the money he had received to pay the lawyers, so that after all his trouble he had to return home as poor as when he went away, and very much sadder. But he comforted himself with the thought that he would soon be among his own family again, and urged his horse on as quickly as it could go.

When he was only thirty miles from home it began to snow heavily, so that he could only see a few yards before him. The road lay through a large forest, with many paths branching in different directions. He took a wrong turning and soon found himself completely lost. The wind had risen to a furious gale, and he was twice blown off his horse. Then darkness came down, and the thought of spending the night in the forest, with the wolves already howling in the distance, filled him with dismay. Also he was stiff with cold and very hungry. Leading his tired horse he almost groped his way, but he felt safer on foot, as the swaying branches were too high to hurt him. All of a sudden he saw a distant light and going in its direction soon found himself in a long avenue, at the end of which were many lights. Thanking God for such a deliverance, he mounted his horse. The intelligent animal also saw

the lights and needed no urging to gallop toward them. They came from the windows of a great castle, but though it was illuminated as if for a feast, there was no sign or sound of life anywhere around it.

From the court they could see the open door of a great stable, toward which the horse turned of its own accord, and, finding both corn and hay there, the tired, hungry animal attacked them without hesitation and made a good meal.

The merchant tied him up for the night and turned toward the house, but no one was to be seen. He entered the open door and found himself in a great dining-hall, with a good fire blazing on the hearth, and a fine dinner already on the table, but with only one cover laid. As he was wet to the skin, he stood up before the fire, saying to himself:

"Both master and servants will pardon me, under the circumstances, and no doubt they will soon be here."

He waited long, but no one came, and when the clock struck eleven o'clock he could resist no longer, for he was faint with hunger, so he took some chicken from a dish and ate it greedily, but trembling with fear of the consequences. As no one came, he filled a glass of wine for himself and drank it off, then another, and another. His courage returned, he went from the dining-hall, through one splendid apartment after another, all magnificently furnished, and soon found himself in a beautiful bedroom, evidently prepared for a guest, and as it was past midnight, and he was greatly fatigued, he made up his mind to lock the door of the room and go to bed.

He did not wake till ten o'clock next morning, and the first thing his eye fell on was a fine new suit of clothes laid where his wet, muddy garments had been the night before.

"Surely," said he to himself, "this palace must belong to some good fairy, who has taken pity on me in my misery."

He rose and looked out of the window. The snow was all gone, and under a bright sun lawns of velvety grass, avenues of shady trees, and arbours of roses, with fountains and

flowers, enchanted the eye.

He dressed and went down to the great hall where he had supped the previous night, and there, on a small table, was a cup of delicious chocolate and some crisp toast.

"Thank you, my lady fairy," said he, "for having had the goodness to think of my breakfast."

When he had taken his chocolate, the good man went out to the stable for his horse, and, as he passed under a bower of roses, Beauty's request came to his mind, so he broke off a branch which had several roses on it. As he did so, a sudden fearful sound arose, and, looking round, he saw coming toward him a beast so horrible in appearance that he almost fainted.

"Monster of ingratitude!" said the Beast in a terrible voice. "I saved your life by receiving you into my castle, and, for my thanks, you rob me of my roses, which I love above all else in the world! Your life is the price you must pay for such a deed. I give you one quarter of an hour to prepare for your death!"

The merchant, clasping his hands, threw himself on his knees before the monster and cried:

"Pardon me, my lord, I did not dream of offending you. I was only gathering a rose for one of my daughters who had asked me to take her one."

"I am not called 'my lord,' but 'the Beast,'" replied the odious creature. "I hate compliments, and only wish people to say what they really think, so you need not try to make me change my mind by your flatteries.

"You say, however, that you have daughters, so if one of them will come, of her own free will, to die in your stead, I am willing to pardon you—no arguing!—I have told you my will—off with you! And if none of your daughters will die for you, give me your oath that you will return yourself three months from this day."

The good man had no intention of letting any one of his

daughters sacrifice herself for him, but he saw the opportunity of seeing his family once more, and of bidding them farewell, so he promised, and the Beast told him he was free to go at any hour that suited him, adding:

"I do not wish you, however, to leave my house empty-handed. Go back to the room you slept in. There you will see a large empty chest. You may fill it with whatever you see around you, and I shall see that it is taken to your cottage." Then the Beast disappeared.

The merchant consoled himself a little by thinking that, if he had to die, he would now be able to provide his children with something to help them to live, so he returned to the bedroom. Looking around him, he discovered quite a heap of gold coins lying on the floor. With these he quickly filled the chest and locked it; then, taking his horse from the stable, he remounted, and left the palace with a very heavy heart.

The horse, of its own accord, took the shortest way to the cottage, where they arrived in a few hours.

On his arrival the family crowded round him, kissing him and welcoming him home, but instead of returning their caresses he burst into tears.

He held the rose branch in his hand, and when he could speak he turned to his daughter, and gave it to her, saying:

"My Beauty, take the roses—they are going to cost your unfortunate father very dear!"

Then he told his family the dire strait in which he found himself.

On hearing his story, the two elder daughters uttered piercing shrieks, and heaped insults and bad names on poor Beauty, who did not shed a tear.

"Only think what the pride of that small creature has brought about!" said they. "Why could she not ask for useful garments, like us? But no! the young lady wished to distinguish herself. Look, she does not even cry for causing the death of her father!"

"That would be a very useless thing to do," said Beauty. "Why should I weep for my father's death? He shall not die! Since the monster is willing to accept one of his daughters in his place, I shall give myself up to it, and shall be proud if by the sacrifice of my life I can save that of my dear father."

"No! my dear sister," cried the three brothers, with one voice. "We shall go and find this monster, and we shall kill him or perish ourselves."

"Do not indulge in such hopes," said the merchant. "The power of this Beast is so great that I have no hope of anyone being able to kill him. I am charmed with the kind heart of my Beauty, but I cannot let her risk her life. I am old, and, at best, could only live a few years longer. I have nothing to regret but leaving you alone, my dear children."

"I assure you, dearest Father," said Beauty, "that you shall not go to the Beast's palace without me. You could not possibly hinder me from following you. Although I am young, life has no great attractions for me, and I prefer being devoured by the monster to dying of grief for the loss of my father."

It was useless to try to dissuade her. Beauty was quite determined to go with her father when the time should come for him to return to the palace, and the jealous sisters could hardly hide their pleasure at her decision.

The merchant was so grieved at the thought of perhaps losing his favourite daughter that he quite forgot to speak of the chest of gold coins which the Beast had promised to send, but on going to bed he found it there at his bedside.

He made up his mind not to tell his two elder daughters about it, as he felt sure they would want to go back to their extravagant life in town, and he had determined to spend what of his life might still be before him in the country. He, however, confided the secret to Beauty, who at once remembered to tell him that during his absence two gentlemen who had made their acquaintance had fallen in love with her sisters, and, in the goodness of her heart, she advised her

father to use a great part of the money in getting them married and comfortably provided for. The sweet-tempered girl cherished no resentment against them for their daily unkindness to her. She wanted to see them happy.

When the sisters saw Beauty ready to start with her father, at the date fixed, they rubbed their eyelids with an onion to make them look as if they were weeping; but the brothers, as well as their father, wept in earnest, not knowing what might happen. Beauty alone did not cry, for she did not wish to add to their grief.

They set off on horseback. Beauty riding on a pillion behind her father. The horse took the road to the palace without being guided, and they arrived in the evening, finding the whole place brilliantly lighted as before. They alighted at the entrance. The horse went to the stable, while the father and daughter entered the dining-hall, where they found a magnificently spread table, with covers for two. The merchant was too sad to care to eat, but Beauty made a great effort not to seem afraid, and sitting down, began to help him to the different dishes which he preferred. While they were eating. Beauty remarked to herself:

"The Beast must wish to fatten me before eating me, as he has provided such a feast."

Just when they had finished their supper they heard a strange noise, and the merchant, feeling sure it was the Beast, bade his daughter adieu, weeping bitterly.

Beauty could not help shuddering when she saw the horrible face of the frightful creature, but she made a brave effort to overcome her fear, and when the monster asked her if it was really of her own free will that she had come, although she was trembling from head to foot she answered, "Yes."

"You are a good girl, and I am much obliged to you," said the Beast; then he turned to the father and said:

"Good man, leave this palace to-morrow morning, and do not take it into your head to return.

"Good night, my Beauty."

"Good night, Beast," the maiden replied, and the Beast withdrew.

"Oh, my child," said the merchant, embracing his daughter, "I am half dead already with horror. Hear me! Let me stay."

"No, dear Father," said she firmly; "you will go home tomorrow, and you will leave me to the care of kind Providence, who will perhaps take pity on me."

They parted to go to their bedrooms; neither of them expected to sleep that night, but their heads were no sooner on their pillows than they fell into a deep slumber.

During her sleep. Beauty dreamt she saw a lady, who said to her:

"Beauty, I am charmed with your tenderness of heart. Your kind action in giving your life to save your father's will not go unrewarded."

In the morning Beauty told the dream to her father, and it comforted him a little, but it did not keep him from crying aloud in his distress when the moment came for parting with his beloved daughter.

When he was out of sight, Beauty could not help throwing herself on a couch and sobbing as if her heart would break. This relieved her feelings, and, being of a brave nature she sat up, commended herself to the care of God, and though she quite expected to be eaten by the Beast that evening, she resolved not to waste the few last hours of her life by meeting her trouble halfway.

She therefore took a walk through the lovely grounds, and then began to explore the interior of the castle. She could not help admiring the magnificent decorations and priceless tapestries, as well as the costly furniture.

She came to a door on which was written: Beauty's Boudoir.

Extremely surprised, she quickly opened the door, and

was dazzled by the brilliance of her surroundings—every comfort and luxury she could desire was there.

One of the first things that caught her eye was an exquisite bookcase, filled with handsome editions of her favourite books, and near it was a harpsichord with an abundance of music.

"The Beast does not want me to weary," said she in a low voice; then she thought to herself, "If I had only one day to live, he would surely not have provided so much for my entertainment." This thought gave her courage. She opened the bookcase, and took out a volume with a very long title in gold letters; it was this: *Desire. Command. You are Lady and Mistress here.*

"Alas!" thought she, with a sigh, "I desire nothing but to see my poor father, and to know what he is doing just now."

She laid down the book without speaking a word. Judge then of her surprise when, in a great mirror on the opposite wall, she saw the cottage where her father was just arriving, broken down with grief. Her sisters came out to meet him, pretending to be sorry, but, in spite of their false grimaces, joy was visible in their eyes to see him returning without her. Then it all disappeared, and, standing there, she could not help thinking how considerate and kind the Beast seemed to have been in trying to make her happy, and in her heart she felt she need not be so much afraid of him.

At noon an excellent dinner was on the table, and while she was eating she listened to a fine band playing lovely music, but no one was visible.

In the evening, as she sat down to supper, she heard the peculiar noise made by the Beast, and she could not help trembling violently when he appeared.

"Beauty," said the monster, "are you willing to let me look at you while you sup?"

"You are master here," said Beauty, in a tremulous voice.

"No!" replied the Beast, "you alone are mistress here. You

have only to bid me go away if my presence annoys you and I shall go at once. Tell me frankly—do you not think me extremely ugly?"

"I do indeed," said Beauty, "for I cannot tell an untruth, but I think you are very kind."

"You are right," said the monster, "but besides being ugly, I am very stupid. I know quite well that I am only a fool."

"No one is really stupid who thinks he is not clever. No fool ever considers himself one."

"Enjoy your supper, then. Beauty," said the monster, "and try not to feel weary in your own house, for all you see is yours, and it would grieve me much to see you unhappy."

"You are very kind," said Beauty, "and your goodness of heart gives me great pleasure. Indeed, when I think how good you are, I do not seem to see you so ugly."

"Oh! for that part," said the Beast, "my heart is tender enough, but it does not hinder me from being a monster."

"There are many men far worse monsters than you are," said Beauty, "and I prefer you with the face you have to many men I have met, who, behind a handsome face, hide a false, bad heart."

"If I had wit enough I should pay you a great compliment to thank you for the pleasure your words give me," said the Beast, "but, being so stupid, all I can say is that I am greatly obliged to you."

Beauty took a hearty supper, and quite forgot her fear of the Beast, but she was again in an agony of terror when he suddenly said to her:

"Beauty, will you be my wife?"

It was some time before she could find words to reply, but at last she answered simply:

"No, Beast."

At this the poor monster heaved a dreadful sigh, which seemed more like a shriek, and the whole palace shook with the sound. Beauty thought her last hour had come. The Beast,

however, only said gently: "Good night, then. Beauty," and went slowly to the door, turning his head from time to time to look wistfully at her as he went.

Left alone. Beauty felt a great wave of pity rising within her.

"What a pity it is that he is so ugly!" said she. "He is so very good and kind!"

Three months passed thus in the palace, without any special event. Every evening Beauty received a visit from the Beast, who did his best to entertain her during supper with his simple talk, which never lacked good sense, but which was far from being what is called, in society, brilliant conversation. Every day Beauty noticed some new token of the goodness which lay below the repulsive outward appearance of the monster. She was becoming accustomed to his ugliness, and instead of dreading his visits she often found herself looking at her watch as nine o'clock drew near, for that was the hour when he made his appearance. There was only one thing which really distressed her. It was that the monster, before leaving her, never failed to ask her if she would become his wife, and never seemed less pained at her refusal.

One evening, Beauty said to him:

"Beast, you grieve me greatly. I only wish I could bring myself to marry you, but I am too sincere to pretend to you that I can ever do so. I shall always be your friend—will you not try to be contented with that?"

"I suppose I must," said the Beast. "I can judge justly, and I know how horribly ugly I am, only I love you greatly. I ought to be very thankful that you are willing to remain here to keep me company. Promise me, I entreat you, that you will never leave me."

Beauty blushed deeply at these words. That afternoon she had seen in her mirror that her father was very ill from his grief at losing her, and she wished greatly to visit him, and reassure him.

"I could readily promise," said she, "never to leave you altogether, but I wish so much to see my father again that I shall die of grief if I may not do so."

"I would rather die myself than grieve you," said the monster. "I shall send you home to your father, you will stay there, and your poor Beast will die of grief."

"Oh, no!" said Beauty, weeping. "I love you too much to wish to cause your death. I promise you to return in eight days. You have enabled me to see that my sisters are both married, and that my brothers have joined the army. My father is quite alone. Let me stay with him for a week, I beg of you."

"You shall be there to-morrow morning," said the Beast, "but do remember your promise. When you are ready to return, you have only to lay your ring on the table when you go to bed. Good-bye, Beauty."

The Beast sighed, in his usual fearful way, when he said these words, and Beauty went to bed, much grieved at having hurt him. She awoke next morning in her father's house. She rang a bell which was on the table by the side of her bed, and it was answered by the servant-maid, who gave a great cry of astonishment when she saw her. The father went quickly up-stairs to know what had happened, and was beside himself with joy when he saw his dear daughter. He clasped her in his arms and they embraced each other long and tenderly.

When she got up to dress. Beauty remembered that she had no clothes to put on, but the maid told her that she had just found a chest in the next room and on opening it she saw it was filled with magnificent robes of costly materials, trimmed with gold lace and embroidered with jewels, and Beauty felt most grateful to the kind Beast for his attentions. She chose the plainest of these beautiful dresses; then she asked the maid to lock the chest, as she wished to give the others to her sisters, but she had hardly said the words when the chest disappeared. Her father said it looked as if the Beast

only intended the dresses for herself, and at these words the chest was again in its place.

While Beauty was dressing, word of her arrival was sent to her sisters, who appeared soon after with their husbands. Both of them were miserably unhappy. One had married a man who was exceedingly handsome, but who was so vain that he thought of nothing but his own good looks, and took no notice whatever of his wife. The other had married a man who was extraordinarily clever, but the only use he made of his brains was to utter sarcastic remarks to everyone, and particularly to his wife.

These sisters were very envious when they saw Beauty looking prettier than ever and dressed like a princess. In vain she kissed and fondled them; they could not hide their jealousy, which increased as they saw how happy she was. They both went into the garden to vent their spite, and to complain to each other.

"Why," said they, "is that creature so much happier than we? Are we not as deserving of happiness as she is?"

"Sister," said the eldest, "I have an idea; let us persuade her to overstay her time. Her stupid Beast will be enraged with her for not keeping her word, and probably he will devour her."

"What a clever plan!" said the other. "We must pretend to be very fond of her and make a great fuss about her."

With this wicked thought in their minds they went back into the cottage, and were so very loving in their speech and manner that poor Beauty almost wept for joy. At the end of the eight days, they made such a show of grief, tearing their hair and wringing their hands, that Beauty consented to stay another week, not without being very sorry for the disappointment she was causing her poor Beast, whom she had grown so fond of, and whom she was longing to see again. On the tenth night of her visit, she dreamt she was in the palace garden, where she saw the Beast lying prone upon the grass,

dying, and reproaching her for her ingratitude. She awoke with a start; then she began to weep.

"How wicked I am!" she said to herself. "How could I grieve the poor Beast who has been so good to me? Is it his fault that he is ugly and not clever? He is good, and that is worth more than cleverness or good looks. Why could I not marry him? I should have been much happier with him than my sisters are with their husbands. It is neither the good looks nor the cleverness of her husband that can make a woman happy; it is kindness of heart, uprightness, and readiness to oblige, and my poor Beast has all these good qualities. I may not be in love with him, but my heart is full of respect, friendship, and gratitude whenever I think of him. Come! I must not make him unhappy. I should reproach myself all my life if I did."

Beauty got up, put her ring on the table, and went back to bed. She quickly fell asleep, and when she awoke next morning she was pleased to find herself back in the palace of the Beast. She dressed herself magnificently to give him pleasure, and found the day pass all too slowly, waiting for nine o'clock. At last the hour struck, but the Beast did not make his appearance.

Beauty was greatly alarmed, fearing lest she had caused his death. She ran from room to room, calling him loudly, but she got no answer. She was almost in despair when she suddenly remembered her dream. Quick as thought, she turned and ran toward the garden. There, on the very spot she had seen in her sleep, lay her poor Beast, prone on the grass near the brook, quite unconscious and apparently dead. In an agony of grief she threw herself down over his body, without any sense of horror; then, finding that his heart was still beating, she brought water from the stream and bathed his temples. This revived him a little, and at length he opened his eyes.

After a little, the Beast found strength to speak:

"You forgot your promise," said he, gazing at Beauty. "My grief at losing you was so great that I determined to starve myself to death, but I shall die happy now that I have had the great pleasure of seeing you again."

"No, my dear Beast, you shall not die," cried Beauty. "You must live to become my husband. From this moment I am yours. I imagined I had no stronger feeling for you than friendship, but now I know that I cannot live without you."

Just as Beauty finished this speech, the whole palace was brilliantly illuminated, while fireworks and music showed that some great event was being celebrated. Beauty looked up for a moment, but immediately turned again toward her dear Beast, for whose life she trembled. But where was he? What did it all mean? At her feet knelt a young Prince, handsome as Adonis, who was gratefully thanking her for having broken the spell of his enchantment. Although this Prince well deserved her attention, she quickly asked him:

"Where is my Beast?"

"You see him at your feet," was the reply. "A wicked fairy had condemned me to remain in that dreadful form till a beautiful young lady should, of her own free will, consent to many me, and I was strictly forbidden to show my intelligence. You alone of all those I have met were touched by my kindness of disposition in spite of my forbidding appearance, and in offering you my crown and my heart I do not pretend to be able to repay all I owe to you."

Beauty held out her hand to the Prince, in a dream of delighted surprise. He rose and clasped her hand in his, and they walked together to the palace. On entering the great hall. Beauty was overjoyed to see her dear father and all the family there. The beautiful lady whom she had seen in her dream had transported them there from the cottage.

This lady, who was a great fairy, now came forward.

"Beauty," said she, "come and receive the reward of your wise choice. You preferred high character to mere beauty, or

even cleverness; you deserve to find all these united in one person. You are going to be a great queen. I hope that the throne will not alter your character."

"As for you, ladies," said the fairy to the sisters, "I know the malice which fills your hearts. You shall become statues, but you shall retain your reason inside the stone which imprisons you. You shall be placed one on each side of the door of your sister's palace, where your only punishment will be seeing your sister's happiness. When you recognize your faults and repent of them, you will be restored to your human forms, but I fear you are likely to remain statues. One may correct oneself of pride, bad temper, greed, or sloth, but to change an evil, envious heart is little short of a miracle."

Then, with one touch of her wand, she transported the whole company to the kingdom of the Prince, whose subjects received him with joy. Beauty and he were married with great pomp, the festivities lasting many days. The union was a very happy one, and at the end of a long life their love for each other was still undiminished.

Riquet with the Tuft

Once a Queen had a little boy who came into the world so unpleasing in face and so deformed in body that the poor little fellow looked hardly human.

Naturally this was a great grief to the mother, who loved her son, and wished everyone else to love him.

A fairy who was present at his birth assured her that, in spite of his appearance, the babe would be a most lovable child, and that he would make up for his want of good looks by his great intelligence and his kind disposition, besides which, as her gift, she had just endowed him with the power of making the lady he should love best one of the wittiest and cleverest people in the world.

The fairy's speech cheered and comforted the Queen, for she knew that, though beauty is a valuable gift, it can be easily destroyed, but that intelligence and sweetness of temper are lifelong attractions.

By the time the child began to speak, the fairy's words were proved true, for he astonished all around him with his witty remarks, and with the sweet way he had of saying just the right thing; also, in all his little actions there was such cleverness and grace of manner that everybody was charmed with him.

I forgot to tell you that he was born with a little tuft of hair on the top of his head, so that he was at once named Riquet with the Tuft, for Riquet was the family surname.

Seven or eight years later, the Queen of a neighbouring kingdom had twin daughters. The first-born was as beautiful as the dawn, and so great was the mother's joy that the attendants feared lest she should suffer from over-excitement. The

fairy who had presided at the birth of little Riquet with the Tuft was again present, so she told the Queen that the little Princess, though charmingly pretty, would have very little intelligence, and would be as dull and stupid as she was beautiful.

This speech damped the Queen's spirits very much, but an even greater disappointment awaited her, for, when the second daughter was born, she was found to be one of the plainest-looking children ever seen, and the poor mother was terribly grieved about it.

"Do not distress yourself so much. Madam," said the fairy; "your little daughter will have much to make her happy. Her wit and liveliness will be such that no one will notice her want of good looks."

"God grant it may be so!" replied the Queen. "But have you no means of giving a little good sense to my poor pretty one?"

"I can do nothing for her in the matter of intelligence," said the fairy, "but where beauty is concerned I can do much, and, as there is nothing I would not do to please you, I now give her power to endow the person she loves best with beauty as great as her own."

As these twin Princesses grew up, their attractions increased, and the whole talk at Court was about the beauty of the elder, and the intelligent wit of the younger.

True, their defects also became more apparent, the younger becoming every day visibly plainer, while the elder daily grew more dull and stupid. When spoken to, she either made no answer at all or said something foolishly rude. She was so awkward in her movements that she could not arrange four china ornaments on a shelf without letting one fall, nor could she drink out of a glass without spilling half of its con-tents over her clothes.

Although beauty adds so much to the charm of youth, in this case it was the plain Princess who, in every company,

attracted the most attention. At first people might go to where the beautiful elder Princess sat, that they might see and admire her, but they soon tired of her senseless remarks, and left her to join the circle which gathered round the plain sister, whose agreeable conversation and sparkling wit charmed all listeners. Sometimes people so far forgot their good manners as to leave the poor beauty all alone; stupid though she was, she could not help noticing this, and she would willingly have given all her beauty in exchange for one half of her younger sister's intelligence.

Her silliness was so irritating that everyone's patience got worn out, and even the Queen, though a most wise and prudent lady, could not help reproaching her repeatedly for her stupid rudeness, so that the poor Princess was often miserably unhappy.

One day she went alone into the wood near the palace, to weep over her lot without being seen, and she noticed, coming toward her, a small and very ugly young man, magnificently dressed. It was the young Prince Riquet with the Tuft, who had fallen in love with her from seeing her portrait, which hung on the walls of every castle he visited. He had come all the way from his father's kingdom, a very long way off, to have the pleasure of seeing her personally, and, if possible, of entering into conversation with her.

Delighted to find the beautiful Princess alone, he went forward with respectful politeness, and, bowing low, begged to be allowed to introduce himself. After he had talked to her for some time, paying her many compliments, but getting no answers to his remarks, he noticed that she seemed oppressed with deep melancholy.

"I cannot understand, Madam," said he, "how anyone so beautiful as yourself can be so sad as you appear to be, for, although I can boast of having seen many beautiful ladies in my travels, I can say, with truth, that I have never seen anyone whose beauty approaches yours."

"It pleases you to say so," was all he got for his pretty speech.

"Beauty," continued Riquet with the Tuft, "is such a very precious possession that it ought to make up for all disadvantages, and in my opinion, those who have it need not let anything else trouble them."

"I should prefer," said the Princess sadly, "being as ugly as yourself and being clever, to being so beautiful yet looked upon as a fool."

"Nothing is such a sure sign of good sense, Madam, as to recognize one's own defects. No one who is really wise ever thinks himself wise enough."

"I know nothing about that," said the Princess. "What I do know is that I am very stupid, and that makes me feel ready to die of grief."

"If that is all that troubles you, Madam, I can easily put an end to your sorrow!" said Riquet with the Tuft.

"What can you do in the matter?" asked the Princess.

"Madam," replied he, "I can endow the person I love best with as much cleverness as any one could wish to possess, and, as you are that person, it remains with yourself to choose whether or not you will become the most witty lady in the world. One condition, however, must be observed—you must be willing to marry me."

The Princess was dumbfounded—she answered not a word!

"I see," continued Riquet with the Tuft, "that the bare idea is painful to you, and that does not surprise me, so I will give you a whole year to make up your mind."

The poor stupid Princess thought a year was such a long time that it would hardly ever come to an end, and, having a great desire to be as clever as her sister, she promised to marry Riquet with the Tuft a year from that day.

No sooner had she given her promise than such a marvellous change came over her that she felt like a different

creature. She could think clearly and express her ideas with astonishing ease, speaking on every subject with keen intelligence, and using the most refined and polished language.

She began a bantering conversation with the Prince, when her ready wit and brilliant sallies made him ask himself whether he had not made her more clever than himself.

On her return to the palace, the amazing change in the Princess was so evident that the whole Court was surprised and puzzled. No one knew what to make of it, for, whereas they had once never heard her speak without saying something silly or rude, or both, now she spoke with the good sense and quiet dignity of a highly cultivated lady, fit to be the partner of the most particular of kings or princes.

The joy at Court was extreme. From the King and Queen to the humblest attendant, everyone was delighted with the lively wit which now added such a charm to their beautiful Princess. The younger sister alone found it impossible to rejoice.

It was indeed hard on her, for the one advantage which her cleverness had given her over her stupid but beautiful sister was now of no account; everyone crowded round the brilliant beauty, without taking the trouble to notice her poor, plain-looking self, for even in Courts people can be selfishly neglectful of other people's feelings.

The elder sister was now as much sought after for her wisdom as for her beauty. The King took her advice in everything that concerned his government, and he even held his privy council in her room.

The rumour of this great change spread far and wide, and all the princes of the neighbouring kingdoms vied with each other as suitors for the hand of the beautiful Princess, who listened courteously to one after another, but as she found none of them sufficiently interesting to please her, she accepted none. If you think it strange that she had forgotten her promise to Riquet with the Tuft you will hear shortly how

this came about.

Finally came a young Prince who was so powerful, so rich, so clever, and so very handsome that she could not help feeling attracted by him.

Her father noticed this, and told her that he left her quite free to choose the husband she preferred; she had only to tell him when her choice was made.

The more good sense people have, the more difficult they find it to decide in such an important affair as marriage. The Princess thanked her father, and asked to be allowed a little time for reflection before deciding.

As she wished to be alone with her thoughts, she went out for a quiet walk, and entered the wood without remembering that, a year before, in this very wood, she had promised to marry the Prince whose marvellous gift had made her so intelligent. Indeed, the first result of that gift had been that all memory of her former stupid words and actions was quite blotted out.

For a while she walked on, in deep thought, but after a little time she became aware of dull muffled sounds somewhere quite near, so she stood still to listen.

The sounds seemed to come from beneath her feet, as if many people were busily working underground, and she even heard their voices and could distinguish their words.

"Fetch me the pan," said one. "Hand me that kettle," said another. "Put more wood on the fire," said a third.

As the Princess stood bewildered, the ground in front of her opened, and, to her utter amazement, she saw the interior of a great kitchen, with men-servants and maids busily engaged in preparing a grand banquet.

At the same time a band of twenty or thirty men who had charge of the roasting came out, and went to take their places round a long table placed in an alley of the wood. Each had his larding-pin in his hand, and they all began to work heartily together, keeping time to a merry song.

The astonished Princess asked for whom they were preparing such a feast.

"We are preparing the wedding-feast of Prince Riquet with the Tuft, Madam," was the reply. "He is to be married to-morrow."

The words recalled in a flash her promise to the Prince, and she stood stunned and ready to fall, as if she had received a blow. Recovering herself, she walked on a few paces, and suddenly found herself face to face with the Prince, magnificently arrayed as became a royal bridegroom.

Riquet with the Tuft advanced joyfully to meet her.

"How delighted I am, dear Princess, to find you as punctual as myself in keeping our appointment! I had hardly dared to hope that you would come yourself to meet me, and to make me the happiest man in the world by giving me your hand."

The Princess drew back coldly and replied:

"I must confess that I had no such intention. I have not yet made up my mind on the subject, nor do I think I shall ever be able to grant your request."

"Your words astonish me. Madam," said the Prince, completely taken aback.

"I quite believe you," said the Princess, "and if I had to deal with a coarse, vulgar fellow, too stupid to take in the situation, I should indeed be in a difficulty, but as I am addressing the most refined and intelligent gentleman in the whole world, I feel quite sure that you yourself will see how impossible it would be for me to keep a promise made when I had not the sense to know what I was doing. If you really wished me to marry you, it would have been wiser not to have made me so difficult to please that I have already rejected the handsomest princes who have asked me in marriage."

"Madam," said Riquet with the Tuft, "you have admitted that a coarse and stupid man might have held you to your word! Is it just or kind to treat me worse than such a fellow,

because I am a gentleman? Surely that cannot be approved by one who so greatly desired the gift of wit and wisdom for herself! But, be that as it may, let us come to facts. Permit me to ask. Madam, if, apart from my appearance, there is anything else about me which displeases you? Do you disapprove of my birth, my character, or my manners?"

"Not at all," said the Princess; "in all these I find you perfect."

"If that is so," said Riquet with the Tuft, "I may yet be happy, as you yourself can make me the most lovable of men, even in appearance."

"How can I possibly do that?" asked the Princess.

"By loving me so much that you wish me to be handsome. Madam; for the same fairy who gave me power to make you wise, gave you, at your birth, the power to make the man you love as handsome as you are beautiful."

"If that is so," said the Princess, "I desire with all my heart that you may become the finest looking Prince in the wide world!"

The Princess had no sooner uttered the words than Prince Riquet with the Tuft stood before her transformed!

In face, in person, and in bearing she felt she had never seen his equal.

Some people tell us that it was not the fairy's magic which worked the change. They say that, as "beauty is in the eyes of the beholder," it was the great love that filled the heart of the Princess when she thought of all the Prince's goodness of heart and other great qualities that made her see him in quite a different light. However that may be, the Princess was eager to marry Prince Riquet with the Tuft as soon as she could obtain her father's consent. This the King gave at once, for he had long heard of the Prince's great intelligence and sweetness of disposition, and now that he saw him and heard him speak he was highly pleased to have him for his son-in-law. So the marriage took place the very next day, all the Court

sharing in the festivities which had already been prepared by the Prince's retainers.

Prince Riquet with the Tuft and his beautiful and witty Princess lived long and happily together, admired and loved by their loyal subjects in every part of their kingdom.

The White Cat

There was once a King who had three grown-up sons, and, fearing that their ambition might make them wish him out of the way in order that one or other of them might reign in his stead, he called them to him, and said:

"I wish to give up my Crown to one of you, but I think it is only right that you should, in the meantime, do your very best to please me. When I leave the throne I intend to retire to some place in the country, and as I might feel a little lonely, I think I should like to have a nice little dog to bear me company, so that one of you who will bring me the prettiest little dog shall be King in my place."

The Princes were rather surprised, but they at once prepared to say good-bye to their father, who told them to return in exactly a year from that day.

The three brothers swore eternal friendship for each other, and changed their names for fear of being recognized. Then they set out, all taking different roads.

The two elder had many adventures, but we shall only relate those of the youngest, who was both the handsomest and the most accomplished of the three.

He lost no time before starting his search. Every day he bought a new dog, parting with it as soon as he found a better bred or more handsome one.

One evening his road lay through a forest, and when he was about the middle of it a fearful thunderstorm came on; rain fell in torrents, he got wet to the skin, and, worst of all, he lost his way in the darkness. After wandering about without knowing even the direction in which he was going, he suddenly saw a bright light through an opening of the trees,

and he gladly went toward it, soon finding himself at the entrance to a superb palace. The gate was of burnished gold studded with gems, whose brilliance lighted up the whole surroundings. This was the light that had guided him. A stag's foot hung from the gate by a chain of diamonds; the Prince took hold of this and gave a tug, when he heard the ringing of a little gold bell inside.

A moment elapsed, then the door opened of itself. No one was visible, but a dozen hands, each holding a torch in the air, lighted up the entrance. He stood amazed and irresolute, but other hands from behind pushed him firmly forward. He went on, grasping the hilt of his sword, prepared for all risks, but on entering a marble hall two melodious voices begged him to have no fear of the hands which he saw. Thus encouraged, he went forward through endless suites of splendidly furnished rooms, all marvellously lit up. After conducting him through at least sixty apartments, the guiding hands stopped. A great armchair moved forward to the fireplace, where the fire began to burn brightly, and the hands took off his wet clothing. They drew forward a dressing-table furnished with the most costly articles for the toilet, they combed and brushed his hair, and dressed him in a much grander suit than any he had ever had. When they had finished, he looked as handsome as a young Greek god, and they led him to the superb dining-hall, on the walls of which were hung the portraits of all the cats famous in story—Puss in Boots, the Writing Cat, the Lady-Cat, the Sorcerers who had become Cats—and also all the rites and ceremonies of the Witch-revels.

The table was laid for two. The Prince was asking himself: "Why two?" when he saw some cats taking their places in a specially arranged orchestra. One had a music-book, another, evidently the conductor, had a roll of paper to beat time, and the others had small guitars. They all began to mew in different tones, and to twang the strings of the guitars. It was a strange concert, and the Prince clapped his hands over his

ears to shut out the discord, while he swayed with laughter at the grimaces made by the cat musicians.

Then entered a little figure about twenty inches high. The little creature was covered from head to foot with a veil of black crape. She was accompanied by two cats, who were also in mourning, and each had a sword hanging at his side. An escort of cats followed, carrying rat-traps full of rats and cages filled with mice.

The little figure threw back her veil, and the Prince saw the most lovely little white pussy-cat he had ever seen in his life. She looked very young and very sad, and she mewed to him so sweetly that his heart was quite touched with pity.

"King's Son," said she, "you are welcome. My mewing Majesty sees you with pleasure."

"Madam Puss," replied the Prince, "I thank you; but you are not an ordinary pussy-cat—your gift of speech, and your splendid castle, show me that."

"Cease paying me compliments," said Pussy, "I am simple in manner, but I like to be kind. Come, stop the music and serve supper."

Hands brought in supper and put it on the table. There were two dishes, one of stewed pigeons, the other of fat mice. Puss assured the Prince that he could eat without fear, as his food would always be separately cooked and served, so he ate with hearty appetite and enjoyed his supper. He noticed that the cat wore a portrait on a bracelet round her little front paw, and he asked her if he might see it. She showed it him willingly, and his surprise was great, for it was that of a young man so like himself that it might easily have been mistaken for his own.

After supper White Puss took her guest to a room where there was a platform arranged as a stage, on which a dozen cats and as many monkeys danced a ballet very cleverly. Then she wished the Prince good night, and he was conducted by the hands to a bedroom which was even more splendid than

the one he had been in before supper.

The next morning the Prince was awakened by a great stir and noise in the court of the castle. The attendant hands dressed him in hunting-costume. He went to look out of the window, and in the park he saw a great concourse of over five hundred cats, some holding greyhounds in leash, others winding their horns. White Puss was going hunting and wished the Prince to accompany her.

The hands mounted him on a wooden horse which either went at full gallop or walked, as desired.

White Puss herself rode on a monkey. She had taken off her veil and wore a dragoon's helmet, which gave her such a commanding appearance that all the mice were terrified when they saw her.

When the day's sport was ended, White Puss took a little hunting-horn, not more than three inches long, and blew two or three blasts, when all the cats came crowding round her. She returned to the castle with this feline escort, and again invited the Prince to go with her. He consented from politeness, but all this behaviour on the part of cats seemed to him too much like witches' enchantments.

They again supped together, and the fine wines the Prince drank made him completely forget about the little dog he was searching for to take to his father. He seemed to think of nothing but White Puss, and even forgot his country so far as to wish at times that he were a cat to pass the rest of his life in such good company, for there was no game or sport of any kind that White Puss would not set a-going for his entertainment; sometimes she even invented new games to amuse him.

It was almost a year since the Prince had left home, but he did not remember the fact till White Puss said to him one day:

"Do you know that you have only three days now left to seek for the little dog your father wants? Your two brothers

have got beauties."

"What!" exclaimed the Prince. "Have I actually forgotten the very thing I left home to do? Where shall I find such a little dog as is needed? And if I had it, where is the horse swift enough to take me to my father's palace in three days?"

He was in great distress, but White Puss came to the rescue.

"The wooden horse will not take one day to carry you home to your father's, and, as far as the little dog is concerned, here is an acorn containing one which is more lovely than the dog-star itself. Hold the acorn to your ear and you will hear it yelping.

"It is, however, important that no one should know of this little dog till you open it in the presence of your father. Promise me this."

The Prince was overjoyed. He readily gave his promise, thanked White Puss a thousand times for all her kindness, then mounted the wooden horse and set off.

He was the first of the three to arrive at the castle where he and his brothers had appointed to meet each other. As he dared not tell them of his extraordinary adventures, nor speak of the acorn he carried, he took a quite common dog with him, and they, very naturally, supposed it was the one he intended to offer the King, but they made no remark.

Next morning the three sons went together to their father. Each of the two elder carried a small basket, with a lovely little dog; these animals were so exquisitely fine and small that they seemed almost too fragile to be handled without hurting them. The dog led by the youngest looked quite horrid by contrast with these dainty little animals.

The King found it difficult to decide which was the prettier of the two little dogs, when the youngest son settled the matter by opening the acorn given him by White Puss. Inside there was a tiny dog lying on cotton-wool. It was so small it could go through a lady's ring, yet it was full of energy, and

danced on its tiny hind legs to the great delight of everyone present. It was so perfect in form and so dainty that the King was speechless with wonder. There could be no longer any doubt as to which of the sons had brought the best little dog.

The King, however, did not want to give up his Crown quite yet, so he told his sons that he would give them another year to seek for a piece of linen, so fine that it could pass through the eye of a needle such as is used in making Venetian point lace.

Each of the three set out again, but with fewer professions of friendship than before, the episode of the marvellous little dog having caused a certain degree of coolness between them.

Our Prince returned to the castle of White Puss, who had been very ill since he went away. When she saw him safe back, she recovered immediately and jumped high for sheer joy.

The Prince told her the result of his journey, and what the new quest was to be.

"That will be quite easy to procure," said she. "Some of my cats can spin thread like gossamer, so the piece of linen will be ready in time for you."

In the evening they had great fireworks to celebrate the Prince's return, and four cats which had stolen White Pussy's cheese and had been condemned to death were pardoned and set free, by request of the Prince, so no sadness clouded the joy of the evening.

For many weeks sports, games, and theatrical entertainments followed each other in rapid succession. White Puss was so clever that every day she found something interesting to do or to see, and this second year passed as quickly as the first had done.

White Puss, who never forgot to watch over the welfare of the Prince, told him again when it was time for him to return to his father. This time she gave him an equipage and an escort worthy of his royal birth. There was an open carriage of solid gold, drawn by twelve white horses, whose red velvet

housings were thickly embroidered with diamonds. It was followed by a hundred coaches, each drawn by eight grey horses, the coaches being filled with the great lords of the court in superb uniforms, and the carriages were accompanied by a thousand gentlemen of the Guards, mounted on chestnut steeds, and on the carriages and harness everywhere were ornamental devices with the portrait of the White Cat.

"Go and prosper," said she to the Prince. "Take this walnut with you. Do not break it till you are in the presence of the King; you will find in it the linen you desire."

"Dear little White One," said he, "I should prefer living here with you to any other earthly grandeur."

"King's Son," said she, "you are kind, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your affection for a poor little cat who is good for nothing but catching mice."

The Prince kissed the little white paw and departed.

This time he was the last of the three to arrive, and his brothers had already unfolded for the King's inspection their pieces of linen, so fine that they could be threaded through the eye of a darning needle, but neither of the pieces was sufficiently fine to pass through the eye of the fine lace-making needle which the King held in his hand. The linen these two Princes brought was really so fine that many people were dissatisfied with the King for being so exacting. While the matter was being discussed there was the sound of delightful music outside the palace—it was our young Prince arriving with his retinue.

He entered, saluted his father and kissed his brothers; then he produced the walnut and cracked it, but instead of a piece of linen he found a hazel-nut. This also he cracked, and found a cherry-stone. The courtiers looked at each other, and the King laughed quietly to himself. The Prince grew very red, but proceeded to break the cherry-stone, which was quite filled with its own kernel. Then, indeed, everyone laughed aloud and made game of him. He took no notice of their

ironical remarks, but opened the kernel, where he found a grain of wheat, and in the wheat one grain of bird-seed. Then he could not help saying to himself: "White Puss, White Puss, you are playing a practical joke on me!"

At that moment an unseen paw scratched the back of his hand, so that it bled slightly. Reassured, he opened the seed and, to the amazement of all, drew out a piece of linen four hundred yards long, on which were painted all kinds of birds, animals, and fishes, with trees, shrubs, and fruit. Besides all these, there were the sun, moon, and stars, and the portraits of all the reigning sovereigns in the world.

When the King saw this web unfolded, he became as white as his son had become red while searching for it. It was passed and repassed through the needle six times.

The King drew a long sigh; then, turning to his children, he said:

"Go and travel for yet another year, and he who will bring home the most beautiful young lady shall marry her and be crowned King. I wish my successor to be married, and I give you my word for it that I shall not again delay the reward."

As our Prince had already been twice successful, the injustice of his father's action fell entirely on him, but he was far too respectful to complain. He said not a word, but went back to his dear little White Puss.

She was expecting him, and was seated on a dais under a pavilion of cloth of gold. The road was strewn with flowers, and all the cats mewed their best to bid him welcome.

"Well!" she exclaimed. "Do you return again without your crown?"

"Madam," replied the Prince, "I believe it is grieving my father more to part with his Crown than it is going to please me to possess it."

"That makes no difference," said she; "you must do your best to deserve it, and since your father now wants a beautiful young lady to be taken to his Court, I shall seek for one who

will win the prize for you. In the meantime let us go on with the rejoicings I had arranged for your return. There is to be a naval engagement between my cats and the terrible rats of this country. My cats will find fighting at sea difficult, as they have a great fear of water, but otherwise they would have a very unfair advantage, and as I like to be just, we must equalize things."

The Prince praised her wise planning, and went with her to a terrace close to the sea.

The vessels of the cats were huge pieces of cork. The rats' boats were made of egg-shells joined to each other. The combat was a terrible one. Twenty times the rats were vanquished and victorious by turns, but at last Admiral Minagrobis, who commanded the feline fleet, reduced the rats to despair by eating up their general, and White Puss gave the signal to stop fighting. She had no desire to destroy the enemy completely. She reflected that, if there were neither rats nor mice in the country, her subjects would have nothing to hunt and would live in idleness, which would be fatal to the race.

The Prince spent this year like the two former ones, riding, hunting, fishing, or playing chess, a game in which White Puss excelled. Many times the Prince asked her to tell him if she were really a fairy, or if some fairy had turned her into a cat, but instead of giving him a direct answer she always beat about the bush in such a manner that he could make neither head nor tail of her meaning, and he concluded that she did not wish to be questioned on the subject.

The Prince would again have forgotten the end of the year, had not White Puss told him, the evening before the day he had to start, that it was for himself to decide whether or not he would take back a beautiful Princess to his father's Court. She told him that the hour for undoing the fatal work of the fairies had come, and that all he needed to do was to cut off her head and her tail and throw them into the fire.

"I!" cried he in horror. "Oh! little White One, you are

putting me to a terrible test! I am quite incapable of acting thus toward my kindest and best friend!"

She tried to persuade him to steel himself to do as she asked him, but all her eloquence failed, till she at last assured him that both his own happiness and hers depended on his complying with her request. Then, with a trembling hand, he drew his sword and cut off both her head and her tail.

Was he dreaming? What had happened? Instead of his poor White Puss, there stood before him the most beautiful girl his eyes had ever beheld.

At first he believed himself to be under some enchantment, but it was far otherwise. His action had broken the spell under which his dear White Puss, as well as all the inmates of the castle, had lain.

They trooped in, lords and ladies, with their cat-skins thrown across their shoulders, and all pressed forward to pay court to their dear young Queen, who received them with great kindness. Then she asked them all to retire for a while, as she wished to speak privately to the Prince. When they had withdrawn, and she was left alone with the Prince, she said:

"Do not think I was always a cat, or that my birth was not quite equal to your own. My father was monarch over six kingdoms. My mother, who loved to travel, wanted to go to a certain great mountain, and on the way she was told that near it was an enchanted castle into which no one dared enter but the fairies to whom it belonged, and that in the castle garden were found the finest fruits of the whole world. The Queen, my mother, had a great desire to taste some of these fruits, so she went to the door of the magnificent building and knocked repeatedly, but got no answer. She asked some of her attendants to climb over the garden walls, but the walls grew higher and higher, and when they brought ladders, these broke, and the men who were on them fell and were killed. The Queen got tents pitched quite near to the castle, and stayed there with her followers for six weeks. She was taken with a great

sickness, and her people feared she was going to die. One night she saw a very ugly little old woman sitting by her bed, and presently the visitor began to speak:

"'Since you are so determined to have some of our fruit,' said she, 'we shall give you some, but in return you must also make us a gift.'

"'Oh! for that,' said the Queen, 'just ask what you want.'

"'We want the little daughter who is coming to you soon. We shall come to fetch her as soon as she is born. She shall be our child, and we shall take good care of her and make her happy, but you shall not be allowed to see her again till she is married. Are you willing to accept our conditions?'

"'Quite willing,' said the Queen, 'for I feel I shall die soon, and a motherless child might be worse off than under your care.'

"The old fairy, having obtained this promise, then touched the Queen with her wand and cured her of her illness. My mother called her ladies and asked them to dress her at once, as she was going to call at the enchanted palace. At first they thought she was delirious, but finding they were mistaken, they dressed her, and she followed the old fairy. They entered the castle (the one in which we now are), and two fairies received them and bade the Queen welcome. They asked her if she wished the different fruits to come to her of their own accord, and my mother said she would like to see such an extraordinary sight.

"The old woman whistled three times, then called: 'Apricots, peaches, cherries, plums, pears, melons, apples, oranges, gooseberries, raspberries, come here!'

"'But,' said the Queen, 'these fruits ripen at different seasons!'

"'Not so, here,' replied the two fairies.

"There and then the fruits arrived pell-mell, neither bruising nor soiling themselves. Afterward the Queen went into the garden, where she spent three days and three nights

gathering store for the winter, and as none of the fruits ever spoiled, she had four thousand mules loaded with them to send home.

"When my mother left, the fairies promised her that they would give me the education needed for my rank as a Princess, and that they would invite her to my wedding when they should have found me a suitable husband.

"The King was delighted to have my mother back, and greatly enjoyed eating the splendid fruit. He did not know of the strange promise my mother had made to the fairies, neither did she tell him exactly where she had been.

"As the time when I was expected drew near, the Queen became very low-spirited, and deeply regretted her promise. At last she told the King all about it. He reproached her very severely for her foolishness, and then put her in a room in a tower, with guards all round it, to prevent her from giving away the little daughter, and he got nurses to take care of me night and day in his own palace.

"The fairies sent to fetch me, as they had arranged, but the escort were ugly little dwarfs, whom the King did not even receive civilly. The fairies were terribly angry, and after having sent every imaginable plague into his six kingdoms, they let loose their horrible dragon, which ate men, women, and children, and killed all the plants with its scorching breath.

"In vain the King consulted all the wise men and the magicians; none of them could help him. At last he went to ask advice from an old fairy whom he knew. She told him to give me to the fairies as had been promised, and to pardon the Queen and set her at liberty, telling him that by doing so he would avert further evils, and would bring prosperity to his subjects. The King found this very hard, as he loved his little daughter, but at last consented, to save his people from greater disasters.

"It was arranged that, eight days later, he and my mother

would take me in my cradle to the mountain of flowers, halfway between their palace and that of the fairies, and that they should wait there till the fairies came to fetch me.

"The Queen was pardoned, and with the King she arranged for the ceremony to take place with due respect to my rank.

"My cradle was made of mother-of-pearl. It was put on a light hand-barrow made of gold, and twenty-four Princesses of the royal blood were appointed to carry it. The whole of the ladies and gentlemen of the Court accompanied me.

"While they were carrying me up the flower-mountain there was a sudden burst of music, heralding the arrival of the fairies. There were thirty-six of them, all very old and very ugly. Each held an olive branch in her hand as a sign of peace. They were followed by the dragon which had been sent before to avenge them when my father had refused to give me up. The monster was led by a chain of diamonds attached to its neck.

"The thirty-six fairies almost smothered me with kisses; then they began their fairy-reel, which is a very merry dance round a circle made on the ground. Afterward the dragon came forward, and the three fairies to whom my mother had promised me seated themselves on its back, holding my cradle on their knees. The dragon spread out his great scaly wings, as fine as silk crape, and sped off through the air to the fairy palace.

"When my mother saw me on the dragon she shrieked aloud for fear, but my father did all he could to console her.

"My fairy guardians had built a tower for my own use, with handsome rooms, luxurious furniture, and interesting books; but the rooms had no doors, every one being entered by the windows, which were terribly high up. On the top of the tower, however, there was a beautiful garden.

"The fairies brought me up very well, and always dressed me in beautiful clothes. They had me taught everything that

a Princess of my age could learn, and always came on the dragon to visit me. I believed myself to be their own child. No one stayed with me in the tower, but I had a parrot and a lap-dog which kept me company, for they were endowed with reason and also with speech.

"One side of the tower looked over a road where I had never once seen anyone walking or driving, so I was immensely surprised one day, when, talking to my companions near the window, I looked out and saw a handsome young knight, who seemed to have overheard our conversation. He made me a low bow; then, as night was falling, he departed, after having sounded his bugle to my great delight.

"Next morning I ran to my window, and was overjoyed to see him again. He had a speaking-trumpet which enabled me to hear all he said, but I dared not answer back for fear of being heard by the fairies; however, I threw him some flowers, for which he thanked me. Then he said:

"'If you are willing to let me come every morning at this hour to talk to you a little, please throw something down, and I shall know that you consent.' I took my turquoise ring from my finger and dropped it down to him, signing quickly to him to go away, as I heard the fairy called Violence coming with my breakfast. As soon as she dismounted from the dragon she exclaimed:

"'I smell a man's voice here! Search, dragon!'

"I trembled with fear.

"'Has a voice a smell, dear Madam? And what mortal would dare to climb up here?' I asked.

"Violence made no answer, but when I had taken my breakfast she handed me my distaff, and said:

"'Having eaten, you must now get some work done. You did nothing at all yesterday.'

"As soon as she had gone, I threw down my distaff, and went up to the roof-garden. I had a very good field-glass, and in the distance I saw the young knight resting under a pavilion

of cloth of gold. He was surrounded by a great train of followers. I feared that, if he returned to the tower, he might be discovered by the dragon, so I told my parrot to fly to him, tell him of his danger, and say I did not wish him to come back.

"The parrot delivered my message correctly, and the King (for such he was) gave her a message for me and entrusted her with a ring, which she carried in her claw, and a tiny portrait of himself, which he tied under her wing.

"I awaited the return of my little courier with great impatience. When she arrived, she told me from the King that he was much too brave to give up his visits on account of the danger to himself, but that he would continue to come whenever there was a favourable opportunity. I began to weep, as I feared what the dragon might do, and to console me Poll gave me the ring, which was a very much handsomer one than the turquoise ring I had thrown down; then she lifted her wing, and I undid the string, and took the royal portrait, which I slipped inside my dress, and whenever I was very lonely I brought it out to gaze on it.

"With so many new thoughts, some pleasant, some sad, I began to feel restless and excited. The fairies imagined that I was weary of living alone, and they began to search for a husband for me, and they chose the dwarf King Migonnet, whose mind was as crooked as his body. His cruel disposition and violent temper made him dreaded by everyone near him. The parrot, who overheard them talking about it, came flying to me and said:

"'Oh! how sorry I shall be for you, my dear mistress, if you have to marry that horrid little Migonnet. The little monster terrifies me even to look at him! I know him only too well, because I was reared on the same branch as he, for he has eagle's claws instead of feet!'

"I was distracted with grief, and determined to die rather than marry Migonnet.

"In the morning my little dog, whose scent is very keen, told me that the King was at the bottom of the tower. I ran to the window, and through his trumpet he begged me to find some means of leaving the tower, or of letting him enter, as he wanted to marry me, and then I should be the greatest Queen in the world.

"I sent the parrot to tell him that what he asked was almost impossible, but that I would do my very best, if only he would not come daily, as the fairies would have no mercy.

"The King went away delighted, but I was terribly distressed, thinking of what I had promised to do. I could find no means of leaving the tower, and again I sent my parrot to tell him so, and he was ready to die with grief.

"My sadness increased daily and I wept the greater part of my time. Fairy Violence noticed my red eyes, and told me that if I did not tell her why I wept so much, she would burn me. I told her that I was weary of spinning, and that I wanted little nets to catch the birds which were destroying the fruits in the garden. She brought me pieces of cord to make the nets, and at the same time she told me to dress to receive King Migonnet, who would arrive presently.

"As soon as she had gone I hastened to make a ladder of the cords, and I sent the parrot to tell the King that I wanted him to come to the tower that night and to stand just beneath my window. I fastened the ladder firmly to the iron bar of the window, and prepared to descend, but before I could get out the King had mounted it and come into the room. I was so delighted to see him that I forgot all about the danger. He asked me to marry him, and we took the parrot and the dog as witnesses. Never before were people of such high rank married with so little ceremony.

"I told the King of the marriage the fairies had arranged for me with Migonnet, and I described his appearance, which horrified the King as much as it had done myself.

"It was night when he left, and shortly after his departure

I saw, coming through the air, a fiery chariot drawn by winged salamanders and escorted by guards mounted on ostriches.

"A few minutes later Violence made her appearance in my room.

"'Your intended husband has arrived,' said she. 'Prepare to receive him.'

"'Who told you that I wanted a husband?' I cried. 'Send King Migonnet home. I shall never be his wife.'

"'Oh, indeed!' said the fairy. 'But you must understand, you little rebel, that I am in no mood for joking, and I shall—'

"'What will you do?' said I, in desperation. 'Can you make my life more miserable than it already is, shut up as I am in this tower, with only my parrot and my lap-dog?'

"'You are an ungrateful little wretch!' said Violence. Then she went off to report our quarrel to her sisters.

"Both my parrot and my lap-dog scolded me for being so impudent, and begged me to conciliate the fairies by meekness and patience; but I would not listen to them.

"My interview with Migonnet took place on the roof-garden. He was very short, his legs were without bones, his feet were like eagle's claws, and he had to walk on both his knees and his feet at the same time, supporting the weight of his heavy, shapeless body on crutches. His head was enormous, and his red nose was so big and thick that a dozen birds could sit on it. His beard was so bushy that several canaries made their nests in it, and his long ears stood half a yard above his head. The flame of his chariot roasted the apples as he passed, and dried up the water in my little garden. He came forward to kiss me, but I fled down to my room and shut both the door and the windows, and Migonnet returned to the fairies in great wrath.

"The fairies begged his pardon, and undertook to tie my feet and hands while I was asleep, and to put me in his fiery chariot, so that he could fly away with me. They did not scold me, but behaved so kindly that both of my pets were

suspicious and warned me to beware of them; but I paid no attention to the warnings. I put out the ladder for my husband, as I had done before. He came up and entered the room, closing the window behind him, and we began to talk happily together, when, all of a sudden, my windows were burst open. Through one came the fairies on their dragon, and through the other came Migonnet in his fiery chariot.

"My husband the King, forgetful of his own safety, drew his sword to protect me, but the dragon killed him with his breath and swallowed him up before my eyes. In utter despair I rushed forward to the monster's fearful mouth, hoping he would devour me, but the cruel fairies held me back, crying:

"'No! Death is too good for such a wretch!'

"They touched me with their wand and I became a white cat. They brought me to this palace, and changed all the great lords and ladies of my father's kingdom into cats, except those who were in office at the Court. These they rendered invisible, all but their hands.

"They told me all about my rank and the incidents connected with my birth; also that both my father and my mother were dead. Then they told me that I should not get rid of my feline shape till I found a Prince resembling my dead husband who would be willing to deliver me. You, my Prince, are the image of him, and my miseries are ended!"

White Puss, now a great Queen, seated herself in a magnificent chariot, our young Prince by her side, and they set out for the palace, where the brothers of the Prince were already waiting. As the chariot neared the palace the Queen hid herself in a piece of rock crystal.

When they arrived at the palace, the two elder Princes were walking in the palace grounds with two very beautiful Princesses whom they had brought to show to the King. They asked their brother what the lady he brought was like. He said he had seen no beauties, so he only brought a little white cat. At this they burst out laughing.

The King welcomed the two Princes and their Princesses, whom he thought so beautiful that he could not decide which one should have the prize. He looked at the youngest, and said:

"So you come alone this time!"

"Your Majesty," replied the Prince, "will find in this piece of rock crystal a little white cat which mews so sweetly that I am sure it will please you."

The King advanced toward the lump of crystal, but at the same moment the Queen touched a spring inside it, the crystal fell apart, and she stepped out, like the sun from be-hind clouds, her golden hair hanging in long curls to her feet, and her white gauze robe girdled with flowers. At the sight, the King exclaimed with enthusiasm:

"This is she who has won the Crown!"

"Sire," said the Queen, "I cannot deprive you of a throne which you occupy so worthily. I have six kingdoms of my own. Allow me to offer you one of them, and to give one each to your two elder sons. In exchange for these three kingdoms, I would ask for your friendship, and for the hand of your youngest son as my husband."

The King bowed gracefully, while his courtiers cheered this speech to the echo.

The marriages of all three sons were celebrated at once with great pomp and amid general good-will; then the three couples set off, each to govern their own realm. As for the beautiful White Cat, she has been immortalized as much for her generous heart as for her learning and her beauty.

Prince Darling

There was once a King who was so just and so kind that his people surnamed him "the Good." One day when he was out hunting, a little rabbit, fleeing from the hounds, jumped right into his arms. The King sheltered the little trembling creature under his coat, saying to himself: "It came to me for safety; I must protect it." He carried the rabbit home to the palace, got a pretty little rabbit-hutch made for it, and gave orders that it was to be well fed and attended to.

During the night, when he was alone, he was astonished to find a beautiful lady standing before him, and he felt puzzled to know how she had come, as the door of his room was closed. She was dressed very simply, having neither gold nor silver embroidery, nor any jewels, but her soft robe was as white as snow, and her lovely hair was crowned with white roses, shedding a delicate perfume all around.

While the King looked in silent amazement, his fair visitor addressed him:

"I am Fairy Candour. I was in the wood when you were hunting and wished to find out for myself whether you are as kind-hearted as people say you are. I therefore assumed the form of a rabbit, and took refuge in your arms, for I know that those who have pity in their hearts for a dumb animal have even more for their brother man, and if you had not sheltered me I should have known you were a hypocrite.

"I have come to thank you for your protection, and to tell you that under all circumstances you can rely on me as a friend, and now you have only to ask what you wish; if it is at all possible, I shall give it you."

"Madam," said the good King, "since you are a fairy, you

know all that I wish. I have only one son, whom I love with all my heart, so that people generally name him Prince Darling. If you wish to do me a kindness, promise me to be a good friend to my boy."

"With all my heart I promise you that," said the fairy. "I can make your son grow up either the handsomest prince in the world, or the richest, or the most powerful; choose which you would prefer him to be."

"I do not specially desire any of these great gifts for my son," said the King, "but I should greatly like him to be the best Prince ever known. Of what use would good looks, riches or great kingdoms be to him, if he were a bad man? You know as well as I that he could be miserable with all these advantages, and that goodness alone can ever bring happiness."

"You are quite right there," said Candour, "but even I cannot make your son a good man unless he himself wishes to be good, and will strive himself to be so. All that I can promise is to watch over him, to give him good advice, to point out his faults to him, and even to punish him if he does not try to correct himself of them and learn to deny himself."

The good King was quite pleased with the fairy's promise. He did not live long after, but he died quite happy, knowing that his son had such a good kind friend as Fairy Candour.

Prince Darling was inconsolable. He loved his father dearly, and would willingly have given all he possessed to save his life, had that been possible.

Two days after the death of the good King, when Prince Darling had gone to bed. Candour suddenly appeared to him.

"I promised your father," said she, "to be a good friend to you, and in order to keep my word I have come to make you a present."

At the same time she put a small gold ring on his finger, saying to him:

"Take good care of this ring; it is much more precious than diamonds. Every time you do anything wrong, it will

prick your finger, but if in spite of the prick you continue the wrong action, you will lose my friendship and make me your enemy."

When she finished this speech, she disappeared, leaving Prince Darling greatly astonished.

For a considerable time the Prince behaved so well that the ring never once needed to prick him, and he was so well pleased with himself that he was always smiling. This made people add 'Happy' to his name 'Darling.'

Some months later the young Prince went hunting, but came back without having caught anything. This annoyed him and put him in a bad humour. He imagined, for a moment, that the ring pressed him a little, but as it did not actually prick him he hardly noticed it. As he entered his room, his little dog Flora came jumping to welcome him, wanting to lick his hand.

"Get out of my way," said he crossly. "I can't be bothered with you just now."

The little creature did not understand, but tugged at his coat to draw his attention. In his ill-temper the Prince lifted his foot and kicked her out of his way. The ring pricked him sharply, as if it had been a pin. This made him think of his conduct, and feeling both annoyed and ashamed, he sat down sulkily in the darkest corner of the room. It was a new and a disagreeable experience for him to be found fault with. He said to himself:

"Really, my fairy friend is making a fool of me! What wrong is there in giving a kick to an animal that is pestering me? What is the use of being master of a great empire, when I am not at liberty to beat my dog if I like?"

"I am not making a fool of you," said a voice, replying to the Prince's thoughts. "You have committed three faults instead of one. You let yourself get cross because you did not have what you wanted, and because you think both men and animals are made only for your pleasure. You flew into a

passion, which is very wrong, and in your passion you were cruel to a little animal that had done nothing to deserve such treatment. I know that you are greatly the superior of a dog, but if it is to be accepted that the great and powerful can tyrannize over those who are beneath them, I might either flog you or kill you, as a fairy is vastly more powerful than a man. The real advantage of being master over a great empire does not consist in having power to do all the wrong you care to do, but the power to do all the good you can."

Prince Darling saw his fault, and felt sorry for a little while. He promised to try to correct his own bad temper, but he soon forgot. Unfortunately his mother had died when he was very little, and he had been brought up by a very foolish old nurse, who let him have his own way in everything. When he wanted anything he had only to cry or fly into a passion, stamping his feet or yelling at the top of his voice. The stupid woman gave him what he wanted to pacify him, and it made him very obstinate and self-willed. She told him daily that soon he would be a great King, and that all Kings were happy because they could get everything they wanted, as everyone had to obey them and respect them, and no one could prevent a King from doing what he liked.

When he grew big enough to understand, he quite recognized how wrong these ideas were, and he saw that nothing was so ignoble as pride, vanity, and obstinacy. He really made many efforts to correct himself, but these bad habits had become almost part of his nature, and nothing is so difficult to cure as a bad habit learned when young. His heart was not naturally bad or cruel, and sometimes he shed tears as he said to himself:

"I am very unfortunate. I have to fight my own pride and my own temper every day, and yet they get the better of me. If I had been corrected when I was young, it would have been better for me to-day."

His ring pricked him many a time. Sometimes he attended

to the warning at once, sometimes he paid no heed, but continued his wrong course. The strange thing was that for a slight fault the ring gave a very tiny prick, but for a grave fault it pricked firmly till the finger bled. At last he lost patience, and making up his mind to do as he liked without restraint, he drew off the ring and threw it away.

He felt greatly relieved when he had no more pricking to worry him, and believed himself to be enjoying life for the first time. He spent his whole time in idle amusements, and even in wrongdoing from which he would have shrunk when younger, and at last he behaved so badly that no nice people liked to be in his company.

One day when the Prince was out for an airing he saw a girl who was so beautiful that he determined to marry her. Her name was Zelia, and she was as well-behaved as she was good-looking, but she was of very humble birth.

The Prince thought Zelia would be only too glad to marry him and become a real Queen, so he asked her at once to be his wife, but the young girl answered him with great frankness:

"Sire, I am only a peasant girl, without fortune, but though I had a fortune I would not marry you."

"Am I so displeasing to look at?" asked he, a little hurt.

"No, Sire," replied Zelia; "you appear to me just what you are, a very handsome man. But of what use would your good looks, your wealth, or the fine clothes and grand coaches you promise, be to me, if your daily behaviour forced me to despise you and hate you?"

The Prince was very angry at this plain speaking, and ordered his officers to take Zelia by force to the palace. The young girl's contempt for him rankled in his mind all day, but he was so much in love with her that he could not bring himself to ill-treat her.

Among the favourites of Prince Darling was a foster-brother, who shared all his secrets. He was a bad man,

brought up among people of low tastes. He kept himself in the Prince's favour by flattering him and encouraging his evil habits. As he saw that the Prince looked sad, he asked him the cause. The Prince told him that he was hurt by the contempt Zelia had shown him, for he knew he had deserved it, and he had just made up his mind to change his manner of living, as he felt he could never win Zelia's love unless he became a good man.

"You would change your ways because of the opinion of a country girl! You are surely very kind!" sneered the foster-brother. "If I were in your place, I should soon teach her proper place. Have you forgotten what is due to your rank as King, and how humiliating it would be for you to be ruled by the opinions of a mere peasant who ought to be proud to be one of your slaves? Shut her up. Give her nothing but bread and water, and if that does not bring her to her senses, torture her to death, as a lesson to everyone who disobeys you. You would be disgraced for ever if people thought a girl could resist you, and your subjects would forget that they only exist for your pleasure."

"But," replied the Prince, "should I not be still more disgraced if I were to cause the death of an innocent girl? For, after all, Zelia has done nothing wrong."

"No one is innocent who refuses to do your bidding," said this false man; "but it would be better for you to be accused of injustice than to be looked on as a contemptible weakling whom your subjects may despise or contradict when they like."

The flatterer had touched the Prince on his weakest side, for he was vain and proud of his power, so the fear of losing his authority made him listen to this bad advice and stifle his desire to be a better man.

The foster-brother saw that he had shaken the Prince's resolution, and in order to follow up the advantage he had gained, he got three of the worst of the Prince's bad

companions to come to sup with him that evening. They put a drug in the Prince's wine, knowing that it would madden him; then they twitted him with being under the thumb of an ignorant country-girl, who could snap her fingers at him when she chose.

The Prince, no longer master of himself, rose and swore he would be revenged; then, with his drunken companions, he staggered off toward Zelia's room, of which he had the key. He unlocked the door, and with derisive oaths they all reeled in, to find the room empty!—Zelia was not there!

The Prince's anger knew no bounds. He vowed that he would severely punish anyone who could even be suspected of having helped Zelia to escape. His companions, hearing what he said, determined to seize the opportunity to ruin Suliman, the Prince's former tutor, whom they hated and feared because he was good and just, and had tried to persuade the Prince to give up his bad habits.

Suliman loved the Prince sincerely, and at first Darling had taken his advice, but latterly he had resented it, and banished the good tutor from the Court.

The Prince, nevertheless, respected Suliman in his heart, and was often heard to speak of him as a good, just man, though he did not wish his interference, and would not have him near the palace.

The bad companions had always feared that Darling might change his mind and recall Suliman, so they now invented a story to the effect that some people had heard Suliman boast that he would let Zelia out of the room where she was imprisoned. This story they told to the Prince, who at first could hardly believe it, but they bribed three other bad men to swear they had heard Suliman say so. On hearing this, the Prince was beside himself with rage, and ordered his foster-brother to send soldiers to bring Suliman to the palace in chains like a criminal.

After giving this order. Prince Darling retired to his room

to brood over his loss.

As he entered, a terrible peal of thunder shook the palace to its foundations, and he felt the ground trembling beneath him; then the Fairy Candour appeared. In a severe voice she said:

"I promised your father to give you good advice, and to chastise you if you refused to follow it. You have chosen to despise my warnings and to act contrary to my advice. As a consequence you have destroyed your manhood, and have nothing left but the outward form of a man. Your evil deeds have changed you into a monster, abhorred by both heaven and earth. It is time for me to fulfil my promise by meting out your punishment. I shall now take from you even the semblance of a man, and you shall become like the beasts whose habits you have acquired. You have been like a lion in fury, a wolf in greed, a serpent in ingratitude, and a bull in brutality. In your new form I condemn you to bear a resemblance to all these animals."

Candour had hardly finished speaking when the Prince found, with horror, that he had taken the form she described. He had the head of a lion, the horns of a bull, the legs of a wolf, and the tail of a serpent. He found himself in a great forest, beside a clear stream in which he saw the reflection of his horrible appearance, and he heard a voice from above him saying:

"Look at yourself and consider carefully the state to which your vices have brought you; then remember that your soul is a thousand times more frightful than your body."

Darling recognized the voice of Candour, and in a burst of fury he turned to rush at her and devour her, but no one was to be seen, and the voice continued:

"Your rage and your evil intentions are powerless to disturb me. Your pride needs still to be humbled, so I am going to put you under the power of your own subjects."

Darling turned from the fountain which showed him his

horrible form so plainly, and thought he would hide himself in the wood, but he fell into a hole which had been dug to trap bears. Some hunters who were hiding in the branches of a tree came down, and, having chained him, led him to his own capital city. On the way, instead of being sorry for the conduct which had brought him to such a pass, he cursed the fairy in his heart, bit his chains, and gave himself over to fury.

As he and his captors neared the city they noticed that some great event was being celebrated. The hunters asked some passers-by what it meant. They replied:

"The people are rejoicing because Prince Darling, who treated his subjects so badly, has been killed in his room by a thunderbolt." For such was the popular belief. "The gods," they added, "could no longer endure his crimes and his wickedness, so they have rid the earth of him. Four great lords, who were his companions in vice, made an attempt to seize the throne and share the kingdom between them, but the people, knowing that it was they who had ruined their King, set upon them and killed them. The good lord Suliman, whom the Prince had condemned to death, has been crowned King, and the event is being celebrated as a National Deliverance, for Suliman is a good man, and will restore peace and plenty to our country."

Darling felt ready to burst with rage when he heard all this, but he had a greater trial to face when they arrived at the great square in front of the palace, where, on a superb throne, sat Suliman, surrounded by crowds who shouted loudly:

"Long live King Suliman! May he have many years of happiness to enable him to repair the evil wrought by his predecessor!"

Suliman stood up and made a sign with his hand to the noisy multitude, who immediately disposed themselves to listen in silent respect. Then he said:

"I accept the Crown you offer me for the time being, but

I do so to preserve it for your rightful King, my former pupil, Prince Darling. He is not dead, as you suppose. A fairy has told me this, and perhaps you and I may yet have the pleasure of seeing him turn from his evil ways and become again the good, kind man that nature intended him to be. Alas! he was led astray by flatterers. I knew him well, and his heart was good. He would have been a father to his subjects had it not been for those who were around him, who poisoned his mind with evil thoughts and set him a bad example. You and I must hate his vices, but we must be sorry for him and pray that he may repent of his wrongdoing, and may be restored to his right mind. For myself I should be only too happy if, by shedding my blood, I could see him again on the throne, with the good character and good desires which would enable him to reign worthily."

This speech cut Darling to the heart. He saw clearly how sincere and how faithful this good man's friendship had been, and, for the first time, he saw clearly how wicked his own conduct had been, and blamed himself for the misfortune that had come upon him. As soon as this better mood began, his fury was calmed, and he began to reflect on the many wrong things he had done. His shame was great, and he confessed to himself that he had deserved an even greater punishment than had been laid on him. He ceased struggling to get out of the iron cage in which he was now chained, and became as quiet as a lamb. His captors took him to a great building where all the wild animals and monstrous creatures were kept, and they chained him in one of the compartments.

Darling resolved to begin to mend his ways at once, and his first step in the right direction was taken when he became quite docile and obedient to his keeper. The man was a brutal bully who beat the creatures under his care without rhyme or reason whenever he was in a bad temper, and Darling's gentleness did not save him from many a cruel blow. One day, when the fellow had fallen asleep, a tiger broke its chain and

sprang on him to tear him to pieces. For a moment Darling was tempted to rejoice that the tiger was going to rid him of his persecutor, but next moment a feeling of pity for the unfortunate wretch made him wish he could free himself to go to his assistance—he wished to render good for evil, by saving the keeper's life.

Just as the desire arose. Darling found his cage was open. He flew to the assistance of the man who was struggling to defend himself against the tiger. The wretched man thought his last hour had come when this other monster bounded toward him, but his fear was changed to joy when he saw it strangle the tiger and then come to lie down at his own feet. The man was filled with gratitude, and was bending over to pat the head of the monster which had saved his life, when he heard a voice saying:

"No good action goes without its reward."

At the same time he found there was no monster to be caressed, but in its stead a very handsome little dog, which licked the hand stretched out to pat him.

Darling was delighted with this new change of form, and gambolled joyfully round the keeper, who lifted the dog in his arms and carried him to the King, to whom he told the wonderful story.

The Queen was so delighted with the beautiful dog that she kept it as a pet, and it accompanied her everywhere, carried on a silk cushion by her favourite page. Darling might have thought himself very fortunate if he could only have forgotten that he ought not to be a dog, but that he should be a man and a king!

The Queen, who fondled him, often began to fear that he would grow too fat, so she consulted the most learned doctors of the Court on this subject. These gentlemen produced weighty books and ancient parchments to prove that dogs thrive best on a spare diet of bread and water, and as the Queen followed this advice rather too strictly, poor Darling

felt ready to die of hunger the half of his time, but he told himself he must learn to be patient.

One morning, when he got his little roll of bread for his breakfast, he carried it in his mouth to the garden of the palace to eat it near a brook which he remembered.

The brook was no longer there, but in his search for it he came to a great house whose walls sparkled with gold and precious stones. Crowds of magnificently dressed men and women were going into it, and they all appeared to be gay, for there were sounds of music and dancing coming from all the brightly lighted windows; but what seemed strange indeed was that those who came out from it were thin, pale, and covered with hideous-looking boils and sores, while they had only a few filthy rags to cover themselves with. Some, indeed, fell dead on the threshold as they came out, having no strength to crawl farther. Some went a little way, then lay down to die of hunger, begging for a crust of bread from the gay crowds who were flocking to the house, but none in these crowds even looked at them as they passed.

Darling saw a young girl trying to pull up some grass to eat to satisfy her hunger. He went toward her, saying to himself:

"I am hungry, but I am not dying of hunger. I can wait till dinner-time, and perhaps my roll will save this girl's life."

He held out the roll to her. She snatched it from him and ate it greedily. It seemed to renew her strength, and Darling, delighted to have been in time to save her, turned and began to walk back toward the palace.

On the way he heard a woman's voice calling for help. It seemed to be Zelia, who was being dragged by four men who wanted to force her to go into the brightly lighted house. At that moment Darling regretted having lost his monster form, for he thought it would have enabled him to terrify these bad men.

"What can a poor little dog do to help her?" he asked himself in great distress; but he did his best by barking and trying

to bite the heels of the girl's captors. They kicked him out of their way, but he returned to the attack repeatedly, till one kick seemed to blind him for a while, and he lost sight of them.

His heart was torn with remorse as he told himself that, but for his own wickedness in imprisoning Zelia, she would not have been in the hands of these bad men.

Suddenly Darling heard the sound of a window opening, and his joy was great when he saw a maiden, who resembled Zelia, throw him a plateful of good roast beef and close the casement quickly. As Darling was very hungry he bounded forward to take some of the meat, when the girl to whom he had given his roll that morning came up and called him to her. Lifting him in her arms, she said:

"Poor little animal, you must not touch any food coming from that house. It is poisoned and would kill you. That is the palace of the terrible fairy Self-Indulgence, who poisons everyone who enters her domains."

Then Darling heard a voice saying, as before: "No good action goes without its reward," and at the same moment he found himself changed into a beautiful white dove. He remembered that white was the favourite colour of Candour, and he began to hope that in the end she would restore him to his original form.

His first desire was to find out what had become of Zelia, so he spread his wings and flew all round the house. Seeing an open window, he flew in and looked everywhere; but Zelia was not there. He was terribly grieved, but determined to fly to the end of the earth, if necessary, in order to find her. He sped on for several days without stopping, until, when crossing a desert, he noticed the mouth of a cave. Flying low, he entered this cave, where to his great delight he found Zelia sitting beside a hermit and sharing his frugal meal of ripe fruit. Darling perched on her shoulder and rubbed his soft head against her neck and face, cooing all the time to show her how

pleased he was.

Zelia was charmed with the gentle little dove, and stroked its soft feathers with her hand. At the same time she spoke to it, though she did not know that it could understand her words. She told it that she accepted the gift of itself, which it had made to her, and that she would love and cherish it as long as she lived.

"What have you done, Zelia?" said the hermit. "Do you know that you have just plighted your troth?"

"Yes, my dear girl," said Prince Darling, who at that moment regained the power of speech, "the spell of my enchantment cannot be broken till you say you are willing to marry me. You have just promised me to love me always. I ask you to assure my happiness by consenting to our union, and I shall beg Fairy Candour, my protectress, to give me back the form which was mine when I was fortunate enough to hear you say my appearance pleased you."

The Prince had barely uttered these words when his own proper shape was restored.

"You need not fear that Zelia will be fickle," said Candour, throwing off the hermit's form in which she had disguised herself. "Zelia loved you whenever she saw you, but she knew that your character did not correspond with your appearance, and although only a poor girl she was too well brought up to marry a bad man. Your better nature has now reasserted itself, and she sees you now as Nature intended you to be, a good man as well as a good-looking one. On that sure foundation your marriage will be happy."

Both Zelia and Prince Darling threw themselves at the fairy's feet, to thank her for her protecting kindness, and for the punishment that had brought the Prince to his senses. Zelia joyfully gave her promise, and Fairy Candour herself married them there and then, while they knelt at her feet. She finished by saying:

"Rise up, my children. I shall now take you to the palace,

that Prince Darling may ascend the throne of which he is now worthy."

When Candour finished speaking Prince Darling and Princess Zelia found themselves in the throne-room in the presence of Suliman. This good man himself rose and seated the Prince on his father's throne, and crowned him King; he then was the first of Darling's faithful subjects to kneel and swear loyalty to him.

Darling and Zelia reigned long and happily, and the young King never again needed to be reminded of ill-doing by the pricking of the fairy's ring.

Goldenlocks

Once there was a King whose only daughter was so beautiful that there was no one in the world fit to compare with her. Her exquisitely graceful figure and lovely face were set off by a glory of golden hair such as no one had ever seen. It was finer than the finest silk, and so abundant and so long that it fell in shining, rippling curls to her very feet. She crowned it daily with a garland of flowers, and let it fall over her graceful shoulders and rich robes like a mantle. Because of her marvellous hair she was known everywhere by the name of Goldenlocks, and her beauty was such that no one could see her without loving her.

Among the neighbouring sovereigns was a young King, who was very rich. This monarch heard so often of the beautiful Princess with the golden locks, that although they had not met, he fell violently in love with her; he let his imagination dwell on her to such an extent that at last he could neither eat nor sleep, and he resolved to send an ambassador to ask her hand in marriage. He got a splendid State coach made, and sent a hundred superbly caparisoned horses and a hundred riders in gold and scarlet liveries with the ambassador, as an escort for the Princess. He never doubted that she would accept his proposal gladly.

After the escort had started, the Court could talk of nothing but the approaching marriage, and preparations for celebrating it were begun. The rooms to be occupied by the bride were newly furnished in the richest and most fashionable manner, and new dresses for every day of the year, of the most costly velvets, satins, or brocades, embroidered with diamonds, pearls, and emeralds, were ordered by the King to

be made, and to be ready for the bride's use when she should arrive.

After travelling many days the ambassador arrived at the palace of Goldenlocks, and was granted an immediate audience.

He delivered his message and laid out before the Princess the costly jewels which his master had sent for her acceptance. What was his surprise, as well as his disappointment, when Goldenlocks told him to thank the King, his master, for the honour he did her in asking her to be his wife, but to tell him that she had no intention of marrying anyone at that time! Of course she could not accept the valuable presents sent, since she was not willing to marry the sender, but to show that she did not wish to be ungracious, she kept a pretty little box of fine English pins—articles which could not be obtained in her own country.

The ambassador took his leave and set off with a sad heart to return to the Court of his own King, where he was awaited with impatience. When he arrived with no golden-haired beauty in the coach there was great lamentation, and the disappointed young King was quite inconsolable.

Among the lords of the Court was a youth named Avenant, who was of quite extraordinary beauty. His elegant figure and frank, handsome face, together with his winning charm of manner, were so pleasing that people said it was like the rising sun, which brightens all around it. Everyone loved him, except two or three envious people, such as are to be found everywhere, who hated the youth because the King regarded him with special favour.

Avenant was one day standing near a group of courtiers who were criticizing the ambassador because of his failure to bring Goldenlocks back with him.

"He had not used much eloquence, I think!" said one of them.

"I agree with you," said Avenant carelessly. "If the King

had given me the mission I feel sure the Princess would have come back with me!"

Some of these men were wicked enough to repeat these words to the King in such a way as to make his Majesty think that Avenant had boasted that his own personal attractions were so great that the Princess would have followed him anywhere, and that she would have fallen in love with him even in preference to his Majesty.

"Only think of his presumption!" said they. "To think that he would have succeeded where your Majesty has failed!" This made the King furious:

"Ha!" said he, "this pretty pet of mine makes game of my misfortune, does he? He makes himself of more importance than I am! We shall see! Throw him into the dungeon and let him die of hunger!"

The guards went to find Avenant, who by this time had quite forgotten his thoughtless words. They dragged him to a tower and heaped insults on him, handling him roughly on the way. They left him in the dark dungeon without food, and with only a little straw on which he could lie down. After a time he was ready to die of hunger, and suffered from such thirst that he must have died had not a glimmer of light from the slit high up in the wall fallen for a moment on some water which was oozing through the ground at one side of the dungeon.

He lay down on the ground and cooled his lips in the tiny stream, sucking in the fresh water as it rose. Feeling somewhat refreshed, he began to reflect upon his hard fate.

"How have I offended the King?" he asked himself in piteous tones. "He had no more loyal subject or more faithful friend. I would willingly have died for him!"

These words he repeated again and again, though the walls could give him no answer.

After some days, the King, who felt lonely without his friend, and who may have begun to feel some remorse, went

for his morning walk along a path which passed close by the tower. Hearing the pitiful sound, he recognized Avenant's voice, though it was weak and tremulous, and he stopped to listen, in spite of the attempts of his courtiers to lead him away.

"Surely, Sire," said they, "you are not going to amuse yourself by listening to that wretch!"

"Have done!" replied the King. "It is my will to listen!"

Soon he made out every word of the poor youth's lament, and the tears rushed down his cheeks. He ordered the warden to open the door of the tower, and he himself called Avenant by name.

Avenant, who could hardly stand, groped his way along the wall toward the door, not knowing what fate might have in store for him. At the door he fell on his knees and kissed the King's feet, while he sobbed:

"Wherein have I offended your Majesty, that I should be so cruelly punished?"

"You made game of me and my ambassador," replied the King. "You said that if I had sent you for the Princess Goldenlocks, you could easily have brought her back with you."

"That is quite true," said Avenant. "I, who know you so well, could have told her of all your good qualities, and I should have described you so eloquently that she could not have helped wanting to come with me; but what was there in that to displease you. Sire?"

The King saw that he had judged the young man wrongly, and he looked angrily at those who had deceived him. He led Avenant to the palace, telling him as they went how deeply he regretted having punished him so unjustly, and after bidding the servants bring refreshments, told him to rest till supper, after which they would have a little private talk together.

As Avenant was young and healthy, the good food and refreshing wine soon restored his strength, and having

nothing now to sadden him he recovered his lightness of heart.

In due time he partook, also, of the grand supper prepared for him, and at its close the King summoned him to his private apartment. After a few minutes' conversation:

"Avenant," said the King, "I am still deeply in love with the Princess Goldenlocks. Her refusal has not completely discouraged me, but I find it difficult to see how I can induce her to consent to marry me. I should like to send you to see if you could not succeed."

"I ask for nothing better, Sire," replied Avenant. "I shall set off to-morrow, if you wish it."

"That is too soon," said the King, "for I must give you a fitting escort."

"No escort is necessary," said Avenant. "All I need is a good horse and your Majesty's letters of introduction."

The King, delighted to find the youth so ready to serve him, threw his arms round him and kissed him fondly.

Next morning the finest horse in the royal stables was led to the door of the palace, and Avenant, bearing the King's letters, mounted and rode off on his mission, followed by the admiring eyes of all in the royal household.

During the whole of the long journey Avenant thought of nothing but how he could best plead the King's cause.

When his horse needed rest to and drink, he would choose a shady part of some wood near the banks of a stream, and while his horse rested he sat on the grass and prepared the speech which he would make to the Princess.

One day, while he was thus engaged, a golden carp, chasing an insect, overleapt itself, and fell on the bank near him. It was early morning, for he always started at break of day, and the fine fish would have made him a good breakfast, but Avenant only saw the agony of the beautiful fish struggling for its life. He rose from the grass and, lifting the carp, dropped it gently into the water. As soon as it felt itself in the

fresh cool stream again, it revived and sped like a flash to the deepest part, below the overhanging turf, but it rose again so near the surface that Avenant could see it, and to his astonishment he heard it say:

"Avenant, I thank you for what you have done for me. I shall reward you."

Continuing his journey the next day Avenant saw a raven pursued by an eagle, which would have torn it to pieces had not Avenant come to its rescue.

"How the strong oppress the weak!" thought he, and, taking an arrow from his quiver, he drew his bow and shot the eagle a moment before it could seize its prey. The eagle fell to the ground dead, and the raven, delighted to find itself alive and unhurt, came and perched on the branch of a tree quite near.

"Avenant," said he, "you are very kind to have taken the trouble to help me, who am only a poor raven, and I shall not forget your kindness. One day I may be able to reward you."

Avenant again marvelled at this strange happening, and continued his journey. One day he started so early to avoid too much travelling in the heat of the day that he could hardly see his way through a wood he had to cross. Quite near him he heard the despairing shriek of an owl.

"There's a poor owl in a bad plight!" said he to himself. "I should not be surprised if it is in the meshes of some hunter's net." He groped about on one side and another, trying to follow the sound, and came upon some nets spread on the ground in which the unfortunate owl had got snared.

"What a pity it is," thought he, "that men seem to take so much pleasure in tormenting each other and in persecuting the dumb creatures that do them no harm!"

He took out his knife and cut the meshes that held the owl, and, finding itself set free, the bird swiftly flew up, but made a downward swoop toward its benefactor to say:

"Avenant, it needs not a long speech to make you

understand how much I am obliged to you. I have a grateful heart. I shall reward you."

These were the three principal adventures of Avenant's journey, for he was in such a hurry to get to the end of it that he wasted no time.

When he arrived at the palace of Princess Goldenlocks, he found that it surpassed in splendour everything he had imagined.

Having removed the traces of his journey, Avenant combed and powdered his hair, as was the fashion of that day. He wore his Court attire of scarlet and gold, the velvet cap adorned with scarlet and white plumes. His splendidly embroidered cape was thrown carelessly over his shoulder, and his shoes glistened with diamond buckles. Thus arrayed he took a dainty basket in which was a lovely little dog which he had brought to offer to the Princess, and presented himself at the gate of the palace. He was so handsome and so gracious in manner and speech that the guards bowed low before him. He told them his name and his errand, then gave the letters of introduction to be taken to the Princess.

The lords-in-waiting hurried to tell Goldenlocks that Avenant had come from the great King who was her nearest neighbour.

"Avenant!" said Goldenlocks. "That is a pleasant name, and I doubt not its bearer is handsome and pleasing to look upon."

"Indeed he is!" said the maids-of-honour. "We saw him from the garret, where we were getting flax for our spinning, and so long as he stood under the windows we could do nothing but look at him!"

"That is a nice story, indeed!" said the Princess. "You amuse yourselves watching young gentlemen! Come! Make haste to dress me. Bring my blue satin pearl-embroidered gown, comb out my golden curls, weave a wreath of fresh flowers for my hair, and give me my fan and my high-heeled

shoes."

The ladies ran in haste to do her bidding; they dressed her like a Queen, and she went into the great gallery of mirrors, to view herself from every side, and to make sure that no part of her toilet had been neglected. Having satisfied herself on that point, she went to the audience-chamber and seated herself on her magnificent throne of ivory, ebony, and gold.

She commanded her maidens to take their musical instruments, seat themselves at a convenient distance, and sing softly to low sweet accompaniments, so that the music should not interfere with the conversation she held with her guest.

When Avenant was brought into the throne-room and saw the Princess, he was struck dumb with admiration, and his well-prepared speech went almost out of his memory. For a few moments he had not a word to say. Nevertheless he took courage, and having begun to deliver his master's message and to plead for him, his eloquence increased at every sentence. He finished by entreating the Princess not to give him the pain of returning to his master without her.

"Dear Avenant," said the Princess, "you plead well, and all your arguments are good. You have so favourably impressed me that I am inclined to your petition more than to that of any other who has ever come to me. I cannot, however, go with you at once, for this reason: While I was walking by the river a month ago I took off my glove, and in doing so I drew from my finger a very precious ring which, unfortunately, fell into the stream. That ring I prized more than my father's kingdom, and my grief for its loss is inexpressible. I have made a vow that I shall listen to no proposal of marriage unless he who comes as ambassador can find this ring and bring it to me. Perchance you may recover it; otherwise your pleading is useless."

Avenant was much astonished at this reply, but he made the Princess a courtly bow, and, before retiring, begged her acceptance of the little dog and a magnificent scarf. But the

Princess said she wanted no presents; she hoped he would pay attention to what she had said to him.

When Avenant was conducted to the house where he was to lodge he went to bed without supper. Frisky, his little dog, also refused to eat, and lay down on the bed beside him. The whole night long Avenant lay awake sighing. "What hope is there of finding a ring lost in a great river a month ago?" said he. "It would be folly to try. The Princess has set me an impossible task in order to get rid of me."

Frisky, who saw his grief, was as much distressed as his master, but he tried his best to comfort him.

"My dear master," said he, "I beg of you not to give up hope of succeeding. When daylight comes, let us go to the riverside; it can do no harm to look for the ring."

Avenant patted him gently without speaking, and worn out with the emotions of the day, he fell sound asleep.

At the first streak of dawn the little dog jumped off the bed, and frisked about to such good purpose that he awakened his master.

Avenant dressed and went down to the garden, hardly caring what he did. From the garden he strolled toward the river, unconsciously following the lead of the little dog. He walked slowly, his cap drawn over his eyes and his arms crossed on his bosom. He was too sad to take notice of the beautiful dawn, and brooded over his return, when he would have to tell the King of his failure.

Suddenly he heard a voice calling him by name:

"Avenant! Avenant!"

He looked around, but no one was to be seen, and he thought he must have been dreaming, so he continued his walk.

"Avenant! Avenant!" called the voice again.

"Who calls me?" cried Avenant.

Frisky, being so small, could look easily into the clear water.

"Never believe me again," said he, "if it is not this golden carp which I see."

Avenant stepped quickly to the side of the river, and the carp addressed him:

"You saved my life when I lay gasping in the meadow by the willows, where, but for you, I must have died. I promised you to repay your kindness. Stretch out your hand, dear Avenant; here is the ring dropped in the river by the Golden-haired Beauty."

The carp opened its mouth; Avenant stooped down and took from it the much-wished-for ring. Then he thanked his friend many times over.

Instead of going back to his lodging, Avenant went straight to the palace, followed by the faithful little Frisky, who was mightily pleased with himself.

At the palace, Avenant again asked for an audience with the Princess, and an attendant went at once to announce him.

"Poor boy," said she, "he has no doubt come to say good-bye. He has evidently seen that I have asked him to do the impossible, and he is returning to tell his master."

Avenant was ushered in, and gracefully presented the ring to the Princess, saying:

"Madam, your royal command is obeyed. May I ask if you are willing now to take the King, my master, for your husband?"

When Goldenlocks saw the ring restored to her without a flaw, she was mute with astonishment, and seemed for a few moments to be in a dream; then she said:

"Really, my Avenant, some fairy must have taken a fancy for you; you have performed what seems a miracle."

"Madam," replied Avenant, "I am not acquainted with any fairy, but I had an ardent desire to give you pleasure."

"Since you are so well disposed toward me," said the Princess, "you must render me another service; until it is

done, I shall not marry. There is a Prince not far from here named Galifron, who has taken it into his head to force me to marry him. He threatens to destroy my country should I refuse. He is a giant of enormous strength, higher than that high tower, and he can seize and eat a man as easily as a monkey can eat a chestnut. I sent him word that I did not want to marry, and begged him to excuse me, but he has not ceased to persecute me. He kills my subjects whenever he gets a chance, so the greatest service you can render me is to bring me his head."

Avenant was rather stupefied by the proposal. He thought it over for a minute, however; then, drawing his slight figure up to its full height, he replied bravely:

"Madam, I shall fight Galifron. I am sure to be vanquished, but at least I shall die a faithful servant and an honourable gentleman."

The Princess was painfully surprised. She had not expected such daring courage, and now did all she could to dissuade Avenant from undertaking so perilous an enterprise, but in vain. He went at once to choose his weapons and provide himself with all he should be likely to need. Then, being equipped with everything necessary, he put Frisky again in his basket, which he fastened to his saddle-bow, and mounting his charger set out to find Galifron.

Whenever he met anyone likely to be able to give him information, he made inquiry about the whereabouts and the habits of the giant. Everyone spoke of him as a demon of cruelty, whom no one dared approach, and the more Avenant heard of him, the more he dreaded the task he had undertaken. Frisky saw his master's anxiety, and did all he could to cheer and encourage him.

"My dear master, while you are fighting the giant, I shall run and bite his legs," said he; "he will have to stoop down to drive me away; then you will be able to cut off his head."

Avenant admired his little dog's clever device, but he

knew that something more than that would be needed to make him a match for his terrible opponent.

As he neared the giant's castle our hero's courage was tested to the utmost, for on every hand were strewn the remains of the monster's cannibal feasts.

Soon Galifron himself appeared in the distance, striding through the forest, head and shoulders higher than the tallest trees. The earth began to shake, and a voice more frightful than rolling thunder filled the air. It was the giant, singing as he came:

"Where are the pretty babes?
Bring them to me.
Be their skin dark or fair,
Welcome they'll be.
Bring them all, big or small,
Tender or tough;
Though you bring all you find,
'Tis not enough!"

Immediately Avenant took up the same tune and sang:

"Proud Galifron, take care!
I'll draw your teeth!
I'll lay you low ere I
My good sword sheath!
Although I am not big
My heart is strong;
At last you've met your match,
Who do such wrong."

When Galifron first heard the clear, tremulous voice, he looked around him in amazement, and now as the slender youth who, sword in hand, dared to defy him, came into view, he got into a fearful fury. He poised his massive iron-headed

club, and would have pounded the brave youth to jelly, but for a raven, which at that very moment flew right in his face and picked out his eyes. The sightless giant hit out desperately on all sides. Foam flew from his great lips, and he yelled with rage. Avenant dodged the mighty blows, and pierced him in many places with his sword, twice over burying it up to the hilt in the giant's flesh. At last the monster staggered and fell prone on the ground. Avenant sprang upon him, and with his sword severed the giant's head from his body. When the horrid head rolled off. Frisky danced and barked in frantic delight, while the raven, which had perched on a branch to watch the combat, flapped its wings and cawed approvingly; then it spoke:

"Avenant, I have not forgotten the service you rendered me when the eagle would have killed me. I promised you then that I would repay you. I think I have done so to-day."

"I owe my victory and my life to you. Sir Raven," replied Avenant, "and I shall ever feel myself your debtor."

Having thus thanked the raven, Avenant prepared to return to the palace of Goldenlocks. He tied the hideous head by its hair to the girth, put Frisky in his basket, remounted his charger, and did not draw rein till he reached the city. There, as the people saw him arrive with the head of Galifron, the noise was deafening, for the whole population followed him, shouting: "Hurrah! Hurrah! Avenant has killed the giant!"

Goldenlocks heard the commotion and her heart sank. She did not dare to ask what it meant, lest she might hear that Avenant had been killed. Soon, however, she saw him ride into the courtyard with the terrible head, and the sight of it was so shocking that, although there was nothing now to fear, she trembled from head to foot. Soon Avenant was ushered into her presence. He bowed low, and said:

"Madam, your enemy is dead; I hope you will no longer refuse to marry the King, my master."

"Oh! indeed!" said the Princess. "But I will refuse him,

unless you can bring me some water from the fairy fountain of the Dismal Cave. There is, not far from here, a great grotto which measures six leagues round its sides. Its entrance is guarded by fiery dragons, which spit flame at all intruders. In the dark centre of this grotto is a deep hollow, filled with all loathsome creeping things: snakes, toads, and serpents. At the bottom of this hollow is the mouth of a small cave through which flows the fountain of beauty and health. Some of the water of that stream I must have. Its virtue is so marvellous that all who wash in it are for ever young and beautiful. You can easily understand, Avenant, that I cannot quit my country without taking some of this priceless water with me.

"Madam," said Avenant, "you are already so beautiful that you do not need this water, but I am an unfortunate ambassador, whose death you desire. I go to try to find what you ask, but I go knowing that I shall never return."

These touching words did not make the Princess change her resolution, and Avenant set out with Frisky to seek the Gloomy Grotto in which was the Dismal Cave, whence he was to bring the Water of Eternal Youth and Beauty.

All who met him on the way looked sadly after him, saying to each other: "How pitiful it is to see such a charming young man go so readily to his doom!"

Avenant rode steadily on, though sad at heart. He came at length to the top of a hill, both steep and high, from which a good view of the surrounding country could be got. Here he dismounted to let his horse rest and graze, while Frisky ran about chasing the flies. He looked carefully around for traces of the Gloomy Grotto, as he knew it could not be far away, and soon perceived a massive rock, black as ink, from which belched great volumes of smoke. A puff of wind blew the clouds aside and revealed one of the dragons; fire issuing from its eyes, mouth, and nostrils, a fearful-looking creature! Its body was yellow and green, its feet were armed with long, cruel claws, and its great tail was twisted in a hundred coils.

Frisky caught sight of it, and was petrified with terror.

Avenant, already prepared for death, drew his sword and descended the hill, taking with him a little phial given him by Goldenlocks to fill with the wonderful water.

"I am done for," said he to Frisky; "it is impossible to get the water guarded by such dragons, but I go to make the attempt. When I am dead, I want you, my faithful little friend, to fill this phial with my blood and take it to the Princess, that she may see the price I have paid for trying to please her; then go to the King, my master, and tell him the story of my misfortunes."

He had hardly finished this mournful speech when he heard a voice calling:

"Avenant! Avenant!"

"Who is calling me?" asked he, turning in the direction from which the voice had come. An owl, looking out of a hole in an old tree, replied:

"You released me from the fowler's net, and so saved my life. I promised you then that I should reward you, and my opportunity has come. Give me the phial. I know all the outs and ins of the Gloomy Grotto and the Dismal Cave. I will fetch you water from the Spring of Eternal Youth and Beauty!"

Whose heart, think you, bounded with joy? You can guess!

Avenant quickly handed over the phial, and the owl flew unhindered into the Gloomy Grotto. In less than a quarter of an hour he returned, bringing the phial well filled and firmly corked. Avenant was delighted. He thanked the owl with all his heart, and was very soon on his way back to the city, in a more joyful mood than that in which he had left it.

When he arrived, he went straight to the palace, and presented the phial to the Princess, who had no longer excuse for not accompanying him. She ordered everything to be prepared for her departure, and soon they set off together. On

the way, he was so respectful and attentive, and such pleasant company, that she often wished that he had been the King she was travelling to marry.

One day she said to him:

"If you had wished to marry me yourself, Avenant, I should have made you King, and we should not have needed to leave my country."

Avenant, however, replied at once:

"I would not have done anything so disloyal and unfaithful for all the kingdoms of the world, though I yield to no one in my admiration of your beauty."

Messengers had been sent with tidings that Avenant was bringing the Golden-haired Princess with him, so they were met outside the capital by the King, who made the Princess the grandest and most costly presents ever seen. The marriage took place amid great rejoicings. Everything was done with such magnificence that nothing else was talked of for a long time afterward.

But in spite of all her grandeur, Goldenlocks was not really happy. She had become so attached to Avenant that he was never out of her thoughts, and she was never weary of talking about him and the great deeds he had done for her.

"But for Avenant, I should never have been here," said she to the King. "He performed seemingly impossible feats for my pleasure. You are under great obligation to him; he even fetched me water from the Spring of Eternal Youth and Beauty; thus I shall never grow old, but shall be always beautiful."

Among those who heard the Queen speak thus were some who were very envious of Avenant. They took the first opportunity to say to the King:

"Your Majesty is not at all jealous, though you have such good reason to be so. Her Majesty the Queen is so fond of Avenant that she can neither eat nor drink. She does nothing but talk of the obligations you are under to him, as if no one

else whom you could have sent could have succeeded in bringing her."

The King replied:

"Now you mention it, I can see it for myself. Go and put him in irons, and shut him up in the tower."

They took Avenant, and as a reward for serving his King so loyally he was again flung in chains into the tower. He was allowed to see no one but his gaoler, who threw him his piece of black bread through a slit in the wall and gave him water in an earthenware bowl. However, Frisky remained faithful to him, consoled him as well as he could, and brought him all the news.

When Goldenlocks heard how Avenant had been treated she threw herself weeping at the feet of the King, and besought him to take the youth out of prison, but the more she begged, the more angry he became, saying to himself:

"It must be that she loves him."

At last, seeing that she could not move the King, Goldenlocks ceased mentioning Avenant's name, but she became very sad.

The King began to fear that perhaps the Queen did not think him sufficiently good-looking, and he resolved to bathe his face with some of the wonderful water Goldenlocks had brought with her, so that she might like him better.

Now, in order that she should always have it at hand, the Queen kept the precious phial in her sleeping-chamber on the mantelpiece. That morning a careless maid, trying to kill a spider with her broom, knocked over the phial, and the priceless liquid was scattered over the floor. The maid quickly gathered up the fragments of glass and removed all traces of the mishap; then, recalling that she had noticed a similar phial in the King's dressing-room, she fetched this and placed it where the broken phial had stood.

Unfortunately the King's phial contained a poisonous mixture, very deadly in its action. If rubbed on the skin it

would induce a deep sleep from which the victim would never awake.

When, therefore, his Majesty carried out his purpose, having secured what he thought was the magic elixir, he immediately fell into a deep sleep, and ere long his horrified gentlemen discovered that he was dead.

Frisky was quick to carry the news to Avenant, who bade him find his way to the Queen, and beg her to remember the poor prisoner.

Frisky, being small, slipped easily through the crowd which gathered round the Queen—for there was great parade of mourning at Court.

When the little dog reached her Majesty, he touched her gently with his paw to draw her attention. She looked down into a pair of beseeching eyes raised to hers, and heard a soft voice saying:

"Madam, do not forget poor Avenant."

Avenant's great fidelity, and all he had suffered on her account, flashed to the mind of the Queen.

Without saying a word to those about her she left the palace forthwith and went straight to the tower, where she ordered the warden to open the heavily barred door. She herself went to the dungeon and took the chains from the hands and feet of the prisoner, after which she led Avenant to the palace, seated him on the throne, placed the crown of gold on his head, and hung the royal mantle over his shoulders.

Then, in presence of the whole Court, she said:

"Avenant, I myself crown you King, and take you for my husband."

At these gracious and condescending words, Avenant knelt at the Queen's feet, raised her hand to his lips, and thanked her.

The mourning at Court was now changed to great rejoicing, everyone being delighted that Avenant was King.

The wedding ceremonies were very splendid.

No one had ever seen such a lovely bride and such a handsome bridegroom.

Queen Goldenlocks and the brave King Avenant lived together happily to a good old age, both retaining their handsome appearance, despite the loss of the wonderful water.

The Story of Blondine, Bonne-Biche, and Beau-Minon

Blondine

There was once a king called Benin. He was good and all the world loved him; he was just and the wicked feared him. His wife, the Queen Doucette, was also good, and much beloved.

This happy pair had a daughter called the Princess Blondine, because of her superb fair hair, and she was as amiable and charming as her father the king and her mother the queen.

Unfortunately, the poor queen died a short time after the birth of Blondine and for a long time the king wept bitterly at his great loss. Blondine was too young to understand her mother's death: she did not weep but continued to laugh, to play and to sleep peacefully. The king loved her tenderly and she loved him more than all the world. He gave his little daughter the most beautiful jewels, the finest bonbons, and the most rare and delicious fruits. Blondine was very happy.

One day it was announced to the king, that all his subjects demanded that he should marry again in order to have a son who should reign after him. He refused at first but finally yielded to the pressing desires of his people and said to his minister Leger:—

"My dear friend, my subjects wish me to marry again but my heart is so sad because of the death of my cherished queen Doucette that I cannot undertake the task of seeking another wife. Go, then, my good Leger and find me a princess who will make my sweet Blondine happy. Go; I ask for nothing more. When you have found a perfect woman, you will demand her hand in marriage and conduct her to my court."

Leger set off immediately, visited many courts and saw

innumerable princesses—ugly, humpbacked and wicked.

At last he arrived at the kingdom of the monarch Turbulent, who had a lovely daughter, bright, winning and apparently good. Leger found her so charming, that he asked her hand in marriage for his king Benin, without sufficiently inquiring into her real character.

Turbulent was enchanted at the prospect of getting rid of his daughter who was jealous, proud and wicked. Also, her presence often interfered with his excursions for pleasure, with the chase and with his various entertainments at the palace.

Without a moment's hesitation, he acceded to the Prime Minister's request, and he returned with the princess to the kingdom of the good king Benin.

The princess Fourbette was accompanied by four thousand mules, loaded with the jewels and wardrobe of the charming bride.

King Benin had been apprised of their approach by a courier and went forward to receive the princess Fourbette. He found her beautiful but he noted the absence of the mild and attractive expression of the poor lost Doucette.

When Fourbette's eyes fell upon Blondine her glance was so cruel, so wicked, that the poor child, who was now three years old, was greatly terrified and began to weep bitterly.

"What is the matter?" said the king. "Why does my sweet and sensible Blondine weep like a bad little girl?"

"Papa! dear papa!" cried Blondine, throwing herself into the arms of the king, "do not give me into the hands of this princess. I am afraid of her—her eyes are cruel"

The king was much surprised. He turned so suddenly towards the princess Fourbette that she had no time to control herself and he perceived the terrible glance with which she regarded the little Blondine.

Benin immediately resolved that Blondine should be wholly separated from the new queen and remain as before

under the exclusive protection of the nurse who had taken care of her and who loved her tenderly.

The queen thus saw Blondine rarely, and when she met her by chance she could not wholly dissimulate the hatred she felt for her.

About a year from that time a daughter was born to the queen Fourbette. She was named Brunette, because of her dark hair which was black as the raven's wing.

Brunette was pretty but not so lovely as Blondine; moreover she was as wicked as her mother. She detested Blondine and played all sorts of cruel tricks upon her, bit her, pinched her, pulled her hair, broke her toys and tore her beautiful dresses.

The good little Blondine was never in a passion with her sister but always tried to make excuses for her conduct.

"Oh, papa!" she said to the king, "do not scold Brunette; she is so little! she does not know that she grieves me when she breaks my toys! It is only in play that she bites me, pulls my hair and pinches me."

The good king embraced his little daughter, and was silent but he knew that Brunette was cruel and wicked; that Blondine was too gentle and good to accuse her. He loved Blondine, therefore, more and more from day to day and his heart grew cold to Brunette.

The ambitious queen Fourbette saw all this clearly and hated intensely the innocent and gentle Blondine. If she had not feared the rage of the king she would have made Blondine the most wretched child in the world.

Benin had commanded that Blondine should never be left alone with the queen. He was known to be just and good but he punished disobedience severely and the queen herself dared not defy his commands.

Blondine Lost

Blondine grew to be seven years old and Brunette three.

The king had given Blondine a charming little carriage drawn by ostriches, and a little coachman ten years of age, who was the nephew of her nurse.

The little page, who was called Gourmandinet, loved Blondine tenderly. He had been her playmate from her birth and she had shown him a thousand acts of kindness.

But Gourmandinet had one terrible fault; he was a gourmand—was so fond of dainties and sweet things, that for a paper of bonbons he would commit almost any wicked action. Blondine often said to him:

"I love you dearly, Gourmandinet, but I do not love to see you so greedy. I entreat you to correct this villainous fault which will make you despised by all the world."

Gourmandinet kissed her hand and promised to reform. But, alas! he continued to steal cakes from the kitchen and bonbons from the store-room. Often, indeed, he was whipped for his disobedience and gluttony.

The queen Fourbette heard on every hand the reproaches lavished upon the page and she was cunning enough to think that she might make use of this weakness of Gourmandinet and thus get rid of poor Blondine.

The garden in which Blondine drove in her little carriage, drawn by ostriches and guided by her little coachman, Gourmandinet, was separated by a grating from an immense and magnificent forest, called the Forest of Lilacs because during the whole year these lilacs were always covered with superb flowers.

No one, however, entered these woods. It was well known

that it was enchanted ground and that if you once entered there you could never hope to escape.

Gourmandinet knew the terrible secret of this forest. He had been severely forbidden ever to drive the carriage of Blondine in that direction lest by some chance Blondine might pass the grating and place her little feet on the enchanted ground.

Many times the king Benin had sought to build a wall the entire length of the grating or to secure it in some way so as to make an entrance there impossible. But the workmen had no sooner laid the foundation than some unknown and invisible power raised the stones and they disappeared from sight.

The queen Fourbette now sought diligently to gain the friendship of Gourmandinet by giving him every day some delicious dainties. In this way she made him so complete a slave to his appetite that he could not live without the jellies, bonbons and cakes which she gave him in such profusion. At last she sent for him to come to her, and said:—

"Gourmandinet, it depends entirely upon yourself whether you shall have a large trunk full of bonbons and delicious dainties or never again eat one during your life."

"Never again eat one! Oh! madam, I should die of such punishment. Speak, madam, what must I do to escape this terrible fate?"

"It is necessary," said the queen, looking at him fixedly, "that you should drive the princess Blondine near to the Forest of Lilacs."

"I cannot do it, madam; the king has forbidden it."

"Ah! you cannot do it; well, then, adieu. No more dainties for you. I shall command every one in the house to give you nothing."

"Oh! madam," said Gourmandinet, weeping bitterly, "do not be so cruel. Give me some order which it is in my power to execute."

"I can only repeat that I command you to lead the princess Blondine near to the Forest of Lilacs; that you encourage her to descend from the carriage, to cross the grating and enter the enchanted ground."

"But, madam," replied Gourmandinet, turning very pale, "if the princess enters this forest she can never escape from it. You know the penalty of entering upon enchanted ground. To send my dear princess there is to give her up to certain death."

"For the third and last time," said the queen, frowning fearfully, "I ask if you will take the princess to the forest? Choose! either an immense box of bonbons which I will renew every month or never again to taste the delicacies which you love."

"But how shall I escape from the dreadful punishment which his majesty will inflict upon me?"

"Do not be disquieted on that account. As soon as you have induced Blondine to enter the Forest of Lilacs, return to me. I will send you off out of danger with your bonbons, and I charge myself with your future fortune."

"Oh! madam, have pity upon me. Do not compel me to lead my dear princess to destruction. She who has always been so good to me!"

"You still hesitate, miserable coward! Of what importance is the fate of Blondine to you? When you have obeyed my commands I will see that you enter the service of Brunette and I declare to you solemnly that the bonbons shall never fail."

Gourmandinet hesitated and reflected a few moments longer and, alas! at last resolved to sacrifice his good little mistress to his gluttony.

The remainder of that day he still hesitated and he lay awake all night weeping bitter tears as he endeavored to discover some way to escape from the power of the wicked queen; but the certainty of the queen's bitter revenge if he

refused to execute her cruel orders, and the hope of rescuing Blondine at some future day by seeking the aid of some powerful fairy, conquered his irresolution and decided him to obey the queen.

In the morning at ten o'clock Blondine ordered her little carriage and entered it for a drive, after having embraced the king her father and promised him to return in two hours.

The garden was immense. Gourmandinet, on starting, turned the ostriches away from the Forest of Lilacs. When, however, they were entirely out of sight of the palace, he changed his course and turned towards the grating which separated them from the enchanted ground. He was sad and silent. His crime weighed upon his heart and conscience.

"What is the matter?" said Blondine, kindly. "You say nothing. Are you ill, Gourmandinet?"

"No, my princess, I am well."

"But how pale you are! Tell me what distresses you, poor boy, and I promise to do all in my power to make you happy."

Blondine's kind inquiries and attentions almost softened the hard heart of Gourmandinet, but the remembrance of the bonbons promised by the wicked queen, Fourbette, soon chased away his good resolutions. Before he had time to reply, the ostriches reached the grating of the Forest of Lilacs.

"Oh! the beautiful lilacs!" exclaimed Blondine; "how fragrant—how delicious! I must have a bouquet of those beautiful flowers for my good papa. Get down, Gourmandinet and bring me some of those superb branches."

"I cannot leave my seat, princess, the ostriches might run away with you during my absence."

"Do not fear," replied Blondine; "I could guide them myself to the palace."

"But the king would give me a terrible scolding for having abandoned you, princess. It is best that you go yourself and gather your flowers."

"That is true. I should be very sorry to get you a scolding,

my poor Gourmandinet."

While saying these words she sprang lightly from the carriage, crossed the bars of the grating and commenced to gather the flowers.

At this moment Gourmandinet shuddered and was overwhelmed with remorse. He wished to repair his fault by calling Blondine but although she was only ten steps from him—although he saw her perfectly—she could not hear his voice, and in a short time she was lost to view in the enchanted forest.

For a long time Gourmandinet wept over his crime, cursed his gluttony and despised the wicked queen Fourbette.

At last he recalled to himself that the hour approached at which Blondine would be expected at the palace. He returned to the stables through the back entrance and ran at once to the queen, who was anxiously expecting him.

On seeing him so deadly pale and his eyes inflamed from the tears of awful remorse, she knew that Blondine had perished.

"Is it done?" said she.

Gourmandinet bowed his head. He had not the strength to speak.

"Come," said she, "behold your reward!"

She pointed to a large box full of delicious bonbons of every variety. She commanded a valet to raise the box and place it upon one of the mules which had brought her jewelry.

"I confide this box to Gourmandinet, in order that he may take it to my father," she said. "Go, boy, and return in a month for another." She placed in his hand at the same time a purse full of gold.

Gourmandinet mounted the mule in perfect silence and set off in full gallop. The mule was obstinate and wilful and soon grew restive under the weight of the box and began to prance and kick. He did this so effectually that he threw Gourmandinet and his precious box of bonbons upon the

ground.

Gourmandinet, who had never ridden upon a horse or mule, fell heavily with his head upon the stones and died instantly.

Thus he did not receive from his crime the profit which he had hoped, for he had not even tasted of the bonbons which the queen had given him.

No one regretted him. No one but the poor Blondine had ever loved him.

The Forest of Lilacs

When Blondine entered the forest she commenced gathering the beautiful branches of lilacs. She rejoiced in their profusion and delighted in their fragrance.

As she made her selection, it seemed to her that those which were more distant were still more beautiful so she emptied her apron and her hat, which were both full and filled them again and again.

Blondine had been thus busily occupied for about an hour. She began to suffer from the heat and to feel great fatigue. She found the branches of lilacs heavy to carry and thought it was time to return to the palace. She looked around and saw herself surrounded with lilacs. She called Gourmandinet but no one replied.

"I have wandered further than I intended," said Blondine. "I will return at once, though I am very weary. Gourmandinet will hear me and will surely come to meet me."

Blondine walked on rapidly for some time but she could not find the boundaries of the forest.

Many times she called anxiously upon Gourmandinet but he did not respond and at last she became terribly frightened.

"What will become of me, all alone in this vast forest? What will my poor papa think when I do not return? And Gourmandinet, how will he dare go back to the palace without me? He will be scolded, perhaps beaten and all this is my fault because I would leave my carriage to gather lilacs? Unfortunate girl that I am! I shall die of hunger and thirst in this forest if the wolves do not eat me up this night."

Weeping bitterly, Blondine fell on the ground at the foot of a large tree. She wept a long time. At last her great fatigue

mastered her grief. She placed her little head upon her bundle of lilacs, and slept peacefully.

Blondine's Awakening—Beau-Minon

Blondine slept calmly all night; no ferocious beast came to trouble her slumbers. She did not suffer from the cold and awakened at a late hour in the morning. She rubbed her eyes, much surprised to see herself surrounded by trees, in place of being in her own room in the palace, and upon her own bed.

She called her nurse and a soft mewing was the only response. Astonished and almost frightened, she looked around and saw at her feet a superb white cat, looking gently upon her and continuing to mew plaintively.

"Ah! pretty puss! how beautiful you are!" cried Blondine, placing her little hand caressingly upon the soft fur, white as snow. "I am so happy to see you, pretty puss, for you will conduct me to your home. I am indeed very hungry and I have not the strength to walk much further without food."

Blondine had scarcely uttered these words, when the white pussy mewed again and pointed with her little paw to a small package lying near her, wrapped neatly in fine white linen. She opened the parcel and found it contained bread and butter which she found delicious. She gave the crumbs to pussy, who munched them with seeming delight.

When they had finished their simple meal, Blondine leaned over towards her little companion, and said, caressingly:

"Thanks, pretty puss, for the breakfast you have given me. Now, can you conduct me to my papa, who is certainly in despair because of my absence?"

Pussy, whom Blondine named Beau-Minon, shook her head and mewed plaintively.

"Ah! you understand me, Beau-Minon," said Blondine. "I

entreat you to have pity upon me and lead me to some house before I perish with hunger, cold and terror in this vast forest!"

Beau-Minon looked at the princess fixedly and made a sign with her little graceful white head which seemed to say, "I understand you." She rose, advanced a few steps and paused to see if Blondine followed her.

"I am here, Beau-Minon; I am following you gladly," said Blondine; "but how can we pass through these bushy thickets? I see no path."

Beau-Minon made no reply but sprang lightly into the thicket which opened of itself to allow Blondine and Beau-Minon to pass, and then closed up immediately.

Blondine walked on for about half an hour. As she advanced, the forest became lighter, the grass was finer and the flowers more abundant. She saw many pretty birds singing melodiously and graceful squirrels, bounding along the branches of the trees.

Blondine, who had no doubt that she was about to leave the forest and see her dear father again, was enchanted with all that she saw; she wished to pause and gather the lovely wild flowers; but Beau-Minon advanced steadily and mewed plaintively whenever Blondine relaxed her speed.

In about an hour Blondine perceived an elegant castle. Beau-Minon led her to the gilded grating. However, Blondine did not know how to enter. There was no bell and the gate was closed. Beau-Minon had disappeared and Blondine was once more alone.

Bonne-Biche

Beau-Minon had entered by a little passage, which seemed made expressly for him and had probably given notice to some one at the castle, as the gate opened without Blondine having called.

She entered the court-yard but saw no one.

The door of the castle opened of itself. Blondine entered the vestibule which was of rare white marble. All the doors of the castle now opened like the first and the princess passed through a suite of beautiful rooms.

At last, in the back part of a charming salon, furnished with blue and gold, she perceived a white hind, lying upon a bed of fine and fragrant grasses. Beau-Minon stood near her. The pretty hind saw Blondine, arose, and approached her.

"You are most welcome, Blondine," said she. "My son Beau-Minon and I have expected you for a long time."

At these words, Blondine was much frightened.

"Take courage, princess; you are with friends. I know the king your father and I love him and I love you also."

"Oh, madam," said Blondine, "if you know the king my father, I pray you to take me to him. My absence must make him very wretched."

"My dear Blondine," said the hind, whose name was Bonne-Biche, sighing, "it is not in my power to conduct you to your father. You are in the hands of the magician of the Forest of Lilacs. I myself am subject to his power which is superior to mine but I can send soft dreams to your father, which will reassure him as to your fate and let him know that you are safe with me."

"Oh, madam!" said Blondine, in an agony of grief, "shall I

never again see my father whom I love so tenderly? My poor father!"

"Dear Blondine, do not distress yourself as to the future. Wisdom and prudence are always recompensed. You will see your father again but not now. In the meantime be good and docile. Beau-Minon and I will do all in our power to make you happy."

Blondine sighed heavily and shed a few tears. She then reflected that to manifest such grief was a poor recompense for all the goodness of Bonne-Biche. She resolved, therefore, to control herself and to be cheerful.

Bonne-Biche took her to see the apartment they had prepared for her. The bedroom was hung with rose-colored silk embroidered with gold. The furniture was covered with white velvet worked with silks of the most brilliant hues. Every species of animal, bird and butterfly were represented in rare embroidery.

Adjoining Blondine's chamber was a small study. It was hung with sky-blue damask, embroidered with fine pearls. The furniture was covered with silver moiré, adorned with nails of turquoise. Two magnificent portraits, representing a young and superbly handsome woman and a strikingly attractive young man, hung on the walls. Their costumes indicated that they were of royal race.

"Whose portraits are these, madam?" said Blondine to Bonne-Biche.

"I am forbidden to answer that question, dear Blondine. You will know later;—but this is the hour for dinner. Come, Blondine, I am sure you are hungry."

Blondine was in fact almost dying of hunger. She followed Bonne-Biche and they entered the dining-room where she saw a table strangely served.

An enormous cushion of black satin was placed on the floor for Bonne-Biche. On the table before her was a vase filled with the choicest herbs, fresh and nutritious and near

this vase was a golden bucket, filled with fresh and limpid water.

Opposite Bonne-Biche was a little stool for Beau-Minon while before him was a little porringer in gold, filled with little fried fish and the thighs of snipes. At one side was a bowl of rich crystal full of fresh milk.

Between Beau-Minon and Bonne-Biche a plate was placed for Blondine. Her chair was of carved ivory covered with crimson velvet attached with nails of diamonds. Before her was a gold plate richly chased, filled with delicious soup made of a young pullet and fig-birds, her glass and water-bottle were of carved rock-crystal, a muffin was placed by her side, her fork and spoon were of gold and her napkin was of linen, finer than anything she had ever seen.

The table was served by gazelles who were marvellously adroit. They waited, carved and even divined the wishes of Blondine, Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon. The dinner was exquisite—the chicken was splendid, the game and fish most delicate, the pastry and bonbons superlative. Blondine was hungry so she ate of all and found all excellent.

After dinner, Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon conducted the princess into the garden. She found there the most delicious fruits and lovely walks.

After a charming walk, Blondine entered the castle with her new friends, much fatigued. Bonne-Biche proposed that she retire, to which she agreed joyfully.

Blondine entered her chamber and found two gazelles waiting to attend her. They disrobed her with grace and adroitness, placed her in bed and seated themselves by her couch to watch over her.

Blondine was soon peacefully asleep—not, however, without having first thought of her father and wept bitterly over her cruel separation from him.

Blondine's Second Awakening

Blondine slept profoundly, and on awaking she found herself entirely changed. Indeed, it seemed to her she could not be the same person. She was much taller, her intellect was developed, her knowledge enlarged. She remembered a number of books she thought she had read during her sleep. She was sure she had been writing, drawing, singing and playing on the piano and harp.

She looked around, however, and knew that the chamber was the same to which Bonne-Biche had conducted her and in which she had gone to sleep.

Agitated, disquieted, she rose and ran to the glass. She saw that she was much grown and she found herself charming, a hundred times more beautiful than when she retired the night before. Her fair ringlets fell to her feet, her complexion was like the lily and the rose, her eyes celestial blue, her nose beautifully formed, her cheeks rosy as the morn, and her form was erect and graceful. In short, Blondine thought herself the most beautiful person she had ever seen.

Trembling, almost frightened, she dressed herself hastily and ran to seek Bonne-Biche whom she found in the apartment where she had first seen her.

"Bonne-Biche, Bonne-Biche!" she exclaimed, "I entreat you to explain to me the change which I see and feel in myself. Last night I went to sleep a child—I awoke this morning, and found myself a young lady. Is this an illusion or have I indeed grown and developed thus during the night?"

"Yes, my dear Blondine, you are fourteen years old to-day. But you have slept peacefully seven years. My son Beau-Minon and I wished to spare you the weariness of all early

studies. When you first entered the castle you knew nothing; not even how to read. I put you to sleep for seven years, and Beau-Minon and I have passed this time in instructing you during your sleep. I see by the wonder expressed in your eyes, sweet princess, that you doubt all this. Come into your study and reassure yourself on this point."

Blondine followed Bonne-Biche to the little room. She ran first to the piano, commenced playing and found that she played remarkably well. She then tried the harp and drew from it the most ravishing sounds, and she sang enchantingly.

She took her pencil and brushes and drew and painted with a facility which denoted a true talent. She wrote and found her handwriting clear and elegant. She looked at the countless books which were ranged round the room and knew that she had read them all.

Surprised, delighted, she threw her arms around the neck of Bonne-Biche, embraced Beau-Minon tenderly and said to them:

"Oh! my dear true good friends, what a debt of gratitude do I owe you for having thus watched over my childhood and developed my intellect and my heart. I feel how much I am improved in every respect and I owe it all to you."

Bonne-Biche returned her caresses and Beau-Minon patted her hand delicately. After the first few happy moments had passed, Blondine cast down her eyes and said timidly:

"Do not think me ungrateful, my dear good friends, if I wish you to add one more to the benefits you have already conferred upon me. Tell me something of my father. Does he still weep my absence? Is he happy since he lost me?"

"Dear Blondine, your anxiety on this point is most natural and shall be relieved. Look in this mirror, Blondine, and you shall see the king your father and all that has passed since you left the palace."

Blondine raised her eyes to the mirror and looked into the apartment of her father. The king seemed much agitated and

was walking backwards and forwards. He appeared to be expecting some one. The queen, Fourbette, entered and related to him that notwithstanding the remonstrances of Gourmandinet, Blondine had herself seized the reins and guided the ostriches who becoming frightened dashed off in the direction of the Forest of Lilacs and overturned the carriage. Blondine was thrown over the grating which bounded the forest. She stated that Gourmandinet had become insane from terror and grief and she had sent him home to his parents. The king was in wild despair at this news. He ran to the Forest of Lilacs and he had to be withheld by force from throwing himself across the boundary in order to search for his cherished Blondine. They carried him to the palace where he yielded to the most frightful sorrow and despair, calling unceasingly upon his dear Blondine, his beloved child. At last, overcome by grief, he slept and saw in a dream Blondine in the castle of Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon. Bonne-Biche gave him the sweet assurance that Blondine should one day be restored to him and that her childhood should be calm and happy.

The mirror now became misty and everything disappeared, then again clear as crystal and Blondine saw her father a second time. He had become old, his hair was white as snow and his countenance was sad. He held in his hand a little portrait of Blondine, his tears fell upon it and he pressed it often to his lips. The king was alone. Blondine saw neither the Queen nor Brunette.

Poor Blondine wept bitterly.

"Alas!" said she, "why is my dear father alone? Where is the queen? Where is Brunette?"

"The queen," said Bonne-Biche, "showed so little grief at your death, my princess, that your father's heart was filled with hatred and suspicion towards her and he sent her back to the king Turbulent, her father, who confined her in a tower, where she soon died of rage and anger. All the world

supposed you to be dead. As to your sister Brunette, she became so wicked, so insupportable, that the king hastened to give her in marriage last year to the prince Violent, who charged himself with the duty of reforming the character of the cruel and envious princess Brunette. The prince was stern and harsh. Brunette saw that her wicked heart prevented her from being happy and she commenced trying to correct her faults. You will see her again some day, dear Blondine and your example may complete her reformation."

Blondine thanked Bonne-Biche tenderly for all these details. Her heart prompted her to ask, "But when shall I see my father and sister?" But she feared to appear ungrateful and too anxious to leave the castle of her good friends. She resolved then to await another more suitable opportunity to ask this question.

The days passed away quietly and pleasantly. Blondine was much occupied, but was sometimes melancholy. She had no one to talk with but Bonne-Biche and she was only with her during the hours of lessons and repasts. Beau-Minon could not converse and could only make himself understood by signs. The gazelles served Blondine with zeal and intelligence but they had not the gift of speech.

Blondine walked every day, always accompanied by Beau-Minon, who pointed out to her the most lovely and sequestered paths and the rarest and richest flowers.

Bonne-Biche had made Blondine promise solemnly never to leave the enclosure of the park and never to enter the forest. Many times Blondine had asked Bonne-Biche the reason of this prohibition. Sighing profoundly, she had replied:

"Ah, Blondine! do not seek to penetrate the forest. It is a fatal spot. May you never enter there."

Sometimes Blondine mounted a pavilion which was built on an eminence near the boundary of the forest. She looked admiringly and longingly at the magnificent trees, the lovely and fragrant flowers, the thousand graceful birds flying and

singing and seeming to call her name.

"Alas!" said she, "why will not Bonne-Biche allow me to walk in this beautiful forest? What possible danger can I encounter in that lovely place and under her protection?"

Whenever she was lost in these reflections, Beau-Minon, who seemed to comprehend what was passing in her heart, mewed plaintively, pulled her robe and tried to draw her from the pavilion.

Blondine smiled sweetly, followed her gentle companion and recommenced her walk in the solitary park.

The Parrot

Six months had passed since Blondine awaked from her seven years' sleep. It seemed to the little princess a long time. The remembrance of her dear father often saddened her heart.

Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon seemed to divine her thoughts. Beau-Minon mewed plaintively, and Bonne-Biche heaved the most profound sighs. Blondine spoke but rarely of that which occupied her thoughts continually. She feared to offend Bonne-Biche, who had said to her three or four times:

"Dear Blondine, be patient. You will see your father when you are fifteen, if you continue wise and good. Trust me, dear child; do not trouble yourself about the future and above all do not seek to leave us."

One morning Blondine was alone and very sad. She was musing upon her singular and monotonous existence. Suddenly she was disturbed in her reverie by three soft little strokes upon her window. Raising her head, she perceived a parrot with beautiful green plumage and throat and breast of bright orange.

Surprised at the appearance of a bird entirely unknown to her, she opened the window and invited the parrot to enter.

What was her amazement when the bird said to her, in a fine sharp voice:

"Good day, Blondine! I know that you sometimes have a very tedious time of it, because you have no one to talk to. I have taken pity upon you and come to have a chat with you. But I pray you do not mention that you have seen me, for Bonne-Biche would cut my throat if she knew it."

"Why so, beautiful Parrot? Bonne-Biche is good; she

injures no one and only hates the wicked."

"Blondine, listen! If you do not promise to conceal my visit from Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon, I will fly away at once and never return."

"Since you wish it so much, beautiful Parrot, I will promise silence. Let us chat a little. It is a long time since I have had an opportunity to converse. You seem to me gay and witty. I do not doubt that you will amuse me much."

Blondine listened with delight to the lively talk of the Parrot, who complimented extravagantly her beauty, her wit and her talents.

Blondine was enchanted. In about an hour the Parrot flew away, promising to return the next day. In short, he returned every day and continued to compliment and amuse her.

One morning he struck upon the window and said:

"Blondine! Blondine! open the window, quickly! I bring you news of your father. But above all make no noise unless you want my throat cut."

Blondine was overwhelmed with joy. She opened the window with alacrity and said: "Is it true, my beautiful Parrot, that you bring me news of my dear father? Speak quickly! What is he doing and how is he?"

"Your father is well, Blondine, but he weeps your loss always. I have promised him to employ all my power to deliver you from your prison but I can do nothing without your assistance."

"My prison!" said Blondine. "But you are ignorant of all the goodness which Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon have shown me, of the pains they have lavished upon my education, of all their tenderness and forbearance. They will be enchanted to find a way of restoring me to my father. Come with me, beautiful Parrot and I will present you to Bonne-Biche. Come, I entreat you."

"Ah! Blondine," said the sharp voice of the Parrot, "it is you, Princess, who do not know Bonne-Biche and Beau-

Minon. They detest me because I have sometimes succeeded in rescuing their victims from them. You will never see your father again, Blondine, you will never leave this forest, unless you yourself shall break the charm which holds you here."

"What charm?" said Blondine. "I know of no charm and what interest have Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon in keeping me a prisoner?"

"Is it not to their interest to enliven their solitude, Blondine? There is a talisman which can procure your release. It is a simple Rose, which, gathered by yourself, will deliver you from your exile and restore you to the arms of your fond father."

"But there is not a single Rose in the garden. How then can I gather one?"

"I will explain this to you another day, Blondine. Now I can tell you no more, as I hear Bonne-Biche coming. But to convince you of the virtues of the Rose, entreat Bonne-Biche to give you one and see what she will say. To-morrow—to-morrow, Blondine!"

The Parrot flew away, well content to have scattered in Blondine's heart the first seeds of discontent and ingratitude.

The Parrot had scarcely disappeared when Bonne-Biche entered. She appeared greatly agitated.

"With whom have you been talking, Blondine?" looking suspiciously towards the open window.

"With no one, madam," said the princess.

"I am certain I heard voices in conversation."

"I must have been speaking to myself."

Bonne-Biche made no reply. She was very sad and tears fell from her eyes.

Blondine was also engaged in thought. The cunning words of the Parrot made her look upon the kindness of Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon in a totally different light.

In place of saying to herself that a hind which had the power to speak, to make wild beasts intelligent, to put an

infant to sleep for seven years, to dedicate seven years to a tiresome and ignorant little girl, in short, a hind lodged and served like a queen, could be no ordinary criminal; in place of cherishing a sentiment of gratitude for all that Bonne-Biche had done for her, Blondine, alas! believed blindly in the Parrot, the unknown bird of whose character and veracity she had no proof. She did not remember that the Parrot could have no possible motive for risking its life to render her a service. Blondine believed it though, implicitly, because of the flattery which the Parrot had lavished upon her. She did not even recall with gratitude the sweet and happy existence which Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon had secured to her. She resolved to follow implicitly the counsels of the Parrot. During the course of the day she said to Bonne-Biche:—

"Why, madam, do I not see among your flowers the most lovely and charming of all flowers—the fragrant Rose?"

Bonne-Biche was greatly agitated and said in a trembling voice:—

"Blondine! Blondine! do not ask for this most perfidious flower, which pierces all who touch it! Never speak to me of the Rose, Blondine. You cannot know what fatal danger this flower contains for you!"

The expression of Bonne-Biche was so stern and severe that Blondine dared not question her further.

The day passed away sadly enough. Bonne-Biche was unhappy and Beau-Minon very sad.

Early in the morning, Blondine ran to her window and the Parrot entered the moment she opened it.

"Well, my dear Blondine, did you notice the agitation of Bonne-Biche, when you mentioned the Rose? I promised you to point out the means by which you could obtain one of these charming flowers. Listen now to my counsel. You will leave this park and enter the forest. I will accompany you and I will conduct you to a garden where you will find the most beautiful Rose in the world!"

"But how is it possible for me to leave the park? Beau-Minon always accompanies me in my walks."

"Try to get rid of him," said the Parrot; "but if that is impossible, go in spite of him."

"If this Rose is at a distance, will not my absence be perceived?"

"It is about an hour's walk. Bonne-Biche has been careful to separate you as far as possible from the Rose in order that you might not find the means to escape from her power."

"But why does she wish to hold me captive? She is all-powerful and could surely find pleasures more acceptable than educating an ignorant child."

"All this will be explained to you in the future, Blondine, when you will be in the arms of your father. Be firm! After breakfast, in some way get away from Beau-Minon and enter the forest. I will expect you there."

Blondine promised, and closed the window, fearing that Bonne-Biche would surprise her.

After breakfast, according to her usual custom, she entered the garden. Beau-Minon followed her in spite of some rude rebuffs which he received with plaintive mews. Arrived at the alley which led out of the park, Blondine resolved to get rid of Beau-Minon.

"I wish to be alone," said she, sternly; "begone, Beau-Minon!"

Beau-Minon pretended not to understand. Blondine was impatient and enraged. She forgot herself so far as to strike Beau-Minon with her foot. When poor Beau-Minon received this humiliating blow, he uttered a cry of anguish and fled towards the palace. Blondine trembled and was on the point of recalling him, when a false shame arrested her. She walked on rapidly to the gate, opened it not without trembling and entered the forest. The Parrot joined her without delay.

"Courage, Blondine! in one hour you will have the Rose and will see your father, who weeps for you."

At these words, Blondine recovered her resolution which had begun to falter. She walked on in the path indicated by the Parrot, who flew before her from branch to branch. The forest, which had seemed so beautiful and attractive near the park of Bonne-Biche, became wilder and more entangled. Brambles and stones almost filled up the path, the sweet songs of the birds were no longer heard and the flowers had entirely disappeared. Blondine felt oppressed by an inexplicable restlessness. The Parrot pressed her eagerly to advance.

"Quick, quick, Blondine! time flies! If Bonne-Biche perceives your absence you will never again see your father."

Blondine, fatigued, almost breathless, with her arms torn by the briers and her shoes in shreds, now declared that she would go no further when the Parrot exclaimed:—

"We have arrived, Blondine. Look! that is the enclosure which separates us from the Rose."

Blondine saw at a turn in the path a small enclosure, the gate of which was quickly opened by the Parrot. The soil was arid and stony but a magnificent, majestic rose-bush adorned with one Rose, which was more beautiful than all the roses of the world grew in the midst of this sterile spot.

"Take it, Blondine!" said the parrot; "you deserve it—you have truly earned it!"

Blondine seized the branch eagerly and in spite of the thorns which pierced her fingers cruelly, she tore it from the bush.

The Rose was scarcely grasped firmly in her hand, when she heard a burst of mocking laughter. The Flower fell from her grasp, crying:—

"Thanks, Blondine, for having delivered me from the prison in which Bonne-Biche held me captive. I am your evil genius! Now you belong to me!"

"Ha! ha!" now exclaimed the Parrot. "Thanks, Blondine! I can now resume my form of magician. You have destroyed your friends for I am their mortal enemy!"

Saying these cruel words, the Parrot and the Rose disappeared, leaving Blondine alone in the forest.

Repentance

Blondine was stupefied! Her conduct now appeared to her in all its horror. She had shown a monstrous ingratitude towards the friends who had been so tenderly devoted to her—who had dedicated seven years to the care of her education. Would these kind friends ever receive her, ever pardon her? What would be her fate, if they should close their doors against her? And then, what did those awful words of the wicked Parrot signify: "You have caused the destruction of your friends"?

Blondine turned round and wished to retrace her steps to the castle of Bonne-Biche. The briers and thorns tore her arms and face terribly. She continued however to force her way bravely through the thickets and after three hours of most painful walking she came before the castle of Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon.

Horror seized upon her, when in place of the superb building she saw only an appalling ruin—in place of the magnificent trees and rare flowers which surrounded it, only briers and thorns, nettles and thistles, could be seen. Terrified and most desolate, she tried to force her way in the midst of the ruins, to seek some knowledge of her kind friends. A large Toad issued from a pile of stones, advanced before her, and said:—

"What are you seeking? Have you not occasioned the death of your friends by the basest ingratitude? Begone! do not insult their memory by your unwelcome presence!"

"Alas! alas!" cried Blondine, "my poor friends, Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon, why can I not atone by my death for the sufferings I have caused them?" And she fell, sobbing

piteously, upon the stones and nettles; her grief and her repentance were so excessive that she did not feel their sharp points in her tender flesh. She wept profusely a long time. At last she arose and looked about her, hoping to find some shelter where she might take refuge. Ruin only stared her in the face!

"Well," said she, "let the wild beasts tear me to pieces, let me die of hunger and thirst, if I can expiate my sins here upon the tomb of Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon!"

As she uttered these words, she heard a soft voice saying: "True repentance can atone for the worst of crimes."

She raised her head and saw only an immense black Crow flying above her.

"Alas! alas!" said Blondine, "my repentance however true, however bitter it may be, can never give me back the lives of my dear Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon!"

"Courage, courage, Blondine! redeem your fault by your repentance and do not allow yourself to be utterly cast down by grief."

The poor princess arose and left the scene of desolation. She followed a little path, where the large trees seemed to have rooted out the brambles and the earth was covered with moss. She was utterly exhausted with grief and fatigue and fell at the foot of a large tree, sobbing piteously.

"Courage, Blondine!" said another voice; "courage and hope!"

She saw near her only a Frog, which was looking at her compassionately.

"Oh, Frog!" said the princess, "you seem to pity my anguish! What will become of me now that I am alone and desolate in the world?"

"Courage and hope!" was the reply.

Blondine sighed deeply and looked around, hoping to discover some herb or fruit to appease her hunger and thirst. She saw nothing and her tears flowed freely. The sound of

bells now somewhat dissipated her despairing thoughts. She saw a beautiful cow approaching her, gently and slowly. On arriving near her, the cow paused, bowed down, and showed her a silver porringer attached to her neck by a chain of beaten gold.

Blondine was very grateful for this unexpected succor. She detached the porringer, milked the cow and drank the sweet milk with delight. The pretty, gentle cow signed to her to replace the porringer. Blondine obeyed, kissed her on the neck and said, sadly:—

"Thanks, Blanchette, it is without doubt to my poor friends that I owe this sweet charity. Perhaps in another and better world they can see the repentance of their poor Blondine and wish to assist her in her frightful position."

"A true repentance will obtain pardon for all faults," said a kind voice.

"Ah!" exclaimed Blondine, "years of sorrow and weeping for my crimes would not suffice! I can never pardon myself!"

In the mean time, night approached. Notwithstanding her anguish and repentance, Blondine began to reflect upon some means of securing herself from the ferocious wild beasts, whose terrible roars she already believed she heard in the distance. She saw some steps before her a kind of hut, formed by several trees growing near together and interlacing their branches. Bowing her head, she entered, and found that by carefully connecting some branches she could form a pretty and secure retreat. She employed the remainder of the day in arranging this little room and gathered a quantity of moss, with which she made herself a bed and pillow. She concealed the entrance to this little retreat by some broken branches and leaves and went to rest, utterly worn out with regret and fatigue.

When Blondine awoke it was broad daylight. At first she could scarcely collect her thoughts and understand her position but the sad realities of her lot were soon apparent to her

and she commenced weeping as before.

Blondine was hungry, and she could not imagine how she was to secure food but soon she heard again the sound of the cow-bells. In a few moments, Blanchette stood near her. Blondine again loosened the porringer, drew the milk and drank till her hunger was appeased, then replaced the porringer and kissed Blanchette, hoping to see her again during the day. Every day—in the morning, at midday and in the evening—Blanchette came to offer Blondine her frugal repast.

Blondine passed the time in tears for her poor friends, and bitter self-reproach for her crimes.

"By my unpardonable disobedience," she said to herself, "I have caused the most terrible misfortunes, which it is not in my power to repair. I have not only lost my good and true friends but I am deprived of the only means of finding my father, my poor father, who perhaps still expects his Blondine, his most unhappy Blondine, condemned to live and die alone in this frightful forest where her evil genius reigns supreme."

Blondine sought to amuse and employ herself in every possible way. Her little home was neatly arranged, and fresh moss and leaves composed her simple couch. She had tied some branches together and formed a seat and she made herself some needles and pins of the thorns and twisted some thread from the hemp which grew near her little hut, and with these implements she had mended the rents in her shoes.

In this simple way Blondine lived for six months; her grief was always the same and it is just to say that it was not her sad and solitary life which made her unhappy but sincere regret for her fault. She would willingly have consented to pass her life in the forest if she could thus have brought to life Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon.

The Tortoise

One day Blondine was seated at the entrance of her hut, musing sadly as usual, thinking of her lost friends and of her father, when she saw before her an enormous Tortoise.

"Blondine," said the Tortoise, "if you will place yourself under my protection, I will conduct you out of this forest."

"And why, Madam Tortoise, should I seek to leave this forest? Here I caused the death of my friends and here I wish to die."

"Are you very certain of their death, Blondine?"

"What do you mean? Is it possible I may be deceived? But, no; I saw the ruins of their castle. The Parrot and the Toad assured me of their death. You are kind and good and wish to console me without doubt but, alas! I do not hope to see them again. If they still lived they would not have left me alone with the frightful despair of having caused their death."

"But how do you know, Blondine, that this seeming neglect is not forced upon them? They may now be subjected to a power greater than their own. You know, Blondine, that a true repentance will obtain pardon for many crimes."

"Ah! Madam Tortoise, if they still live, if you can give me news of them, if you can assure me that I need no longer reproach myself with their death, assure me that I shall one day see them again, there is no price which I will not gladly pay to merit this great happiness."

"Blondine, I am not permitted to disclose to you the fate of your friends but if you have the courage to mount on my back, remain there for six months and not address a single question to me during the journey, I will conduct you to a place where all will be revealed."

"I promise all that you ask, Madam Tortoise, provided I can only learn what has become of my friends."

"Take care, Blondine! reflect well. Six months without descending from my back and without asking me a single question! When once you have accepted the conditions, when we have commenced our journey, if you have not the courage to endure to the end, you will remain eternally in the power of the enchanter, Perroquet, and his sister Rose and I cannot even continue to bestow upon you the little assistance to which you owe your life during the last six months."

"Let us go, Madam Tortoise let us be off, immediately. I prefer to die of hunger and fatigue rather than of grief and uncertainty. Your words have brought hope to my poor heart, and I have courage to undertake even a more difficult journey than that of which you speak."

"Let it be according to your wish, Blondine. Mount my back. Fear neither hunger nor thirst nor cold nor sunshine nor any accident during our long journey. As long as it lasts you shall not suffer from any inconvenience."

Blondine mounted on the back of the Tortoise. "Now, silence!" said she; "and not one word till we have arrived and I speak to you first."

The Journey and Arrival

The journey of Blondine lasted, as the Tortoise had said, six months. They were three months passing through the forest. At the end of that time she found herself on an arid plain which it required six weeks to cross. Then Blondine perceived a castle which reminded her of that of Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon. They were a full month passing through the avenue to this castle.

Blondine burned with impatience. Would she indeed learn the fate of her dear friends at the palace? In spite of her extreme anxiety, she dared not ask a single question. If she could have descended from the back of the Tortoise, ten minutes would have sufficed for her to reach the castle. But, alas! the Tortoise crept on slowly and Blondine remembered that she had been forbidden to alight or to utter a word. She resolved, therefore, to control her impatience. The Tortoise seemed rather to relax than to increase her speed. She consumed fourteen days still in passing through this avenue. They seemed fourteen centuries to Blondine. She never, however, lost sight of the castle or of the door. The place seemed deserted; she heard no noise, she saw no sign of life.

At last, after twenty-four days' journey, the Tortoise paused, and said to Blondine:—

"Now, princess, descend. By your courage and obedience you have earned the recompense I promised. Enter the little door which you see before you. The first person you will meet will be the fairy Bienveillante and she will make known to you the fate of your friends."

Blondine sprang lightly to the earth. She had been immovable so long she feared her limbs would be cramped but

on the contrary she was as light and active as when she had lived so happily with her dear Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon and ran joyously and gracefully gathering flowers and chasing butterflies.

After having thanked the Tortoise most warmly she opened the door which had been pointed out to her and found herself before a young person clothed in white, who asked in a sweet voice, whom she desired to see?

"I wish to see the fairy Bienveillante. Tell her, I pray you, miss, that the princess Blondine begs earnestly to see her without delay."

"Follow me, princess," replied the young girl.

Blondine followed in great agitation. She passed through several beautiful rooms and met many young girls clothed in white, like her guide. They looked at her as if they recognized her and smiled graciously.

At last Blondine arrived in a room in every respect resembling that of Bonne-Biche in the Forest of Lilacs. The remembrances which this recalled were so painful that she did not perceive the disappearance of her fair young guide.

Blondine gazed sadly at the furniture of the room. She saw but one piece which had not adorned the apartment of Bonne-Biche in the Forest of Lilacs. This was a wardrobe in gold and ivory, exquisitely carved. It was closed. Blondine felt herself drawn towards it in an inexplicable manner. She was gazing at it intently, not having indeed the power to turn her eyes away, when a door opened and a young and beautiful woman, magnificently dressed, entered and drew near Blondine.

"What do you wish, my child?" said she, in a sweet, caressing voice.

"Oh, madam!" said Blondine, throwing herself at her feet, "I have been assured that you could give me news of my dear, kind friends, Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon. You know, madam, without doubt by what heedless disobedience I gave

them up to destruction and that I wept for them a long time, believing them to be dead but the Tortoise, who conducted me here, has given me reason to hope I may one day see them again. Tell me, madam, tell me if they yet live and if I may dare hope for the happiness of rejoining them?"

"Blondine," replied the fairy Bienveillante, sadly, "you are now about to know the fate of your friends, but no matter what you see or hear, do not lose courage or hope."

Saying these words, she seized the trembling Blondine and conducted her in front of the wardrobe which had already so forcibly attracted her attention.

"Blondine, here is the key to this wardrobe. Open it, and be brave!"

She handed Blondine a gold key. With a trembling hand the princess opened the wardrobe. What was her anguish when she saw the skins of Bonne-Biche and Beau-Minon fastened to the wardrobe with diamond nails! At this terrible sight the unfortunate princess uttered a cry of horror and fell insensible at the feet of the fairy. At this moment the door opened and a prince, beautiful as the day, sprang towards Blondine, saying:—

"Oh, my mother! this is too severe a trial for my sweet Blondine!"

"Alas! my son, my heart also bleeds for her. But you know that this last punishment was indispensable to deliver her for ever from the yoke of the cruel genius of the Forest of Lilacs."

The fairy Bienveillante now with her wand touched Blondine, who was immediately restored to consciousness but despairing and sobbing convulsively, she exclaimed:—

"Let me die at once! My life is odious to me! No hope, no happiness, from this time forth for ever for poor Blondine! My friends! my cherished friends! I will join you soon in the land of shadows!"

"Blondine! ever dear Blondine!" said the fairy, clasping her in her arms, "your friends live and love you tenderly. I am

Bonne-Biche and this is my son, Beau-Minon. The wicked genius of the Forest of Lilacs, taking advantage of the negligence of my son, obtained dominion over us and forced us into the forms under which you have known us. We could not resume our natural appearance unless you should pluck the Rose, which I, knowing it to be your evil genius, retained captive. I placed it as far as possible from the castle in order to withdraw it from your view. I knew the misfortune to which you would be exposed on delivering your evil genius from his prison and Heaven is my witness, that my son and I would willingly have remained a Hind and a Cat for ever in your eyes in order to spare you the cruel tortures to which you have been subjected. The Parrot gained you over, in spite of all our precautions. You know the rest, my dear child. But you can never know all that we have suffered in witnessing your tears and your desolation."

Blondine embraced the Fairy ardently and addressed a thousand questions to her.

"What has become of the gazelles who waited upon us so gracefully?"

"You have already seen them, dear Blondine. They are the young girls who accompanied you. They also were changed when the evil genius gained his power over us."

"And the good white cow who brought me milk every day?"

"We obtained permission from the Queen of the Fairies to send you this light refreshment. The encouraging words of the Crow came also from us."

"You, then, madam, also sent me the Tortoise?"

"Yes, Blondine. The Queen of the Fairies, touched by your repentance and your grief, deprived the Evil Genius of the Forest of all power over us on condition of obtaining from you one last proof of submission, compelling you to take this long and fatiguing journey and inflicting the terrible punishment of making you believe that my son and I had died from

your imprudence. I implored, entreated the Queen of the Fairies to spare you at least this last anguish but she was inflexible."

Blondine gazed at her lost friends, listened eagerly to every word and did not cease to embrace those she had feared were eternally separated from her by death. The remembrance of her dear father now presented itself. The prince Parfait understood her secret desire and made it known to his mother, the fairy Bienveillante.

"Prepare yourself, dear Blondine, to see your father. Informed by me, he now expects you."

At this moment, Blondine found herself in a chariot of gold and pearls, the fairy Bienveillante seated at her right hand, and the prince Parfait at her feet, regarding her kindly and tenderly. The chariot was drawn by four swans of dazzling whiteness. They flew with such rapidity, that five minutes brought them to the palace of King Benin. All the court was assembled about the king, all were expecting the princess Blondine.

When the chariot appeared, the cries of joy and welcome were so tumultuous that the swans were confused and almost lost their way. Prince Parfait, who guided them, succeeded in arresting their attention and the chariot drew up at the foot of the grand stairway. King Benin sprang towards Blondine who, jumping lightly from the chariot, threw herself in her father's arms. They remained a long time in this position and everybody wept tears of joy.

When King Benin had somewhat recovered himself he kissed, respectfully and tenderly, the hand of the good fairy who, after having protected and educated the princess Blondine had now restored her to him. He embraced the prince Parfait whom he found most charming.

There were eight resplendent gala days in honor of the return of Blondine. At the close of this gay festival, the fairy Bienveillante announced her intention of returning home.

But Prince Parfait and Blondine were so melancholy at the prospect of this separation that King Benin resolved they should never quit the place. He wedded the fairy and Blondine became the happy wife of Prince Parfait who was always for her the Beau-Minon of the Forest of Lilacs.

Brunette, whose character had entirely changed, came often to see Blondine. Prince Violent, her husband, became more amiable as Brunette became more gentle and they were very happy.

As to Blondine, she had no misfortunes, no griefs. She had lovely daughters, who resembled her, and good and handsome sons, the image of their manly father, Prince Parfait. Everybody loved them and every one connected with them was happy ever after.

Ourson

The Lark and the Toad

There was once a pretty woman named Agnella, who cultivated a farm. She lived alone with a young servant named Passerose. The farm was small but beautiful and in fine order. She had a most charming cow, which gave a quantity of milk, a cat to destroy the mice and an ass to carry her fruit, butter, vegetables, eggs, and cheese to markets every Wednesday.

No one knew up to that time how Agnella and Passerose had arrived at this unknown farm which received in the county the name of the Woodland Farm.

One evening Passerose was busy milking the pretty white cow while Agnella prepared the supper. At the moment she was placing some good soup and a plate of cream upon the table, she saw an enormous toad devouring with avidity some cherries which had been put on the ground in a vine-leaf.

"Ugly toad!" exclaimed Agnella, "I will teach you how to eat my cherries!" At the same moment she lifted the leaves which contained the cherries, and gave the toad a kick which dashed it off about ten steps. She was about to throw it from the door, when the toad uttered a sharp whistle and raised itself upon its hind legs; its great eyes were flashing, and its enormous mouth opening and shutting with rage, its whole ugly body was trembling and from its quivering throat was heard a terrible bellowing.

Agnella paused in amazement; she recoiled, indeed, to avoid the venom of the monstrous and enraged toad. She looked around for a broom to eject this hideous monster, when the toad advanced towards her, made with its fore paws a gesture of authority, and said in a voice trembling with rage:—

"You have dared to touch me with your foot! You have prevented me from satisfying my appetite with the cherries which you had placed within my reach! You have tried to expel me from your house! My vengeance shall reach you and will fall upon that which you hold most dear! You shall know and feel that the fairy Furious is not to be insulted with impunity. You shall have a son, covered with coarse hair like a bear's cub and—"

"Stop, sister," interrupted a small voice, sweet and flute-like, which seemed to come from above. Agnella raised her head and saw a lark perched on the top of the front door. "You revenge yourself too cruelly for an injury inflicted, not upon you in your character of a fairy but upon the ugly and disgusting form in which it has pleased you to disguise yourself. By my power, which is superior to yours, I forbid you to exaggerate the evil which you have already done in your blind rage and which, alas! it is not in my power to undo. And you, poor mother," she continued, turning to Agnella, "do not utterly despair; there is a possible remedy for the deformity of your child. I will accord to him the power of changing his skin with any one whom he may, by his goodness and service rendered, inspire with sufficient gratitude and affection to consent to the change. He will then resume the handsome form which would have been his if my sister, the fairy Furious, had not given you this terrible proof of her malice and cruelty."

"Alas! madam Lark," replied Agnella, "all this goodness cannot prevent my poor, unhappy son from being disgusting and like a wild beast. His very playmates will shun him as a monster."

"That is true," replied the fairy Drolette; "and the more so as it is forbidden to yourself or to Passerose to change skins with him. But I will neither abandon you nor your son. You will name him Ourson until the day when he can assume a name worthy of his birth and beauty. He must then be called

the prince Marvellous."

Saying these words, the fairy flew lightly through the air and disappeared from sight.

The fairy Furious withdrew, filled with rage, walking slowly and turning every instant to gaze at Agnella with a menacing air. As she moved slowly along, she spat her venom from side to side and the grass, the plants and the bushes perished along her course. This was a venom so subtle that nothing could ever flourish on the spot again and the path is called to this day the Road of the Fairy Furious.

When Agnella found herself alone, she began to sob. Passerose, who had finished her work and saw the hour of supper approaching, entered the dining-room and with great surprise saw her mistress in tears.

"Dear queen, what is the matter? Who can have caused you this great grief? I have seen no one enter the house."

"No one has entered, my dear, except those who enter everywhere. A wicked fairy under the form of a toad and a good fairy under the appearance of a lark."

"And what have these fairies said to you, my queen, to make you weep so piteously? Has not the good fairy interfered to prevent the misfortunes which the wicked fairy wished to bring about?"

"No, my dear friend. She has somewhat lightened them but it was not in her power to set them aside altogether."

Agnella then recounted all that had taken place and that she would have a son with a skin like a bear. At this narrative Passerose wept as bitterly as her mistress.

"What a misfortune!" she exclaimed. "What degradation and shame, that the heir of a great kingdom should be a bear! What will King Ferocious, your husband, say if he should ever discover us?"

"And how will he ever find us, Passerose? You know that after our flight we were swept away by a whirlwind and dashed from cloud to cloud for twelve hours with such astonishing

rapidity that we found ourselves more than three thousand leagues from the kingdom of Ferocious. Besides, you know his wickedness. You know how bitterly he hates me since I prevented him from killing his brother Indolent and his sister Nonchalante. You know that I fled because he wished to kill me also. I have no reason to fear that he will pursue me for I am sure that he will wish never to see me again."

Passerose, after having wept and sobbed some time with the Queen Aimee, for that was her true name, now entreated her mistress to be seated at the table.

"If we wept all night, dear queen, we could not prevent your son from being shaggy but we will endeavor to educate him so well, to make him so good, that he will not be a long time in finding some good and grateful soul who will exchange a white skin for this hairy one which the evil fairy Furious has put upon him. A beautiful present indeed! She would have done well to reserve it for herself."

The poor queen, whom we will continue to call Agnella for fear of giving information to King Ferocious, rose slowly, dried her eyes and succeeded in somewhat overcoming her sadness. Little by little the gay and cheering conversation of Passerose dissipated her forebodings. Before the close of the evening, Passerose had convinced her that Ourson would not remain a long time a bear; that he would soon resume a form worthy of a noble prince. That she would herself indeed be most happy to exchange with him, if the fairy would permit it.

Agnella and Passerose now retired to their chambers and slept peacefully.

Birth and Infancy of Ourson

Three months after the appearance of the toad and the cruel sentence of the fairy Furious, Agnella gave birth to a boy whom she named Ourson, as the fairy Drolette had commanded. Neither Agnella nor Passerose could decide if he was ugly or handsome for he was so hairy, so covered with long brown bristles, you could see nothing but his eyes and his mouth, and not even these unless he opened them.

If Agnella had not been his mother and if Passerose had not loved her like a sister, poor Ourson would have died from neglect for he was so frightful no one would have dared to touch—he would have been taken for a little cub and killed with pitchforks. But Agnella was his mother and her first movement was to embrace him lovingly and, bathed in tears, to exclaim:—

"Poor little Ourson! who can ever love you well enough to deliver you from this horrible curse? Alas! why will not the fairy permit me to make this exchange, which is allowed to another who may love you? No one can ever love you as I do."

Ourson did not reply to these endearments; he slept peacefully.

Passerose wept also in sympathy with Agnella but she was not in the habit of afflicting herself for a long time on any occasion so she dried her eyes and said to Agnella:—

"Dear queen, I am very certain that your dear son will be clothed but a short time with this villainous bear-skin and from this day I shall call him Prince Marvellous."

"I beseech you not to do so," said the queen, anxiously; "you know that the fairies love to be obeyed."

Passerose took the child, clothed it in the linen that had

been prepared for it and leaned over to embrace it but she pricked her lips against the rough bristles of Ourson and drew back precipitately.

"It will not be I who will embrace you frequently, my boy," said she, in a low voice; "you prick like a real hedgehog."

It was Passerose, however, to whom Agnella gave the charge of the little Ourson. He had nothing of the bear but his skin: he was the sweetest-tempered, the most knowing, the most affectionate child that ever was seen. Passerose soon loved him with all her heart.

As Ourson grew up he was sometimes permitted to leave the farm. He was in no danger for no one knew him in the country. The children always ran away at his approach and the women repulsed him. Men avoided him—they looked upon him as something accursed. Sometimes when Agnella went to market she put him on her donkey and took him with her and on those days she found more difficulty in selling her vegetables and cheese. The mothers fled from her, fearing that Ourson would come too near them.

Agnella wept often and vainly implored the fairy Drolette. Whenever a lark flew near her, hope was born in her breast. But the larks, alas, were real larks, fit only to make pies and not fairies in disguise.

Violette

Ourson at eight years of age was tall and strong, with magnificent eyes and a sweet voice; his bristles were no longer stiff but his hair was soft as silk, and those who loved him could embrace him without being scratched, as Passerose had been the day of his birth. Ourson loved his mother tenderly and Passerose almost as well but he was often alone and very sad. He saw too well the horror he inspired and he saw also that he was unlike other children.

One day he was walking along a beautiful road which bordered on the farm. He had walked a long time and overcome with heat and fatigue he looked about him for some fresh and quiet spot for repose when he thought he saw a little object, fair and rosy, a few steps from him. Drawing near with precaution he saw a little girl asleep. She seemed to be about three years old and she was beautiful as the Loves and Graces. Her blonde hair partly covered her fair and dimpled shoulders while her soft cheeks were round and fresh and dimpled and a half smile played upon her rosy and parted lips, through which small teeth, white and even as pearls, could be seen. Her charming head was reposing upon a lovely rounded arm and the little hand was beautifully formed and white as snow. The attitude of this little girl was so graceful, so enchanting, that Ourson stood before her immovable with admiration. He watched with as much surprise as pleasure, this child sleeping as soundly and peacefully in the wood as if she had been at home in her own little bed. Ourson looked at her a long time and examined her toilet which was more rich and elegant than anything he had ever seen. Her dress was of white silk embroidered in gold; her boots were of blue satin also

embroidered in gold; her stockings were silk and fine as a spider's web; magnificent bracelets were sparkling upon her arms and the clasp seemed to contain her portrait; a string of beautiful pearls encircled her throat.

A lark now commenced its song just above the lovely little girl and awakened her from her profound slumber. She looked about her, called her nurse but finding herself alone in the woods, began to weep bitterly.

Ourson was much affected at her tears and his embarrassment was very great.

"If I show myself," said he to himself, "this poor little one will take me for some wild beast of the forest. If she sees me she will be terrified; she will take to flight and wander still further from her home. If I leave her here, she will die of terror and hunger. What shall I do!"

Whilst Ourson reflected thus, the little girl turned around, saw him, uttered a cry of alarm, tried to flee and fell back in a panic.

"Do not fly from me, dear little one," said Ourson, in his sad, soft voice; "I would not injure you for the whole world; on the contrary, I will assist you to find your father and mother."

The child gazed at him with staring eyes and seemed much alarmed.

"Speak to me, little one," said Ourson; "I am not a bear, as you might suppose, but a poor and most unfortunate little boy, who inspires every one with terror and whom everybody avoids."

The sweet child's eyes became calmer and softer, her fear seemed melting away and she looked undecided.

Ourson took one step towards her but she became greatly frightened, uttered a sharp cry and tried again to rise and run off. Ourson paused and began to weep bitterly.

"Unfortunate wretch that I am," he said; "I cannot even assist this poor lost child. My appearance fills her with terror!

She would rather be lost than have help from me!"

So saying, poor Ourson covered his face with his hands and sobbing piteously threw himself on the ground. A few moments afterwards he felt a little hand seeking to take possession of his own. He raised his head and saw the child standing before him, her eyes filled with tears. She caressed and patted the hairy cheeks of poor Ourson.

"Don't cry, little cub, don't cry," said she. "Violette is no longer afraid, she will not run away again. Violette will love poor little cub. Won't little cub give his hand to Violette? And if you cry again, Violette will embrace you, poor little cub."

Tears of happiness and tenderness succeeded those of despair in Ourson. Violette, seeing that he was again weeping, approached her soft rosy lips to Ourson's hairy cheek and gave him several kisses.

"You see, little cub, that Violette is no longer afraid. Violette kisses you! The little cub won't eat Violette—she will follow you!"

If Ourson had followed the dictates of his heart, he would have pressed her to his bosom and covered with kisses the good and charming child who overcame her natural terror in order to assuage the grief and mortification of a poor being whom she saw unfortunate and miserable. But he feared to arouse her terrors.

"She would think that I was about to devour her," he said.

He contented himself, therefore, with clasping her hands softly, and kissing them delicately. Violette permitted this smilingly.

"Now little cub is satisfied. Little cub will love Violette, poor Violette, who is lost!"

Ourson understood well that her name was Violette; but he could not comprehend how this little girl, so richly clad, was left alone in the forest.

"Where do you live, my dear little Violette?"

"Yonder—yonder—with papa and mamma."

"What is the name of your papa?"

"He is the king and dear mamma is the queen."

Ourson was more and more surprised and asked:

"Why are you alone in this forest?"

"Violette doesn't know. Poor Violette rode on a big dog—he ran, oh! so fast—so fast, a long time! Violette was so tired, she fell down and slept!"

"And the dog, where is he?"

Violet turned in every direction and called softly:

"Ami! Ami!"

No dog appeared.

"Alas! Ami has gone! Poor Violette is alone—alone!"

Ourson took Violette's hand and she did not withdraw it but smiled sweetly.

"Shall I go and seek mamma, Violette?"

"No, no! Violette cannot stay all alone in this wood. Violette will go."

"Come, then, with me, dear little girl. I will take you to my mother."

Ourson and Violette now turned their steps towards the farm. Ourson gathered strawberries and cherries for Violette, who would not touch them till Ourson had eaten half. When she found that he still held his half in his hand, she took them, and placed them herself in his mouth, saying:

"Eat—eat, little cub. Violette will not eat unless you eat. Violette cannot have little cub unhappy. Violette will not see you weep."

She looked at him to see if he was content and happy. Ourson was really happy. He saw that his good and pretty little companion not only tolerated him but was interested in him and sought to make herself agreeable. His eyes were sparkling with joy, his voice, always soft and sad, was now tender. After half an hour's walk, he said to her:

"Violette, you are no longer afraid of poor Ourson, are

you?"

"Oh! no, no, no!" exclaimed she. "Ourson is good—Violette will not leave him."

"You are willing, then, that I shall embrace you? you are no longer afraid of me?"

Violette, without further reply, threw herself in his arms. Ourson embraced her tenderly and pressed her to his heart.

"Dear Violette, I will always love you. I will never forget that you are the only child who was ever willing to speak to me, touch me or embrace me."

A short time after they arrived at the farm. Agnella and Passerose were seated at the door, talking together. When they saw Ourson arrive holding a little girl richly dressed by the hand, they were so surprised that neither could utter a word.

"Dear mamma, here is a good and charming little girl whom I found sleeping in the forest. She is called Violette. She is very well bred and is not afraid of me. She even embraced me when she saw me weeping."

"And why did you weep, my poor boy?" said Agnella.

"Because the little girl was afraid of me," said Ourson, in a sad and trembling voice, "and hurt herself when trying to run away from me."

"Violette is not afraid now," said she, interrupting him hastily. "Violette gave her hand to poor Ourson, embraced him and fed him with cherries and strawberries."

"But what is all this about?" said Passerose. "Why has our Ourson the charge of this little girl? why was she alone in the wood? who is she? Answer, Ourson, I do not understand this."

"I know nothing more than yourself, dear Passerose," said Ourson. "I saw this little child asleep in the wood all alone. She awoke and began to weep. Suddenly she saw me and cried out in terror. I spoke to her and began to approach her; but she screamed again with fright. I was sorrowful—oh! so very sorrowful! I wept bitterly."

"Hush! hush! poor Ourson," exclaimed Violette, putting her little hand on his mouth; "Violette will certainly never make you cry again."

While saying these words Violette's voice was trembling and her sweet eyes were full of tears.

"Good little girl!" said Agnella, embracing her; "you love our poor Ourson, who is so unhappy!"

"Oh, yes! Violette loves Ourson—will always love Ourson!"

Agnella and Passerose asked Violette many questions about her father, mother and country; but they could learn nothing more from her than she had already told Ourson. Her father was a king, her mother a queen and she did not know how she came to be alone in the forest.

Agnella did not hesitate to take under her protection this poor lost child. She loved her already because of the affection the little one seemed to entertain for Ourson and because of the happiness Ourson's whole manner expressed on seeing himself loved by some one else than his mother and Passerose.

It was now the hour for supper. Passerose laid the cloth and they all took their seats at the table. Violette asked to be put at Ourson's side. She was gay and laughed and talked merrily. Ourson was more happy than he had ever been. Agnella was contented, and Passerose jumped for joy on seeing a little playmate for her dear Ourson. In her transports she spilled a pan of cream which was not lost, however, as a cat came and licked it up to the last drop. After supper, Violette fell asleep in her chair.

"Where shall we lay her?" said Agnella. "I have no bed for her."

"Give her mine, dear mamma," said Ourson; "I can sleep quite as well in the stable."

Agnella and Passerose at first refused but Ourson insisted so much upon being allowed to make this little sacrifice, that they at last consented. Passerose carried Violette still sleeping

in her arms, undressed her without awaking her and laid her quietly in Ourson's bed, near that of Agnella. Ourson went to sleep in the stable on the bundles of hay. He slept peacefully with content in his heart.

Passerose rejoined Agnella in the parlor. She found her meditating, with her head resting on her hand.

"Of what are you thinking, dear queen?" said she; "your eyes are sad, your lips do not smile. I am come to show you the bracelets of the little stranger. This medallion ought to open but I have tried in vain to open it. Perhaps we shall find here a portrait or a name."

"Give it to me, my child. These bracelets are beautiful; they may aid us, perhaps, in finding a resemblance which presents itself vaguely to my remembrance and which I am trying in vain to make clear."

Agnella took the bracelets and turned them from side to side and pressed them in every way, trying to open the medallion, but she succeeded no better than Passerose had done.

At the moment when, weary of her vain efforts, she returned them to Passerose, she saw in the middle of the room a woman glittering as the sun; her face was of dazzling whiteness, her hair seemed made of threads of gold and a crown of glittering stars adorned her brow. Her waist was small and her person seemed transparent, it was so delicate and luminous; her floating robe was studded with stars like those which formed her crown. Her glance was soft yet she smiled maliciously but still with goodness.

"Madam," said she to Agnella, "you see in me the fairy Drolette, the protectress of your son and of the little princess whom he brought home this morning from the forest. This princess is nearly related to you for she is your niece—the daughter of your brother-in-law Indolent and sister-in-law Nonchalante. Your husband succeeded after your flight in killing Indolent and Nonchalante, who did not distrust him

and who passed all their time in sleeping, eating and lounging. Unfortunately, I could not prevent this crime as I was absent assisting at the birth of a prince whose parents are under my protection, and I forgot myself while playing tricks upon a wicked old maid of honor and an old chamberlain who was cruel and avaricious, both of them friends of my sister, the fairy Furious. But I arrived in time to save the princess Violette, only daughter and heiress of King Indolent and Queen Nonchalante. She was playing in the garden while the king Ferocious was seeking her with his poniard in his hand. I induced her to mount on the back of my dog Ami, who was ordered to leave her in the forest and to that point I directed the steps of the prince your son. Conceal from both of them their birth and your own and do not allow Violette to see these bracelets, which contain the portraits of her father and mother, nor the rich clothing which I have replaced by other articles better suited to the quiet existence she will lead here. I have here," said the fairy, "a casket of precious stones. It contains the happiness of Violette but you must hide them from all eyes and not open the casket until she shall have been lost and found."

"I will execute your orders most faithfully, madam, but I pray you tell me if my unhappy son must long wear his frightful covering."

"Patience! patience!" cried the fairy, "I watch over you, over Violette and over your son. Inform Ourson of the faculty he has of exchanging his skin with any one who loves him well enough to make this sacrifice for his sake. Remember that no one must know the rank of Ourson or of Violette. Passerose, on account of devotion, deserves to be the only one initiated into this mystery and she can always be trusted. Adieu, queen; count always upon my protection. Here is a ring, which you must place upon your little finger. As long as you wear it there you will want for nothing."

Waving her farewell with her hand, the fairy took the

form of a lark and flew away singing merrily.

Agnella and Passerose looked at each other. Agnella sighed, Passerose smiled.

"Let us hide this precious casket, dear queen, and the clothing of Violette. I am going now to see what the fairy has prepared for Violette's dress to-morrow morning."

She ran quickly and opened the wardrobe, and found it filled with clothing, linen and hosiery, all plain but good and comfortable. After having looked at all, counted all and approved all and after having assisted Agnella to undress, Passerose went to bed and was soon sound asleep.

The Dream

In the morning Ourson was the first awake, aroused by the lowing of the cow. He rubbed his eyes and looked about him and asked himself why he was in a stable. Then he recalled the events of the day before, sprang up from his bundle of hay and ran quickly to the fountain to wash his face.

While he was washing, Passerose, who had like Ourson risen at a very early hour and had come out to milk the cow, left the house-door open. Ourson entered quietly and proceeded to the chamber of his mother, who was still sleeping. He drew back the curtains from Violette's bed and found her sleeping as peacefully as Agnella.

Ourson watched her for a long time and was happy to see that she smiled in her dreams. Suddenly Violette's brow contracted and she uttered a cry of alarm, half raised herself in the bed, and throwing her little arms around Ourson's neck, she exclaimed:

"Ourson! good Ourson! save poor Violette! poor Violette is in the water and a wicked toad is pulling Violette!"

She now awoke, weeping bitterly, with all the symptoms of great alarm. She clasped Ourson tightly with her little arms: he tried in vain to reassure and control her but she still exclaimed:

"Wicked toad! good Ourson! save Violette!"

Agnella, who had awaked at her first cry, could not yet understand Violette's alarm but she succeeded at last in calming her and the child told her dream.

"Violette was walking with Ourson but he did not give his hand to Violette nor look at her. A wicked toad came and pulled Violette into the water; she fell and called Ourson; he

came and saved Violette. She loves good Ourson," she added, in a tender voice; "will never forget him."

Saying these words, Violette threw herself into his arms. He, no longer fearing the effect of his bear-skin, embraced her a thousand times and comforted and encouraged her.

Agnella had no doubt that this dream was a warning sent by the fairy Drolette. She resolved to watch carefully over Violette and to make known to Ourson all that she could reveal to him without disobeying the fairy.

When she had washed and dressed Violette, she called Ourson to breakfast. Passerose brought them a bowl of milk fresh from the cow, some good brown bread and a pot of butter. Violette, who was hungry, shouted for joy when she saw this good breakfast.

"Violette loves good milk, good bread, good butter, loves everything here, with good Ourson and good Mamma Ourson!"

"I am not called Mamma Ourson," said Agnella, laughing; "call me only Mamma."

"Oh no, no! not mamma!" cried Violette, shaking her head sadly. "Mamma! mamma is lost! she was always sleeping, never walking, never taking care of poor Violette, never kissing little Violette, Mamma Ourson speaks, walks, kisses Violette and dresses her. I love Mamma Ourson, oh, so much!" she said, seizing Agnella's hand and pressing it to her heart.

Agnella replied by clasping her tenderly in her arms.

Ourson was much moved—his eyes were moist. Violette perceived this and passing her hand over his eyes, she said, entreatingly:

"I pray you don't cry, Ourson; if you cry, Violette must cry too."

"No, no, dear little girl, I will cry no more. Let us eat our breakfast and then we will take a walk."

They breakfasted with good appetites. Violette clapped

her hands frequently and exclaimed:

"Oh how good it is! I love it! I am very glad!"

After breakfast, Ourson and Violette went out to walk while Agnella and Passerose attended to the house. Ourson played with Violette and gathered her flowers and strawberries. She said to him:

"We will always walk with each other. You must always play with Violette."

"I cannot always play, little girl. I have to help mamma and Passerose to work."

"What sort of work, Ourson?"

"To sweep, scour, take care of the cow, cut the grass and bring wood and water."

"Violette will work with Ourson."

"You are too little, dear Violette, but still you can try."

When they returned to the house, Ourson started on his various tasks. Violette followed him everywhere, she did her best and believed that she was helping him but she was really too small to be useful. After some days had passed away, she began to wash the cups and saucers, spread the cloth, fold the linen and wipe the table. She went to the milking with Passerose, helped to strain the milk and skim it and wash the marble flag-stones. She was never out of temper, never disobedient and never answered impatiently or angrily.

Ourson loved her more and more from day to day. Agnella and Passerose were also very fond of her and the more so because they knew that she was Ourson's cousin.

Violette loved them but Ourson most of all. How could she help loving this good boy, who always forgot himself for her, who was constantly seeking to amuse and please her and who would indeed have been willing to die for his little friend?

One day, when Passerose had taken Violette with her to market, Agnella related to Ourson the sad circumstances which had preceded his birth. She revealed to him the possibility of his getting rid of his hairy skin and receiving a

smooth white skin in exchange if he could ever find any one who would voluntarily make this sacrifice from affection and gratitude.

"Never," cried Ourson, "never will I propose or accept such a sacrifice. I will never consent to devote a being who loves me to that life of wretchedness which the vengeance of the fairy Furious has condemned me to endure; never, from a wish of mine, shall a heart capable of such a sacrifice suffer all that I have suffered and all that I still suffer from the fear and antipathy of men."

Agnella argued in vain against this firm and noble resolve of Ourson. He declared that she must never again speak to him of this exchange, to which he would most assuredly never give his consent and that it must never be named to Violette or any other person who loved him.

Agnella promised compliance, after a few weak arguments. In reality she approved and admired his sentiments. She could not but hope, however, that the fairy Drolette would recompense the generous and noble character of her little charge and, by some extraordinary exercise of her power, release him from his hairy skin.

The Toad Again

Some years passed away in this peaceful manner without the occurrence of any remarkable event. Ourson and Violette both grew rapidly. Agnella thought no more of Violette's frightful dream; her vigilance had greatly relaxed and she often allowed her to walk alone or under the care of Ourson.

Ourson was now fifteen years of age and he was tall and strong. No one could say whether he was handsome or homely for his long black hair covered his body and face entirely. He was good, generous and loving—always ready to render a service, always contented and cheerful. Since the day when he had found Violette in the wood his melancholy had disappeared; he was utterly indifferent to the general antipathy which he inspired and he no longer walked in uninhabited places but lived happily in the circle of the three beings whom he cherished and who loved him supremely.

Violette was now ten years old and she had not lost a single sweet charm of her beauty in growing up. Her eyes were softer and more angelic, her complexion fresher and purer, her mouth more beautiful and arch in its expression. She had grown much in height—was tall, light and graceful and her rich blonde hair, when unbound, fell to her feet and entirely enveloped her like a veil. Passerose had the care of this superb hair and Agnella never ceased to admire it.

Violette had learned many things during those seven years. Agnella had taught her how to do housework. In other things, Ourson had been her teacher. He had taught her to read, write and keep accounts and he often read aloud to her while she was sewing. Instructive and amusing books were found in her room without any one knowing where they came

from. There was also clothing and other necessary objects for Violette, Ourson, Agnella and Passerose. There was no longer any necessity for going to market to sell or the neighboring village to buy. Through the agency of the ring on Agnella's little finger everything they wished for, or had need of, was speedily brought to them.

One day when Ourson was walking with Violette she stumbled against a stone, fell and hurt her foot. Ourson was frightened when he saw his cherished Violette bleeding. He did not know what to do to relieve her; he saw how much she suffered, for, notwithstanding all her efforts, she could not suppress the tears which escaped from her eyes but finally he remembered that a brook flowed not ten paces from them.

"Dear Violette," he said, "lean upon me and we will endeavor to reach the rivulet—the fresh water will relieve you."

Violette tried to walk while Ourson supported her. He succeeded in seating her on the borders of the stream where she took off her shoe and bathed her delicate little foot in the fresh flowing water.

"I will run to the house, dear Violette, and bring some linen to wrap up your foot. Wait for me, I shall not be long absent and take good care not to get nearer the stream for this little brook is deep and if you slip you might drown."

When Ourson was out of sight Violette felt an uneasiness which she attributed to the pain caused by her wound. An unaccountable repulsion made her feel inclined to withdraw her foot from the water in which it was hanging. Before she decided to obey this strange impulse she saw the water troubled and the head of an enormous toad appear upon the surface. The great swollen angry eyes of the loathsome animal were fixed upon Violette, who since her dream had always had a dread of toads. The appearance of this hideous creature, its monstrous swollen body and menacing glance, froze her with such horror that she could neither move nor cry out.

"Ah! ha! you are at last in my domain, little fool!" said the

toad. "I am the fairy Furious, the enemy of your family. I have been lying in wait for you a long time and should have had you before if my sister, the fairy Drolette, had not protected you and sent you a dream to warn you against me. Ourson whose hairy skin is a talisman of safety is now absent, my sister is on a journey and you are at last mine."

Saying these words, she seized Violette's foot with her cold and shining paws and tried to draw her down into the water. Violette uttered the most piercing shrieks; she struggled and caught hold of the plants and shrubs growing on the borders of the stream. The first, alas, gave way, and Violette in despair seized hold of others.

"Ourson! oh, Ourson! help! help! dear Ourson, save me, save your poor Violette! I am perishing! save me! help! help!"

The fairy Furious, in the form of a toad, was about to carry her off. The last shrub had given way and Violette's last cry was hushed.

The poor Violette disappeared under the water just as another cry, more despairing, more terrible, answered to her own. But, alas! her hair alone appeared above the water when Ourson reached the spot, breathless and panting with terror. He had heard Violette's cries and had turned back with the rapidity of lightning.

Without a moment's hesitation he sprang into the water and seized Violette by her long hair but he felt instantly that he was sinking with her. The fairy Furious was drawing them to the bottom of the stream. He knew he was sinking but he did not lose his self-possession. Instead of releasing Violette, he seized her both arms and invoked the fairy Drolette. When they reached the bottom, he gave one vigorous stroke with his heel which brought him again to the surface. Holding Violette securely with one arm, he swam sturdily with the other and through some supernatural force he reached the shore where he deposited the unconscious Violette.

Her eyes were closed, her teeth tightly clenched and the

pallor of death was on her face. Ourson threw himself on his knees by her side weeping bitterly. Brave Ourson, whom no dangers could intimidate, no privation, no suffering could master, now wept like a child. His sweet sister, so well beloved! his only friend, his consolation, his happiness was lying there motionless, lifeless! Ourson's strength and courage had deserted him and he sank down without consciousness by the side of his beloved Violette.

At this moment a lark flew rapidly up, approached Violette and Ourson, gave one stroke of her little beak to Ourson and another to Violette and disappeared.

Ourson was not the only one who replied to the shrieks of Violette. Passerose had heard them and then the more terrible cry of Ourson which succeeded them. She ran to the house to apprise Agnella and they both ran rapidly toward the stream from which the cries for help seemed to come.

On approaching, they saw with surprise and alarm that Violette and Ourson were lying on the ground in a state of unconsciousness. Passerose placed her hand on Violette's heart and felt it still beating. Agnella ascertained at the same moment that Ourson was still living. She directed Passerose to take Violette home, undress her and put her to bed while she endeavored to restore consciousness to Ourson with salts and other restoratives before conducting him to the farm. Ourson was too tall and heavy to be carried while Violette, on the contrary, was light and it was easy for Passerose to carry her to the house. When she arrived there, she was soon restored to animation. It was some moments before she was conscious. She was still agitated with a vague remembrance of terror but without knowing what had alarmed her.

During this time the tender care of Agnella had restored Ourson to life. He opened his eyes, gazed tenderly at his mother and threw himself weeping upon her neck.

"Mother, dear mother!" he exclaimed, "my Violette, my beloved sister, has perished! Let me die with her!"

"Be composed, my son," replied Agnella; "Violette still lives. Passerose has carried her to the house and will bestow upon her all the attention she requires."

Ourson seemed to revive on hearing these words. He rose and wished to run to the farm but his second thought was consideration for his mother and he restrained his impatience to suit her steps. On their way to the farm he told his mother all that he knew of the events which had almost cost Violette and himself their lives. He added that the slime from the mouth of the fairy Furious had left a strange dulness in his head.

Agnella now told him how Passerose and herself had found them stretched unconscious upon the border of the stream. They soon arrived at the farm, and Ourson, still dripping, rushed into Violette's presence.

On seeing him Violette remembered everything and she sprang towards him. She threw her arms around him and wept upon his bosom. Ourson also wept and Agnella and Passerose were both in tears. It was a concert of emotion, enough to soften all hearts. Passerose put an end to it by crying out:

"Would not one say—ha! ha!—that we were the most—ha! ha!—unfortunate people—ha! ha!—in the universe!—Look at our poor Ourson, wet as a water-reed, bathing himself in his own and Violette's tears. Courage, children, courage and happiness! See, we are all alive, thanks to Ourson."

"Oh, yes!" interrupted Violette; "thanks to Ourson—to my dear, my well-beloved Ourson. How shall I ever repay him for all I owe him? How can I ever testify my profound gratitude, my tender affection?"

"By loving me always as you do now, my dear Violette, my sister. Ah! if it has indeed been in my power to render you some little service, have you not changed my whole existence? Have you not made me gay and happy—me who was so wretched and so miserable before? Are you not every day and every hour of the day the consolation and happiness of

my life and of that of my excellent mother?"

Violette was still weeping and she answered only by pressing more tenderly to her heart her Ourson, her adopted brother.

"Dear son," said his mother, "you are dripping wet. Go and change your clothing. Violette has need of some hours' repose. We will meet again at dinner."

Violette consented to go to bed but did not sleep for her heart was melting, overflowing with gratitude and tenderness. She sought in vain for some means of rewarding the devotion of Ourson. She could think of no other way than that of trying to become perfect so as to increase the happiness of Ourson and Agnella.

Violette's Sacrifice

When the dinner hour came, Violette arose, dressed herself and entered the dining-room where Agnella and Passerose were awaiting her. Ourson was not there.

"Ourson is not with you, mother," said Violette.

"I have not seen him," said Agnella.

"Nor I," said Passerose; "I will go and seek him."

She entered his chamber and found him seated upon his bed, his head resting upon his arm.

"Come, Ourson, come quick; we are waiting dinner for you."

"I cannot come," said Ourson, in a weak voice; "I have a strange heaviness in my head."

Passerose flew to inform Agnella and Violette of his illness and they were by his side in an instant. Ourson made an effort to rise in order to reassure them but he fell upon a chair. Agnella found that he had a violent fever and she prevailed upon him to lie down. Violette absolutely refused to leave him.

"I am the cause of his illness," she said, "and I will not leave his side till he is well. I shall die of anxiety if you force me to leave my dear brother."

Agnella and Passerose also installed themselves near their dear invalid but alas! soon poor Ourson did not recognise them. He was delirious! He called his mother and Violette every moment and continued to call them most importunately and to complain of their absence, even while they were holding him in their arms.

Agnella and Violette never left him day nor night during all his sickness. The eighth day, Agnella, exhausted with

fatigue, had fallen asleep near the poor sufferer's bed; his difficult respiration and lifeless eye seemed to announce the near approach of death. Violette was on her knees, holding and pressing in her fine white hands the hairy hands of Ourson and covering them with tears and kisses.

In the midst of this scene of desolation, a clear sweet song interrupted the mournful silence of the chamber of the dying boy. Violette started. This soft melody seemed to bring consolation and happiness; she raised her head and saw a lark perched upon the open shutter.

"Violette!" said the lark.

Violette trembled fearfully.

"Violette," repeated the little soft voice of the lark, "do you love Ourson?"

"Do I love him? Ah! love him—I love him more than any one else—more than I love myself."

"Would you purchase his life at the price of your happiness?"

"Yes, gladly would I purchase life for him by the sacrifice of my happiness and of my own life."

"Listen, then, Violette. I am the fairy Drolette. I love Ourson, I love you and I love your family. The venom which my sister the fairy Furious has blown upon the head of Ourson is sufficient to cause his death. Nevertheless, if you are sincere, if you really feel for Ourson the sentiments of gratitude and tenderness which you express, his life is in your hands. You are permitted to redeem it! But remember that you will soon be called upon to give the most terrible proof of your attachment and that if he lives you will pay for his existence by a most horrible sacrifice."

"Oh, madam! quick, quick, tell me what I am to do to save my dear Ourson. Nothing will be terrible to me, all will be joy and happiness if you aid me to save my brother Ourson."

"Well, my child, very well," replied the fairy. "Kiss his left

ear three times, saying at each kiss: *'To thee!—For thee!—With thee!'* Reflect again, Violette, before undertaking this cure. If you are not prepared for the most difficult sacrifices, the greatest misfortunes will overwhelm you and my sister Furious will be the mistress of your life."

As her only reply, Violette crossed her hands upon her breast, cast upon the fairy, who was about to fly away, a look of tender gratitude, and, throwing herself upon Ourson, she kissed his left ear three times, saying, with an accent loving and penetrating:

"To thee!—For thee!—With thee!"

Scarcely had she said these words, when Ourson uttered a profound sigh, opened his eyes, perceived Violette and seizing her hands carried them to his lips, saying:

"Violette, dear Violette! it seems to me I am awaking from a long dream. Tell me all that has passed. Why am I here? Why are you so pale and thin? Your cheeks are hollow, you seem to have grown old and your beautiful eyes are red with weeping."

"Hush!" said Violette, "do not wake your mother, who is sleeping by your side. She has not slept for a long time and is much fatigued. You have been very ill, Ourson!"

"And you, dear Violette, have you been resting?"

Violette blushed and hesitated.

"How could I sleep, dear Ourson, when I was the cause of all your sufferings?"

Ourson was silent. He looked at her tenderly, kissed her hands and again asked her to tell him what had passed. She told him but she was too modest and too truly devoted to reveal to him the price that the fairy had affixed to his cure. Ourson, therefore, was far from knowing the truth.

Ourson now felt himself restored to health, rose up, proceeded to his mother softly and awakened her by a kiss. Agnella thought he was delirious and called Passerose who was astonished when Violette told them that Ourson had

been restored by the good fairy Drolette.

After all this, Ourson and Violette loved each other more tenderly than ever and they never left each other unless their occupations forced them to be apart.

The Wild Boar

Two years passed. One day Ourson had been cutting wood in the forest. Violette was to bring him his dinner and return with him in the evening. At midday Passerose hung on Violette's arm a basket containing wine, bread, a little pot of butter, some ham and some cherries. Violette set off eagerly. The morning had appeared to her very long and she was impatient to be again with Ourson. To shorten the way she went through the forest which was composed of large trees under which she could easily walk. There were neither briars nor thorns in her way and a soft, thick moss covered the earth.

Violette stepped lightly for she was happy to have found a shorter path to her dear Ourson. When she had passed over about half the distance she heard the noise of a heavy and precipitate step but too far off for her to imagine what it could be. After some moments of expectation she saw an enormous wild boar coming towards her. He seemed greatly enraged, ploughed the ground with his tusks and rubbed the bark from the trees as he passed along. His heavy snorting and breathing were as distinctly heard as his step. Violette did not know where to fly or to hide herself. While she was hesitating the wild boar came in sight, saw her, and paused. His eyes were flaming, his whole body bristling, his tusks clashing together. He uttered a ferocious grunt, and sprang towards Violette. Happily she was near a tree whose branches were within her reach. She seized one, sprang up with it, and climbed from branch to branch, until she knew she was beyond his reach. Scarcely was she in safety when the savage animal precipitated himself with all his weight against the tree in which she had taken refuge. Furious at this obstacle, he commenced

tearing the bark from the tree and gave it such furious blows with his snout that Violette was terribly frightened. The concussion caused by these violent and repeated blows might at last cause the fall of the tree. She clung tightly and trembling to the tree. The wild boar at last weary of his useless attacks laid himself down at the foot of the tree casting from time to time a menacing look at Violette.

Many hours passed in this painful situation, Violette trembling but holding on steadily and the wild boar, sometimes calm, sometimes in a terrible rage, springing against the tree and tearing it with his tusks.

Violette called on her brother, her dear Ourson, for help. At every new attempt of the wild boar she renewed her cries for aid but alas! Ourson was too far off and he could not hear. No one came to her aid.

Discouragement and despair gained upon her; she began to feel hunger. She had thrown away the basket of provisions when she sprang up the tree, the wild boar had trampled upon it, crushed it and eaten up everything it contained.

Whilst Violette was a prey to these terrors and vainly calling for help Ourson was amazed at not seeing her come with the dinner.

"Can they have forgotten me?" he said to himself. "No, neither my mother nor Violette could have forgotten me. I could not have explained myself well. Without doubt they expected me back to dinner; they are looking for me now and are perhaps uneasy."

At this thought Ourson abandoned his work and commenced walking precipitately towards the house. He also wished to shorten the way and determined to cross the forest. Soon he thought he heard plaintive cries of distress. He paused—he listened, his heart beat violently as he believed he recognized the voice of Violette. But, no—he heard nothing now. He was about to resume his march when he heard a more distinct and piercing cry.

Now he knew that it must be Violette, his Violette, who was in danger and calling upon Ourson for help. He ran in the direction from which the noise seemed to come. Approaching, he heard not only calls for help but roars and growls accompanied by ferocious cries and violent blows. Poor Ourson ran on with the speed of despair. At last he perceived the wild boar shaking with his snout the tree upon which Violette was still crouched in safety though pale and overcome.

This sight gave him new strength. He invoked the protection of the good fairy Drolette and rushed upon the wild boar with his axe in his hand. The wild boar in his rage bellowed furiously. He gnashed his formidable tusks one against the other and sprang towards Ourson, who dodged the attack and jumped to one side. The boar passed beyond him, paused a moment, then turned more furious than ever against Ourson who had now taken breath and with his axe raised in his hand awaited his enemy.

The wild boar sprung on Ourson and received on his head a most violent blow but his bones were so hard he scarcely seemed to feel it. The violence of the attack overthrew Ourson. The wild boar, seeing his enemy on the ground, did not give him time to rise but sprang upon him and with his tusks endeavored to tear him to pieces.

Ourson now thought himself lost, indeed he thought no more of himself, he prayed only for Violette's safety.

Whilst the wild boar was thus trampling and kicking his enemy, a jeering song was heard just above the combatants. The wild boar shuddered, suddenly quitted Ourson, raised his head and saw a lark flying above them. The mocking song continued and the brute, uttering a cry of rage, lowered his head and withdrew slowly without once turning round.

Violette at sight of Ourson's danger had fainted away but had rested supported by the branches of the tree. Ourson, who thought himself torn to pieces, scarcely dared attempt to

move but feeling no pain he rose promptly to assist Violette. His heart was full of gratitude to the fairy Drolette to whom he attributed his rescue. At this moment the lark flew towards him, pecked his cheeks and whispered in his ear:

"Ourson, it was the fairy Furious who sent this wild boar. I arrived in time to save you. Profit by the gratitude of Violette and change skins with her. She will consent joyfully."

"Never!" cried Ourson. "I would rather be a bear all my life—rather die. Poor Violette! I should indeed be base if I abused her tenderness towards me in this way."

"Good-bye, obstinate one!" said the lark, flying away singing, "till we meet again. I shall come again—and then—"

"The result will be the same," said Ourson.

He then climbed the tree, took Violette in his arms, and descended. He laid her upon the soft green moss and bathed her forehead with a little wine he found in a broken bottle.

In a few moments Violette was restored to consciousness. She could scarcely believe her senses when she saw Ourson, living and unwounded, kneeling by her side and bathing her forehead and temples.

"Ourson! dear Ourson! again you have saved my life. Tell me, oh! tell me, what can I do to prove my gratitude?"

"Do not speak of gratitude, my cherished Violette. Do I not owe all my happiness to you? In saving your life I save my own and all I value."

"All that you say, dear brother, is sweet and tender but I desire no less to render you some real and signal service, which will show all the gratitude and all the love with which my heart is filled."

"Good! good! we shall see," said Ourson, laughing. "In the mean time let us think of preserving our lives. You have eaten nothing since morning, poor Violette, for I see on the ground the remnants of the provisions you brought, as I suppose, for our dinner. It is late and the day is declining so we must hurry to return to the farm before dark."

Violette now tried to rise but her terror and her long fast had weakened her so much that she fell to the ground.

"I cannot stand, Ourson, I am too weak. What will become of us?"

Ourson was greatly embarrassed. Violette was no longer a child and had grown so large that he could not carry her so far, neither could he leave her exposed to the attacks of the ferocious beasts of the forest and he feared she could not do without food till the morning. In this perplexity he saw a packet fall at his feet. He raised it, opened it and found a pie, a loaf of bread and a bottle of wine. Ourson knew that this bounty was from the hand of the fairy Drolette and with a heart full of gratitude he put the bottle to Violette's lips. One mouthful of this good wine which was indeed unequalled restored a portion of Violette's strength. The pie and the bread completely restored her as well as Ourson who did full honor to the repast. While eating and drinking they conversed of their past terrors and present happiness.

Now, however, it was night and neither Violette nor Ourson knew which way to turn their steps in order to reach the farm. They were in the midst of a wood. Violette was reclining against the tree which had been her refuge from the wild boar. They dared not quit this spot lest in the obscurity they might not find as comfortable a one.

"Well, dear Violette, do not be alarmed. It is warm, the weather is beautiful and you are reclining upon a bed of soft green moss. Let us pass the night where we are. I will cover you with my coat and I will lie at your feet to protect you from all danger and alarm. Mamma and Passerose will not be very anxious for they are ignorant of the dangers we have encountered and you know that we have often on a lovely evening like this reached home after they had retired."

Violette consented willingly to pass the night in the forest. In the first place, they could not do otherwise; secondly, she was never afraid with Ourson and always thought that what

he decided to do was right.

Ourson now arranged Violette's bed of moss in the best possible manner, took off his coat and in spite of her resistance spread it over her. Then, after having seen Violette's eyes close and sleep take possession of all her senses he lay at her feet and soon slept most profoundly.

Violette was the first awake in the morning. She walked around the tree which had sheltered them during the night. Ourson awaked and not seeing Violette he sprang up in an instant and called her name in a voice choking with terror.

"I am here! I am here, dear brother!" she replied, running towards him; "I am seeking the path to the farm. But what is the matter? you tremble!"

"I thought you had been carried away by some wicked fairy, dear Violette, and I reproached myself for having fallen asleep. Let us go now quickly in order to reach home before mamma and Passerose are awake."

Ourson knew the forest well. He soon found the path to the farm and they arrived some moments before Agnella and Passerose awoke. They agreed to conceal from Agnella the dangers to which they had been exposed, to spare her anguish and disquietude for the future. Passerose alone was made the confidant of their dangerous adventures.

The Conflagration

Ourson now forbade Violette to go alone in the forest. She was no longer allowed to carry him his dinner so he always returned to the house at midday. Violette never left the farm without Ourson.

Three years after the event in the forest, Ourson saw Violette arise in the morning pale and exhausted. She was seeking him.

"Come, come," she said, drawing him along, "I have something to say—something to relate—Oh, come!"

Ourson was much alarmed and followed her precipitately.

"What is it, dear Violette? For the love of Heaven, speak to me! What can I do for you?"

"Nothing, nothing, dear Ourson; you can do nothing—only listen to me. You remember the dream I had in my childhood, of the toad! the river! the danger! Well, last night I had this same dream again. It is terrible! terrible! Ourson, dear Ourson, your life is menaced! If you die, I will die also!"

"How! By whom is my life threatened?"

"Listen! I was sleeping and a toad—still a toad—always a toad—came to me and said:

"'The moment approaches when your dear Ourson is to resume his natural skin. To you he is to be indebted for this change. I hate him! I hate you! You shall not make each other happy! Ourson shall perish and you cannot accomplish the sacrifice which in your folly you meditate. In a few days, yes, perhaps in a few hours I shall take a signal vengeance upon you both. Good-bye—do you hear?—till we meet again!'

"I awoke, suppressed a cry which was about to issue from my lips and saw, as I saw on that day in which you saved me

from the water, the hideous toad creeping upon the shutter and gazing at me menacingly. It disappeared, leaving me more dead than alive. I arose dressed myself and came to find you my brother, my friend to warn you against the vengeance of the fairy Furious and to entreat you to seek the aid of the good fairy Drolette."

Ourson listened in great alarm. He was not frightened by the fate which menaced himself—he was agitated by the sacrifice which Furious announced and which he understood but too well. The thought alone of his dear and lovely Violette being muffled up in his hideous bear's skin through devotion to him made him tremble and he preferred death. Ourson's anguish was pictured in his countenance, and Violette, who was watching him closely, threw herself upon his neck and sobbed violently.

"Alas! my brother, my dear brother, you will soon be torn from me. You, who do not know what it is to fear, now tremble. You who comfort me encourage me and sustain me in all my fears have now no word to utter to restore my failing courage. You who have combated the most terrible dangers now bow your head and are resigned to fate."

"No, Violette, it is not fear which makes me tremble—it is not fear which agitates me. It is a word which the fairy Furious has uttered, of which you do not comprehend the meaning but which I understand perfectly. The threat was addressed to you, my Violette. It is for you I tremble!"

Violette divined from this that the moment of sacrifice had come, that she was about to be called upon to keep the promise she had made to the fairy Drolette. In place of trembling and shrinking, she felt the most lively joy. She could now at last make some return for the devotion, the incessant watchful tenderness of her dear Ourson—could in her turn be useful to him. She made no response to the fears expressed by Ourson but thanked him and spoke to him more tenderly than ever before, thinking that soon perhaps she

would be separated from him by death. Ourson had the same thought. They both fervently invoked the protection of the fairy Drolette. Ourson, indeed, called upon her in a loud voice but she did not respond to his appeal.

The day passed away sadly. Neither Ourson nor Violette spoke to Agnella on the subject of their disquiet for fear of aggravating her melancholy which had been constantly increasing as Ourson grew to manhood.

"Already twenty years old!" thought she. "If he persists in living in this solitude and seeing no one and in refusing to change with Violette, who asks nothing better, I am certain, I am convinced, he will wear this bear-skin till his death."

Agnella wept, often wept; but her tears brought her no remedy.

The day Violette had her frightful dream, Agnella also had a dream. The fairy Drolette had appeared to her:

"Courage, queen," she said to her, "in a few days Ourson will lose his bear's skin and you can give him his true name of Prince Marvellous."

Agnella had awaked full of hope and happiness. She redoubled her tenderness to Violette, believing that it was to her she would owe the happiness of her son.

Every one retired at night with different feelings. Violette and Ourson, full of anxiety for the future which appeared so threatening, Agnella's heart bounding with joy at that same future which appeared so near and so replete with happiness, Passerose, astonished at the melancholy of the one and the joy of the other and ignorant of the cause of both.

All slept, however. Violette after weeping profusely, Ourson after having invoked the fairy Drolette; Agnella after smiling and thinking of Ourson handsome and attractive and Passerose after saying to herself a hundred times: "But what is the matter with them all to-day?"

Scarcely an hour after all at the farm were asleep, Violette was aroused by the smell of fire and smoke. Agnella awoke at

the same moment.

"Mother," said Violette, "do you not smell something?"

"The house is on fire," said Agnella. "Look what a light is round about us!"

They sprang from their beds and ran to the parlor. The flames had already taken possession of it and of the neighboring chambers.

"Ourson! Passerose!" cried Agnella.

"Ourson! Ourson!" exclaimed Violette.

Passerose sprang half clothed into the parlor.

"We are lost, madam! The flames are all through the house. The doors and windows are firmly closed—it is impossible to open them."

"My son! my son!" cried Agnella.

"My brother! my brother!" exclaimed Violette.

They ran to the doors; all their efforts to open them or the windows were ineffectual.

"Oh! my terrible dream!" murmured Violette. "Dear Ourson, adieu for ever!"

Ourson had also been awakened by the flames and smoke. He slept out of the farm-house, and near the stable. His first impulse was to run to the front of the house but notwithstanding his extraordinary strength he could not open it. One would have thought that the door would break to pieces under his efforts. It was evidently held fast by the fairy Furious.

Ourson sprang upon a ladder and passed across the flames into a granary through an open window, then descended into the room where his mother and Violette were embracing, expecting instant death. Before they had time to recognize him he seized them in his arms and cried to Passerose to follow him. He ran along the granary and descended the ladder with his mother in one arm and Violette in the other and followed by Passerose. The moment after they reached the ground in safety, the ladder and granary became a prey to

the flames.

Ourson led Agnella and Violette some distance from the fire. Passerose was self-possessed: she had quite a large package of clothing which she had collected at the commencement of the fire. Agnella and Violette had escaped barefooted and in their night robes, and the clothing brought by Passerose was thus very necessary to protect them from the cold. After having thanked Ourson for saving their lives at the peril of his own they complimented Passerose upon her forethought.

"See," said Passerose, "the advantage of not losing one's senses. Whilst you two were only thinking of your Ourson, I made up this package of necessary things."

"That is true, my good Passerose; but what purpose would your package have served, if my mother and Violette had perished in the flames?"

"Oh, I knew very well that you would not allow them to be burned up alive. Is any one ever in danger when you are present? Is not this the third time you have saved Violette's life?"

Violette pressed Ourson's hands tenderly and carried them to her lips. Agnella embraced her and said:

"Dear Violette, Ourson is happy in your tenderness which fully rewards him for all he has done for you. I feel assured that on your part you would be happy to sacrifice yourself for him if an occasion offered, that only too willingly would you help him."

Before Violette could speak, Ourson said with animation:

"Mother, do not say anything to Violette of sacrificing herself for me. You know the thought alone makes me wretched."

In place of replying to Ourson, Agnella placed her hand on her forehead and cried out anxiously:

"The casket, Passerose! the casket! Have you saved the casket?"

"I forgot it, madam," said Passerose.

The countenance of Agnella expressed such regret and anxiety, that Ourson questioned her as to this precious casket which seemed to trouble her so much.

"The casket was a present of the fairy Drolette. She told me that the happiness of Violette was contained in it. It was in the wardrobe, at the foot of my bed. Alas! by what fatality did I forget it?"

She had scarcely uttered these words when the brave Ourson sprang towards the burning house and notwithstanding the tears and supplications of Agnella, Violette and Passerose, disappeared in the flames exclaiming:

"You shall have the casket, mother, or I will perish with it!"

A horrible silence followed this act of Ourson. Violette fell on her knees with her arms extended towards the burning house, Agnella with her hands clasped looked with straining eyes at the opening through which Ourson had entered while Passerose was motionless, hiding her face with her hands. Some moments passed thus and they appeared ages to the three women who were expecting a sentence of life or death.

Ourson did not reappear. The crackling of the burning wood, the flashing of the flames, increased in violence. Suddenly, a frightful noise made Violette and Agnella utter a cry of despair.

The roof, covered with flames, had fallen in and Ourson was buried under the ruins—crushed by the ruins, consumed by the fire.

The silence of death succeeded this dreadful catastrophe. The flames diminished, then died away—no sound now interrupted the despair of Agnella and Violette.

Violette had fallen into the arms of Agnella and they sobbed thus a long time in silence. Passerose contemplated the smoking ruins and wept. Poor Ourson was buried there a victim of his courage and his devotion! Agnella and Violette

still wept bitterly; they appeared neither to hear nor understand what was passing around them.

"Let us leave this place," said Passerose, at last.

Agnella and Violette made no response.

Passerose tried to lead Violette away.

"Come," said she; "come, Violette, let us seek a shelter for the night—the evening fortunately is mild."

"What shelter do I want?" said Violette. "What is the evening to me or the morning? There are no more beautiful days for me! The sun will shine no more but to illumine my despair!"

"But if we remain here weeping we shall die of hunger, Violette, and in spite of the bitterest grief, we must think of the necessities of life."

"Better to die of hunger than of grief! I will not leave this place where I saw my dear Ourson for the last time—where he perished, a victim of his tenderness for us."

Passerose shrugged her shoulders; she remembered that the stable had not been burned so she ran there with all speed, milked the cow, drank a cupful of milk and tried in vain to make Agnella and Violette do the same.

Agnella rose and said to Violette in a solemn tone:

"Your grief is just, my daughter. Never did a more noble or generous heart beat in a human form than Ourson's and he loved you more than he loved himself—to spare your grief he sacrificed his happiness and his life."

Agnella now recounted to Violette the scene which preceded Ourson's birth, the power Violette had to deliver him from his deformity by accepting it for herself and Ourson's constant prayer that Violette should never be informed of the possibility of such a sacrifice.

It is easy to comprehend the feelings of loving tenderness and regret which filled the heart of Violette after this confidence and she wept more bitterly than ever.

"And now, my daughter," continued Agnella, "there

remains one duty to fulfil, that is to give burial to my son. We must clear away these ruins and remove the ashes and when we have found the remains of our well-beloved Ourson—"

Sobs interrupted her speech; she could say no more.

The Well

Agnella, Violette and Passerose walked slowly towards the burned walls of the farmhouse. With the courage of despair they removed the smoking ruins. They worked diligently two days before this work was completed. No vestige of poor Ourson appeared and yet they had removed piece by piece, handful by handful, all that covered the site. On removing the last half-burned planks, Violette perceived an aperture, which she quickly enlarged. It was the orifice of a well. Her heart beat violently—a vague hope inspired it.

"Ourson!" cried she, with a faint voice.

"Violette! dear Violette! I am here; I am saved!"

Violette could reply only by a smothered cry; she lost her consciousness and fell into the well which enclosed her dear Ourson. If the good fairy Drolette had not watched over her fall, she would have broken her head and limbs against the sides of the well. But their kind protectress, who had already rendered them so many services, sustained her and she fell safely at Ourson's feet.

Violette soon returned to consciousness. Their happiness was too great to be believed in—to be trusted. They did not cease to give the most tender assurances of affection. And now they were aroused from their ecstasy by the cries of Passerose, who, losing sight of Violette and seeking her amongst the ruins, discovered the open well. Peering into the darkness she saw Violette's white robe and she imagined that the poor girl had thrown herself intentionally into the well and there found the death she sought. Passerose screamed loud enough to destroy her lungs. Agnella came slowly forward to know the cause of this alarm.

"Be silent, Passerose," cried Ourson in a loud voice; "you are frightening our mother. I am in the well with Violette; we are happy and want for nothing."

"Oh blessed news! blessed news!" cried Passerose; "I see them! I see them! Madam, madam, come quickly, quickly! They are here—they are well—they have need of nothing!"

Agnella, pale, and half dead with emotion, listened to Passerose without comprehending her. She fell on her knees and had not strength to rise. But when she heard the voice of her dear Ourson calling to her: "Mother, mother, your poor son Ourson still lives!" she sprang toward the well, and would have precipitated herself within, had not Passerose seized her by the arms and drawn her back suddenly.

"For the love of Ourson, dear queen, do not throw yourself into this hole; you will kill yourself! I will restore Ourson and Violette to you unharmed."

Agnella, trembling with happiness, comprehended the wisdom of the counsel given by Passerose. She remained rooted to the spot but shuddering with agitation while Passerose ran to seek a ladder.

Passerose was absent a long time which was excusable as she was somewhat confused. First she seized a cord, then a pitchfork, then a chair. For an instant she thought of lowering the cow to the bottom of the well so that poor Ourson might have a drink of fresh warm milk. At last she found the ladder before her eyes, almost in her hands, but she had not seen it.

While Passerose was seeking the ladder, Ourson and Violette talked incessantly of their present happiness and the despair and anguish they had endured.

"I passed uninjured through the flames," said Ourson, "and sought groping about for the wardrobe of my mother. The smoke suffocated and blinded me. Then I felt myself raised by the hair and cast to the bottom of this well where you have come to join me, dear Violette.

"In place of finding water, or even moisture here, I felt at

once a sweet, fresh air. A soft carpet was spread on the bottom: you see it is still here. There was from some source sufficient light around me. I found ample provisions at my side. Look at them, Violette, I have not touched them. A few drops of wine was all I could swallow.

"The knowledge of your despair and that of my mother rendered me too unhappy and the fairy Drolette took pity on me. She appeared to me under your form, dear Violette, and I took her for you and sprang forward to seize you in my arms but I embraced only a vague form of air or vapor. I could see her but I could not touch her.

"'Ourson', said the fairy, smiling sweetly upon me, 'I have assumed Violette's form to testify my friendship in the most agreeable way. Be comforted; you shall see her to-morrow. She weeps bitterly, because she believes you to be dead but I will send her to you to-morrow. She will make you a visit at the bottom of this well. She will accompany you when you go forth from this tomb and you shall see your mother and the blue heavens and the dazzling sun which neither your mother nor Violette wish to look upon since your loss, but which appeared beautiful to them while you were with them. You will return once more to this well for it contains your happiness.'

"'My happiness!' I exclaimed to the fairy; 'when I have found my mother and my Violette I shall be in possession of all my happiness.'

"'Believe implicitly what I say. This well contains your happiness and that of Violette.'

"'Violette's happiness, madam, is to live with me and my mother.'"

"Ah! you replied well," interrupted Violette. "But what said the fairy?"

"'I know what I say,' she answered. 'In a few days something will be wanting to complete your happiness. You will find it here. We will meet again, Ourson. Remember what

I have said.'

"'Yes, madam; I hope it will be soon.'

"'When you see me again, my poor child, you will be scarcely content and then you will wish that you had never seen me. Silence and farewell.'

"She flew away smiling sweetly, leaving behind her a delicious perfume and an atmosphere so soft and heavenly that it diffused a peaceful calm in my heart. I suffered no more—I expected you."

Violette on her part comprehended better than Ourson why the next return of the fairy would be painful to him. Since Agnella had revealed to her in confidence the nature of the sacrifice that she could impose upon herself, she was resolved to accomplish it, in spite of the opposition of Ourson. She thought only of the delight of giving an immense proof of her affection. This hope tempered her joy at having found him.

When Ourson had completed his narrative, they heard the shrill voice of Passerose crying out to them:

"Look, look, my children! the ladder. I will put it down to you. Take care that it does not fall on your heads. You must have some provisions down there; send them up, if you please; we are somewhat destitute above here. For two days I have only had a little milk to drink and a crust. Your mother and Violette have lived upon the air and their tears. Softly! softly! take care not to break the ladder. Madam! madam! here they are: here are Ourson's and Violette's heads—Good! Step up! There you are!"

Agnella, still pallid and trembling, was immovable as a statue.

After having seen Violette in safety, Ourson sprang from the well and threw himself into his mother's arms. She covered him with tears and kisses and held him a long time clasped to her heart. After having thought him dead during so many painful hours, it seemed a dream to her almost impossible to realize that she was holding him safe once more.

Finally Passerose terminated this melting scene by seizing Ourson and saying to him:

"Now it is my turn! I am forgotten, forsooth, because I do not bathe myself in tears; because I keep my head cool and preserve my strength. Was it not Passerose, after all, who got you out of that terrible hole? Speak the truth."

"Yes, yes, my good Passerose! You may believe that I love you and indeed I thank you for drawing me out of it where, however, I was doing very well after my sweet Violette came down to me."

"But now I think of it," said Passerose, "tell me, Violette, how did you get to the bottom of that well without killing yourself?"

"I did not go down purposely. I fell and Ourson received me in his arms."

"All this is not very clear," said Passerose. "The fairy Drolette had something to do with it."

"Yes, the good and amiable fairy," said Ourson. "She is always counteracting the cruelties of her wicked sister."

While thus talking merrily, their stomachs gave indication that they were suffering for dinner. Ourson had left in the well the provisions furnished by the fairy. The rest of the happy family were still embracing and weeping over past remembrances but Passerose without saying a word descended into the well and remounted with the provisions which she placed on a bundle of straw; she then placed around the table four other bundles of straw for seats.

"Dinner is ready," said she; "come and eat; you all need food. The good queen and Violette will soon fall from exhaustion. Ourson has had a little wine but he has eaten nothing. Here is a pie, a ham, bread and wine. Long life to the good fairy!"

Agnella, Violette and Ourson did not require to be told a second time but placed themselves gayly at the table. Their appetites were good and the repast excellent. Happiness

illuminated every countenance; they talked, laughed, clasped each other's hands and were in paradise.

When dinner was over, Passerose was surprised that the fairy Drolette had not provided for all their wants.

"Look," said she, "the house is in ruins, we are destitute of everything! The stable is our only shelter, the straw our only bed and the provisions I brought up from the well our only food. Formerly everything was provided before we had the time to ask for it."

Agnella looked suddenly at her hand—the ring was no longer there! They must now gain their bread by the sweat of their brows. Ourson and Violette seeing her air of consternation demanded the cause of it.

"Alas! my children, you will no doubt think me very ungrateful to feel disquieted about the future in the midst of our great happiness but I perceive that during the fire I have lost the ring given me by the good fairy and this ring would have furnished us with all the necessaries of life so long as it was upon my finger. Alas! I have it no longer. What shall we do?"

"Dismiss all anxiety, dear mother," said Ourson. "Am I not tall and strong? I will seek for work and you can all live on my wages."

"And I, too," said Violette, "can I not assist my good mother and Passerose? In seeking work for yourself, Ourson, you can also find something for me to do."

"I will go at once and seek work," said Ourson. "Adieu, mother. We will meet again, Violette."

Kissing their hands, he set off with a light step.

He had no presentiment, poor boy, of the reception which awaited him in the three houses where he sought employment.

The Farm—The Castle—The Forge

Ourson walked more than three hours before he arrived at a large and beautiful farm where he hoped to obtain employment. He saw from a distance the farmer and his family seated before his front door taking their evening meal.

He was but a short way off when one of the children, a little boy about ten years of age, perceived him. He sprang from his seat, uttered a cry of terror and fled into the house.

A second child, a little girl eight years old, hearing the cry of her brother turned towards Ourson and commenced the most piercing shrieks.

All the family now followed the movement of the children and turned around. At the sight of Ourson the women cried out with terror and the children fled in wild alarm. The men seized sticks and pitchforks expecting to be attacked by poor Ourson whom they took for some extraordinary animal escaped from a menagerie.

Ourson, seeing this movement of terror and preparation for attack, spoke to them hoping to dissipate their fears.

"I am not a bear, as you seem to suppose, but a poor boy seeking work and who would be very glad if you should give him employment."

The farmer was greatly amazed to hear a bear speak. He did not know whether to fly or to interrogate him further. He resolved, however, to speak.

"Who are you and from whence do you come?"

"I come from the Woodland Farm and I am the son of Agnella," Ourson replied.

"Ah, then it was you who in your childhood went with your mother to market and frightened all our children to

death. You have lived in the woods and done without our help. Why do you seek us now? Go away and live as you have lived heretofore."

"Our farm-house is burned to the ground. I have to work now with my hands to support my mother and sister. For this reason, I pray you to give me work. I will do all you command me."

"Do you suppose, boy, that I will take into my service a villainous animal like you who will frighten my wife and my servants to death and throw my children into convulsions? I am not quite such a fool, my boy; not quite such a fool. Enough of this. Be off, and allow us to finish our dinner."

"Master farmer, be merciful. Only try my work. Place me altogether by myself; then no one will fear me. I will conceal myself so well that your children shall not see me."

"Will you be done talking, wicked bear? Go instantly; if you don't you shall feel the teeth of my pitchfork."

Poor Ourson bowed his head. Tears of humiliation and disappointment glittered in his eyes. He withdrew slowly, followed by the coarse laugh and shouts of the farm hands.

When out of sight he no longer restrained his tears, but in all this shame and despair the thought that Violette could take upon herself his ugly covering did not enter his thoughts.

Ourson walked on till he came in sight of a castle where he saw a crowd of men coming, going and laboring at every kind of work. Some were mowing, some raking, some currying horses, some sweeping, some watering plants, some sowing.

"Here is a house where I shall certainly find work," said Ourson to himself. "I see neither women nor children and I think the men will not be afraid of me."

Ourson drew near without being seen. He took off his hat and stood before a man who seemed to be the superintendent.

"Sir—" said he.

The man looked up, recoiled a step when he saw Ourson and examined him with the greatest surprise.

"Who are you and what do you want?" said he, in a rude voice.

"Sir, I am the son of Agnella, mistress of the Woodland Farm."

"Well! and what has brought you here?"

"Our house is burned down, sir. I am seeking work in order to support my mother and sister. I hope you will be good enough to give me employment."

"Give employment to a bear?"

"Sir, I have only the appearance of a bear. Under this rough outside, which is so repugnant to you, there beats a human heart—a heart capable of gratitude and affection. You shall have no reason to complain either of my work or of my good will."

Whilst Ourson spoke and the superintendent listened with a mocking air, a great noise was heard amongst the horses. They began to kick and prance and the grooms could scarcely hold them. Some of them indeed escaped and fled in terror to the woods.

"It is the bear! It is the bear!" cried the grooms. "It has terrified the horses. Drive it off! Chase it away! We cannot control our horses."

"Off with you!" cried the superintendent.

Ourson was stupefied by his misfortunes and was immovable.

"Ha! you will not go," vociferated the man. "Wait a few moments, you hairy beast. I will give you something to run for. Halloa, men! bring out the dogs, and set them upon this animal. Hurry!—see him scampering off!"

In fact Ourson, more dead than alive at this cruel treatment, precipitately withdrew from the presence of these wicked and inhuman men. This second attempt had failed utterly but he would not allow himself to be discouraged.

"It is still three or four hours before sunset so I have time to continue my search for work."

He directed his steps towards a forge which was some distance from Woodland Farm. The master of the forge employed a great many workmen. He gave work to those who asked it, not in charity, but in view of his own interest. He was feared but he was not loved. He developed the riches of the country but no one thanked him for it because he alone profited by it. By his avidity and his opulence he ground down the poor workmen who could only find employment with this new Marquis of Carabas.

Poor Ourson arrived at the forge. The master was at the door, scolding some, threatening others and terrifying all.

"Sir," said Ourson, drawing near, "have you any work to give me?"

"Certainly. What kind of work—?"

He raised his head at these words for he had replied without looking at Ourson. When his eye fell upon him he did not finish his phrase; his eyes flashed with rage and he stammered out:—

"What foolery is this? Are we in the midst of the Carnival, that a workman ventures upon such a ridiculous masquerade? Throw off your ugly bear's skin instantly or I will crisp your bristles for you in my fire."

"This, sir, is no masquerade," replied Ourson, sadly; "it is, alas! my natural skin but if you will be humane enough to employ me you will see that my strength is equal to my good-will."

"I give work to you, you vile animal!" cried the master of the forge, foaming with rage: "I will put you into a sack and send you to a menagerie or I will throw you into a den with your brother bears. You will have work enough to defend yourself from their claws. Be off!"

And brandishing his club he would have dealt Ourson a heavy blow if the poor boy had not made a hasty retreat.

The Sacrifice

Ourson turned his steps homeward, discouraged and exhausted. He walked slowly and arrived at the farm late. Violette ran to meet him, took him by the hand, and without saying a word led him to his mother. There she fell on her knees and said:—

"My mother, I know what our well-beloved Ourson has suffered to-day. During his absence the fairy Furious has told me all and the good fairy Drolette has confirmed her story. My mother, when our Ourson was, as we believed, lost to us for ever and lost for my sake you revealed to me that which in his nobility and goodness he wished to conceal. I know that by changing skins with him I can restore to him his original beauty. Happy, a hundred times happy in having this opportunity to recompense the tenderness and devotion of my dearly-loved brother Ourson, I demand to make this exchange allowed by the fairy Drolette and I entreat her to complete the transfer immediately."

"Violette! Violette!" exclaimed Ourson, in great agitation, "take back your words! You do not know to what you engage yourself; you are ignorant of the life of anguish and misery unparalleled, the life of solitude and isolation to which you thus condemn yourself; you know not the unceasing desolation you will feel at knowing that you are an object of fear to all mankind. Violette, Violette, in pity to me, withdraw your words!"

"Dear Ourson," said Violette, calmly, but resolutely, "in making what you believe to be so great a sacrifice, I accomplish the dearest wish of my heart; I secure my own happiness; I satisfy an ardent and imperious desire to testify my

tenderness and my gratitude. I esteem myself for doing what I propose. I should despise myself if I left it undone."

"Pause, Violette, for one instant longer, I beseech you! Think of my grief, when I no longer see my beautiful Violette, when I think of you exposed to the railleries, the horror of men. Oh! Violette, do not condemn your poor Ourson to this anguish."

The lovely face of Violette was veiled with sadness. The fear that Ourson would feel repugnance towards her made her heart tremble; but this thought, which was wholly personal, was very fleeting—it could not triumph over her devoted tenderness. Her only response was to throw herself in the arms of Agnella, and say:—

"Mother, embrace your fair and pretty Violette for the last time."

Whilst Agnella, Ourson and Passerose embraced her and looked lovingly upon her—whilst Ourson, on his knees, supplicated her to leave him his bear-skin to which he had been accustomed for twenty years—Violette called out again in a loud voice:—

"Fairy Drolette! Fairy Drolette! come and accept the price of the life and health of my dear Ourson."

At this moment the fairy Drolette appeared in all her glory. She was seated in a massive chariot of gold, drawn by a hundred and fifty larks. She was clothed with a robe of butterflies' wings, of the most brilliant colors while from her shoulders fell a mantle of network of diamonds, which trailed ten feet behind her and it was so fine in texture that it was light as gauze. Her hair, glittering like tissue of gold, was ornamented by a crown of carbuncles more brilliant than the sun; each of her slippers was carved from a single ruby and her beautiful face, soft, yet gay, breathed contentment. She fixed upon Violette a most affectionate regard.

"You wish it, then, my daughter?" said she.

"Madam," cried Ourson, falling at her feet, "deign to

listen to me. You, who have loaded me with undeserved benefits—you, who have inspired me with boundless gratitude—you, good and just—will you execute the mad wish of my dear Violette? Will you make my whole life wretched by forcing me to accept this sacrifice? No, no, charming and humane fairy, you could not, you will not do it!"

Whilst Ourson was thus supplicating, the fairy gave Violette a light touch with her wand of pearl and Ourson another—then said:—

"Let it be according to the wish of your heart, my daughter. Let it be contrary to your ardent desires, my son."

At the same moment, the face, arms and the whole body of the lovely young girl were covered with the long hair which Ourson had worn, and Ourson appeared with a white smooth skin, which set off his extreme beauty to advantage.

Violette gazed at him with admiration, while he, his eyes cast down and full of tears, dared not look at his poor Violette, so horribly metamorphosed. At last he looked up, threw himself in her arms, and they wept together.

Ourson was marvellously handsome. Violette was, as Ourson had been, without form, without beauty, but not ugly. When Violette raised her head and looked at Agnella, the latter extended her hands towards her, and said:—

"Thanks, my daughter, my noble, generous child."

"Mother," said Violette, in low voice, "do you love me still?"

"Do I love you, my cherished child? Yes, a hundred times, a thousand times more than ever before."

"Violette," said Ourson, "never fear being ugly in our eyes. To my eyes, you are a hundred times more beautiful than when clothed with all your loveliness. To me you are a sister—a friend incomparable. You will always be the companion of my life, the ideal of my heart."

The Combat

Violette was about to reply, when a kind of roaring was heard in the air, and they saw descend a chariot made of crocodile's skin, drawn by fifty enormous toads. All the toads were hissing and blowing, and would have cast their infectious venom in every direction, if they had not been restrained by the power of the fairy Drolette.

When the chariot reached the ground, the fairy Furious, a huge and heavy creature, issued from it. Her big eyes seemed bursting from their sockets, her large flat nose covered her wrinkled, withered cheeks, her monstrous mouth extended from ear to ear and when it was open a long pointed black tongue was seen licking her horrid teeth.

She was not more than three feet in height and was very corpulent; her grizzly skin was gluey and cold, like a snail's and her thin red hair fell in locks of unequal length around her throat, which was disfigured by a goitre. Her large, flat hands looked like the fins of a shark, her dress was made of snail's skins and her mantle of the skins of toads.

She advanced towards Ourson (who shall hereafter be known by his true name of Prince Marvellous) with a slow step. She paused in front of him and casting a furious glance upon the fairy Drolette and an eye of mocking triumph upon Violette, she folded her great cold arms and said in a sharp yet hoarse voice:—

"My sister has triumphed over me, Prince Marvellous. I have, however, one consolation: you will not be happy, because you have obtained your original beauty at the expense of that little fool, who is now frightful and repugnant and whom you will now never wish to approach. Yes! yes!

weep, my handsome Ourson! You will weep a long time, Violette, and you will regret bitterly, if you do not already regret, that you have given your beautiful skin to the prince Marvellous."

"Never, madam, never! My only regret is that I did not know sooner what I could do to testify my gratitude."

The fairy Drolette, whose countenance had assumed an unaccustomed expression of severity and irritation, now waved her wand and said:—

"Silence, sister! You shall not triumph long over the misfortunes of Violette. I will provide a remedy for those misfortunes: her generous devotion merits recompense."

"I defy you to come to her assistance under penalty of my wrath," said Furious.

"I do not doubt your rage, sister, but I disdain to punish you for it," replied Drolette.

"To punish me!—Do you dare to threaten me?" said Furious. And hissing furiously, she called her chariot, mounted it, rose in the air and tried to launch upon Drolette all the venom of her toads in order to suffocate her.

But Drolette knew her sister perfectly. Her faithful larks held the door of her chariot open and she sprang within. The larks rose in the air, hovered above the toads, and then lowered themselves rapidly upon them. The toads, in spite of their weight, escaped the blows by turning adroitly to one side. They however threw their venom on the larks which were nearest to them, who died instantly.

Drolette detached them with the rapidity of a thunderbolt, rose again in the air and fell so adroitly on the toads, that the larks tore out their eyes with their claws, before Furious had time to come to the rescue of her army.

The outcries of the toads and the hissing of the larks made a deafening noise; and the fairy Drolette called out to her friends, who were regarding the combat with terror:—

"Withdraw immediately and stop your ears!"

Which was done instantly, in obedience to her command.

The fairy Furious made one last effort. She guided her blinded toads in such a way as to meet the larks face to face, and to dart their venom upon them.

But Drolette rose higher and higher in the air and Furious found herself always under her sister's chariot.

At last, unable to contain her rage, Furious cried out:—

"You are assisted by the queen of the fairies, an old fool whom I should gladly see in the lower regions!"

Scarcely had she pronounced these words when her chariot fell heavily to the earth. The toads perished and the chariot disappeared. The fairy Furious only remained, in the form of an enormous toad. She wished to speak but she could only bellow and snuffle. She gazed at Drolette and her larks—at Prince Marvellous, Violette and Agnella, in a transport of rage but her power was destroyed.

The fairy Drolette lowered her chariot, descended to the earth and said:—

"The queen of the fairies has punished you for your audacity, sister. Repent, if you wish to obtain pardon."

The only answer of Furious was to spit forth her poisonous venom, which happily reached no one.

Drolette extended her wand towards her and said:

"I command you to disappear and never to appear again to the prince Marvellous, to Violette or to their mother."

Drolette had scarcely uttered these words when the toad disappeared; there remained no vestige of the chariot or of herself.

Drolette remained some time motionless. She passed her hand over her brow, as if to chase away a sad thought; then approaching Prince Marvellous, she said to him:—

"Prince, the title which I give you indicates your birth. You are the son of King Ferocious and the queen Aimee, concealed till now under the appearance of a modest farmer woman. The name of your father sufficiently indicates his

character. Your mother having prevented him from killing his brother Indolent and his sister-in-law Nonchalante, he turned his rage against her. I was her protectress, and carried her off with her faithful Passerose in a cloud.

"And you, Princess Violette, your birth is equal to that of Prince Marvellous. Your father and mother were that same King Indolent and Queen Nonchalante who, saved once by Queen Aimee, became at last the victims of King Ferocious and their own apathy. Since that time King Ferocious has been killed by his subjects who could no longer support his cruel yoke.

"They expect you, prince, to reign over them. I have revealed to them your existence and I have promised them that you will take a wife worthy of you. You can select from the twelve princesses whom your father retained captive after having slain their parents. They are all wise and beautiful and each has a kingdom for her marriage portion."

Surprise had kept Prince Marvellous silent. At the last words of the fairy he turned towards Violette, and seeing that she was weeping, he said:—

"Why do you weep, my Violette? Do you fear that I will blush for you—that I will not dare to testify before my whole court the tenderness with which you inspire me? That I will conceal what you have done for me or forget the bonds which attach me to you for ever? Can you believe that I will be ungrateful enough to seek any other affection than yours and fill your place by any of those princesses held captive by my father? No, dearest Violette! Until this time I have seen in you only a sister but from this moment you are the companion of my life, my sole friend, my wife!"

"Your wife, dear brother? That is impossible! How can you seat upon your throne a creature so repulsive as your poor Violette? How will you dare to brave the raillery of your subjects and of the neighboring kings? And how could I show my deformity in the midst of the festivals given on your return

to your kingdom? No, no, my brother! Let me live near you, near to your mother, alone, unknown, covered with a veil. I cannot be your wife! No one shall blame you for having made so sad a choice."

The prince insisted long and firmly. Violette could scarcely control her emotions but she resisted with as much resolution as devotion. Agnella said nothing. She would have been willing that her son should accept even this last sacrifice from poor Violette and simply allow her to live near to them but hidden from the world.

Passerose wept and in a low tone encouraged the prince in his determination.

"Violette," said the prince, at last, "since you absolutely refuse to ascend the throne with me, I abandon it and all royal power in order to live with you as before in solitude and happiness. Without your sweet presence, the sceptre would be a heavy burden; with you at my side, our little farm will be a paradise! Say, dear Violette, shall it be so?"

"Yes, dear brother, you have triumphed; let us live as we have lived so many years: modest in our lives, happy in our affections."

"Noble prince and generous princess," said the fairy, "you shall be recompensed for this rare and devoted tenderness. Prince, in the well to which I carried you during the fire, there is a priceless treasure for Violette and yourself. Descend into the well, seek for it, and when you have found it bring it to me. I will teach you its value."

The prince did not wait to be told a second time; he ran towards the well; the ladder was still there and he descended. On arriving at the bottom, he saw nothing but the carpet which had been there from the first; he searched the walls of the well, but saw no indication of treasure. Finally he raised the carpet, and perceived a black stone with a ring attached; he raised the stone and discovered a casket which glittered like a constellation.

"This must contain the treasure spoken of by the fairy," said he.

The prince seized the casket; it was as light as a nutshell. He ascended the ladder hastily, holding the casket carefully in his arms.

They were awaiting his return with impatience. He handed the casket to the fairy. Agnella exclaimed:—

"This is the same casket you confided to me, madam, and which I supposed I had lost in the fire."

"It is the same," replied the fairy. "Here is the key; open it, prince."

Prince Marvellous hastened to open it. But who can describe the general disappointment, when, in place of some rich treasure which they supposed it contained, they found only the bracelets which Violette had worn when her cousin found her sleeping in the wood, and a vial of perfumed oil!

The fairy looked from one to the other, and enjoyed their surprise and consternation. She took the bracelets and gave them to Violette.

"This is my bridal present, my dear child; every one of these diamonds has the property of guarding from all evil influences the person who wears it, and of endowing its wearer with every virtue, enormous riches and resplendent beauty, with wit, intellect and all desirable happiness. Use them for the children who will be born of your union with Prince Marvellous.

"As to this vial of perfumed oil, it is the wedding gift of the prince your cousin. I know you love perfumes, this has peculiar virtues; use it to-day. To-morrow I will return to seek you and carry you all to your kingdom," she said.

"I renounce my kingdom, madam," said Ourson.

"Who will govern your people?" said Agnella.

"You, my mother, if you are willing," replied Ourson.

The queen was about to refuse, when the fairy interfered.

"We will speak of this to-morrow," said she. "You,

madam, I know, desire to accept the crown which you are about to refuse. I forbid you, however, to accept it before my return. And you, dear and amiable prince," added she, in a sweet voice, accompanied with an affectionate glance, "I forbid you to repeat this offer before my return. Adieu till tomorrow. When you are truly happy, my dear children, think kindly of your friend the fairy Drolette."

The fairy ascended her chariot. The larks flew like lightning and she soon disappeared, leaving behind her a delicious perfume.

The Recompense

Prince Marvellous looked at Violette and sighed heavily; Violette gazed at the prince and smiled sweetly.

"How handsome you are, my dear cousin! I am so happy to have it in my power to restore you your beauty. And now I will pour some of this perfumed oil upon my hands; since I cannot please your eye, I will at least embalm you," said she, laughing.

She uncorked the vial, and entreated Marvellous to sprinkle some drops on her forehead and cheeks. The heart of the prince was too full for words. He took the vial and obeyed the order of his cousin. Their surprise and joy were indescribable on seeing that as soon as the oil touched Violette's forehead the hair disappeared and her skin resumed its original purity and dazzling whiteness.

The prince and Violette, on seeing the virtue of this wonderful oil, uttered loud cries of delight and ran towards the stable where they saw Agnella and Passerose. They called their attention to the happy effect of this perfumed oil given them by the fairy. Both joined in their happiness. The prince could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses. And now nothing could prevent his union with Violette, so good, so devoted, so tender, so lovely, so well constituted to make him supremely happy.

The queen thought of the morrow—of her return to her kingdom, which she had abandoned twenty years ago. She wished that she herself, that Violette, that her son the prince had clothing worthy of so great an occasion but, alas! she had neither the time nor the means to procure them: they would therefore be compelled to wear their coarse clothing, and thus

show themselves to their people. Violette and Marvellous laughed at this distress of their mother.

"Do you not think, mamma," said Violette, "that our dear prince is sufficiently adorned with his rare beauty and that a rich and royal robe would not make him more beautiful or more amiable?"

"And do you not agree with me, my dear mother," said Marvellous, "in thinking that our dear Violette is lovely enough in the simplest clothing, that the lustre of her eyes surpasses the most brilliant diamonds, that the clear whiteness of her teeth rivals successfully the rarest pearls, that the richness of her blonde hair surpasses a crown of brilliants?"

"Yes, yes, my children," replied Agnella, "without doubt, you are both of you handsome and attractive but a rich dress spoils nothing, not even beauty. Jewels, embroidery and heavy brocades would detract nothing from your charms. And I who am old——"

"But not ugly, madam," interrupted Passerose, hastily. "You are still amiable and handsome, in spite of your little country cap, your skirts of coarse striped cloth, your waist of red camlet and your stomacher of simple cloth. Besides, when you return to your kingdom, you can buy every kind of dress your heart desires."

The evening passed away gayly and there seemed no anxiety about the future. The fairy had provided their supper; they passed the night on the bundles of hay in the stable and as they were all fatigued by the emotions of the day they slept profoundly. The sun had been shining a long time and the fairy Drolette was with them, before they awoke.

A soft "Hem! hem!" of the fairy aroused them. The prince was the first to open his eyes; he threw himself on his knees before the fairy and thanked her with such warmth and gratitude that her heart was touched.

Violette was on her knees by his side and joining her thanks to those of the prince.

"I do not doubt your gratitude, dear children," said the fairy; "but I have much to do. I am expected in the kingdom of the king Benin where I am to attend at the birth of the third son of the princess Blondine. This prince is to be the husband of your first daughter, Prince Marvellous, and I am resolved to endow him with all the qualities which will obtain for him the warm love of your daughter. And now I must conduct you to your kingdom; I will return in time to be present at your wedding. Queen," she continued, turning to Aimee, who was now just opening her eyes, "we are about to set out immediately for your son's kingdom. Are you and your faithful Passerose ready for the journey?"

"Madam," replied the queen, with a slight embarrassment, "we are ready to follow you but will you not blush for our dress, so little worthy of our rank?"

"It is not I who will blush, queen," said the fairy, smiling, "but rather yourself who have this sensation of shame. But I will remedy this evil also."

Saying this, she described a circle with her wand above the head of the queen, who in the same moment found herself clothed in a robe of gold brocade. Upon her head was a hat with splendid plumes, fastened with a band of superb diamonds and her boots were of velvet, spangled with gold.

Aimee looked at her robe with an air of complaisance.

"And Violette and my son the prince, will you not extend your goodness to them also?"

"Violette and the prince have asked for nothing. I will do as they wish. Speak, Violette, do you desire to change your costume?"

"Madam," replied Violette, casting down her sweet eyes and blushing, "I have been sufficiently happy in this robe of simple cloth. In this costume my brother knew me and loved me. Permit me to continue to wear it as far as regard for my station allows and allow me to preserve it always in remembrance of the happy years of my childhood."

The prince thanked Violette for these sweet words, and pressed her hand tenderly.

The fairy kindly nodded her approval and called for her chariot, which was waiting a few steps from them. She entered and placed the queen next herself, then the prince, Violette and Passerose.

In less than an hour the larks had flown over the three thousand leagues which separated them from the kingdom of Prince Marvellous. All his court and all his subjects, apprised beforehand by the fairy, expected him. The streets and the palaces were filled by the eager, happy crowd.

When the chariot appeared in sight, the people uttered cries of joy which were redoubled when it drew up before the great entrance of the palace, when they saw descend Queen Aimee, a little older, no doubt, but still pretty and gracious, and the Prince Marvellous, whose natural beauty and grace were enhanced by the splendor of his clothing, glittering with gold and precious stones, which were also a present from the fairy.

But the acclamations arose to frenzy when the prince, taking Violette by the hand, presented her to the people.

Her sweet, attractive countenance, her superb and elegant form, were adorned with a dress with which the fairy had clothed her by one stroke of her wand.

Her robe was of gold lace, while her waist, her arms and shoulders shone with innumerable larks formed of diamonds larger than humming-birds. On her graceful head she wore a crown of larks made of precious stones of all colors. Her countenance, soft but gay, her grace, her beauty, won the hearts of all.

For a long time nothing was heard but shouts of "Long live King Marvellous! Long live Queen Violette!" The noise and tumult were so great that many persons became deaf. The good fairy, who desired that only joy and happiness should prevail throughout the kingdom on this auspicious day, cured

them instantly at the request of Violette.

There was a magnificent feast spread for the court and the people. A million, three hundred and forty-six thousand, eight hundred and twenty-two persons dined at the expense of the fairy and each guest was permitted to carry away enough for eight days.

During the repast the fairy set off for the kingdom of King Benin, promising to return in time for the wedding of Marvellous and Violette. During the eight days of the fairy's absence Marvellous, who saw that his mother was a little sad at not being queen, entreated her earnestly to accept Violette's kingdom and she consented to reign there on condition that King Marvellous and Queen Violette would come every year and pass three months with her.

Queen Aimee, before parting with her children, wished to witness their marriage. The fairy Drolette and many other fairies of her acquaintance and many genii were invited to the marriage. They all received the most magnificent presents, and were so satisfied with the welcome given them by King Marvellous and Queen Violette that they graciously promised to return whenever they were invited.

Two years afterwards they received an invitation to be present at the birth of the first child of King Marvellous. There came to Queen Violette a daughter, who, like her mother, was a marvel of goodness and beauty.

The king and queen could not fulfil the promise they had made to Queen Aimee. One of the genii who had been invited to the wedding of Marvellous and Violette, found in Queen Aimee so much of goodness, sweetness, and beauty, that he loved her, and, visiting her several times in her new kingdom and being affectionately and graciously received by her, he carried her off one day in a whirlwind. Queen Aimee wept for a while but as she loved the genius she was not inconsolable; indeed, she promptly consented to wed him. The king of the genii granted to her as a wedding present the

power of participating in all the privileges of her husband: never to die, never to grow old and the ability to transport herself in the twinkling of an eye wherever she wished to go. Aimee used this power very often to visit her son and his children.

King Marvellous and Queen Violette had eight sons and four daughters and they were all charming. They were happy, without doubt, for they loved each other tenderly and their grandmother, who, it was said spoiled them a little induced their grandfather, the genius Bienveillant, to contribute all in his power to their happiness. Consequently, they received many rich gifts.

Passerose, who was warmly attached to Queen Aimee, had followed her into her new kingdom but when the genius carried her off in a whirlwind, Passerose, seeing herself forgotten and not being able to follow her mistress was so sad in the loneliness caused by the departure of Aimee, that she prayed the fairy Drolette to transport her to the kingdom of King Marvellous and Queen Violette. She remained with them and took care of their children to whom she often recounted the adventures of Ourson and Violette. She still remains, it is said, though the genius and his queen have made her many excuses for not having carried her off in the whirlwind.

"No, no," Passerose replied to all these explanations; "let us remain as we are. You forgot me once—you might forget me another time. Here, my dear Ourson and my sweet Violette never forget their old nurse. I love them and I will remain with them. They loved me and they will take care of me."

The farmer, the superintendent, and the master of the forge who had been so cruel to Ourson were severely punished by the fairy Drolette.

The farmer was devoured by a bear, some hours after he had chased away Ourson.

The superintendent was dismissed by his master for

having let loose the dogs, who escaped and never could be found. The same night he was bitten by a venomous serpent and expired some moments afterwards.

The master of the forge having reprimanded his workmen too brutally, they resolved upon vengeance: seized him and cast him into the blazing furnace where he perished miserably.

Tales from Canada

How Glooskap Made the Birds

Once upon a time long before the white men came to Canada there lived a wicked giant who caused great trouble and sorrow wherever he went. Men called him Wolf-Wind. Where he was born no man knows, but his home was in the Cave of the Winds, far in the north country in the Night-Night Land, and there men knew he was hiding on calm days when the sun was hot and the sea was still, and on quiet nights when not a leaf or a flower or a blade of grass was stirring. But whenever he appeared, the great trees cracked in fear and the little trees trembled and the flowers bent their heads close to the earth, trying to hide from his presence. Often he came upon them without warning and with little sign of his coming. And then the corn fell flat never to rise again, and tall trees crashed in the forest, and the flowers dropped dead because of their terror; and often the great waters grew white and moaned or screamed loudly or dashed themselves against the rocks trying to escape from Wolf-Wind. And in the darkness of the night when Wolf-Wind howled, there was great fear upon all the earth.

It happened once in those old times that Wolf-Wind was in a great rage, and he went forth to kill and devour all who dared to come in his path. It chanced in that time that many Indian families were living near the sea. The men and women were fishing far off the coast. They were catching fish to make food for the winter. They went very far away in small canoes, for the sea had long been still and they thought there was no danger. The little children were alone on shore. Suddenly as the sun went down, without a sign of his coming, out of the north came Wolf-Wind in his great rage looking for prey, and

roaring loudly as he came. "I am Wolf-Wind, the giant," he howled, "cross not my path, for I will kill all the people I meet, and eat them all up." His anger only grew as he stalked along, and he splashed and tossed the waters aside in his fury as he came down upon the fishermen and fisher-women far out to sea. The fishers had no time to get out of his reach or to paddle to the shore, so quick was Wolf-Wind's coming, and the giant caught them in his path and broke up their boats and killed them all. All night long he raged over the ocean looking for more fishers.

In the morning Wolf-Wind's anger was not yet spent. Far away in front of him he saw the little children of the fishers playing on the shore. He knew they were alone, for he had killed their fathers and mothers. He resolved to catch them and kill them too, and after them he went, still in a great rage. He went quickly towards the land, roaring as he went and dashing the waters against the rocks in his madness. As he came near the beach he howled in his anger, "I will catch you and kill you all and eat you and bleach your bones upon the sand." But the children heard him and they ran away as fast as they could, and they hid in a cave among the great rocks and placed a big stone at the mouth of the cave and Wolf-Wind could not get in. He howled loudly at the door all day and all night long, but the stone was strong and he could not break it down. Then he went on his way still very angry and still roaring, and he howled, "I will come back and catch you yet. You cannot escape from me."

The children were very frightened and they stayed long in the cave after Wolf-Wind had gone, for far away they could still hear him howling and crashing in the forest. Then they came out. They knew that Wolf-Wind had killed their fathers and mothers on the sea. They ran away into the forest, for they thought that there they would be safe. They went to the Willow-Willow Land where they found a pleasant place with grass and flowers and streams. And between them and the

north country where Wolf-Wind lived were many great trees with thick leaves which they knew would protect them from the giant.

But one day Wolf-Wind, true to his promise, came again in a rage to find them. He came into the land killing all he met in his path. But he could not catch the children, for the trees with their thick leaves kept him away. They heard him howling in the forest far distant. For many days in the late summer he tried to find them but their home was close to the trees, and the great branches spread over them and the thick leaves saved them, and only the sun from the south, coming from the Summer-Flower country, could look in upon them. Try as he could with all his might old Wolf-Wind could not harm them although he knew that they were there; and they were always safe while they lived in the Willow-Willow Land.

Wolf-Wind was more angry than ever because of his failure, for he liked to feed on his little children, and rage knew no bounds. He swore that he would have vengeance on the trees. So he came back again and he brought with him to aid him another giant from the north country who had with him a strange and powerful charm, the Charm of the Frost. And the two giants tried to kill the trees that had saved the little children. But over many of the trees they had no power, for when they came, the trees only laughed and merely swayed and creaked and said, "You cannot harm us; we are strong, for we came at first from the Night-Night Land in the far north country, and over us the Charm of the Frost has no power." These were the Spruce and the Fir, the Hemlock and the Pine and the Cedar. But on the other trees Wolf-Wind had vengeance as he had vowed. One night when the harvest moon was shining in the sky he came without warning, and with the help of the giant bearing the Charm of the Frost he killed all the leaves that had kept him from the children, and threw them to the ground. One after one the leaves came off from the Beech and the Birch, the Oak and the Maple, the

Alder and the Willow. Some fell quickly, some fluttered slowly down, and some took a long time in dying. But at last the trees stood bare and cold against the sky and there was stillness and sadness in the forest. And Wolf-Wind laughed and played in silence through the leafless branches with the giant from Night-Night Land. And he said, "Now I have overcome the leaves that kept me away, and now when I please I can kill the children." But the children only moved closer to the strong and sturdy trees that had come at first from the far north country and over which the Charm of the Frost had no power, and Wolf-Wind could not reach them and they were still for ever safe from the giants.

The children were very sad when they saw what Wolf-Wind had done to their friends and protectors, the trees. Summer had gone back to the Southland following as she always did the Rainbow Road to her home in the Wilderness of Flowers. It was lonely now in the forest and silent; there was not a whisper in the trees; there were no leaves, for it was autumn and Wolf-Wind had killed them all.

At last it came to that time of year when Glooskap, who ruled upon the earth and was very great in those days, gave his yearly gifts to little children. And he came into the land on a sled drawn by his faithful dogs to find out for himself what the children wished for. And the children all came to him each asking for a boon. Now Glooskap had great power upon the earth in that old time. He could always do what he willed. And the little children whom Wolf-Wind had tried to harm in his rage came to Glooskap, the Magic Master of gifts, and they were all very sad because the leaves had gone.

"What do you wish?" said Glooskap. "We wish nothing for ourselves," said the children, "but we ask that the leaves that were killed by Wolf-Wind because they saved us from his rage be brought back to life and put back again in their old home in the trees." Glooskap was silent for a long time and he sat and thought as was his custom, and he smoked hard at

his mighty pipe, for he was a great smoker. Now in that time there were no little forest birds upon the earth, for Glooskap had not yet brought them into being. There were only the birds that dwelt near the sea and over whom Wolf-Wind had no power—Sea-gull and Crane, Wild-duck and Loon, King-fisher and Brant and Curlew. These only laughed at the giant in his rage and screamed in mockery as they flew from him and hid when he came, among the shallows or the rocks or the thick grass in the marshes. And there were also the sturdy birds that dwelt with men and worked for them, giving them eggs and food. These were Hen and Goose and Duck and Wild Turkey. They gave men food, but they were not fair to look upon; they waddled along and could not fly well and they made no sweet music upon the earth, for their song was a quack and a cackle.

Glooskap decided to bring other birds into the world, not to give food but to bring happiness to the children on the days when summer dwells in the land, with their pretty feathers and their pleasant songs. So after he had smoked long in silence he hit upon a plan. And he said to the children asking for their yearly gifts, "I cannot bring back to the trees the leaves that Wolf-Wind has killed and stripped off, for it is now too late. But I will take the fallen leaves and change them into little birds. And the birds shall never forget how they were born. When autumn comes they shall go with summer far away to the Summer-Flower Land, but in the spring-time they shall always come back and they shall live as close as they can to the leaves from which they have sprung. And they shall nest, most of them, in the trees under the leaves, and even those that nest in the grass shall love the trees and linger in them. And they shall all be beautiful in colour like the leaves that gave them birth; and they shall have power to rest at times upon the air like a leaf fluttering; and the voice of the air and the laughing waters shall be in their throats and they shall sing sweet songs for little children. And I give the

children charge over them to keep them from harm just as the leaves which gave them birth have saved the little children from the giants. And I will give the trees that Wolf-Wind has stripped power to bring forth new leaves every spring-time so that when Summer comes back from the Wilderness of Flowers the trees shall not be bare. And although Wolf-Wind may strip them off when the Giant of the Frost comes with him from the Night-Night Land they shall always be replaced in the spring-time. And I will take away much of Wolf-Wind's power so that he can no longer harm little children as wickedly as he has done before."

Glooskap waved his magic wand as was his custom, and at once great flocks of little birds sprang from the ground where the fallen leaves had lain. And they twittered and sang in a great chorus and flew back to the trees. They were of beautiful colours like the leaves that had given them birth. There were Robin Red-breasts and Thrushes all brown and red, from the red and brown leaves of the Oak. And there were Finches and Humming-birds all yellow and green and brown from the leaves of the Alder and the Willow, and they glowed like willows in the sun-light and fluttered like a leaf upon the air. There were Yellowbirds and Canadian Warblers from the golden Beech and Birch leaves. And there were Scarlet Tanagers and Orioles and Grosbeaks all of changing colours, red and purple and brown, from the leaves of the Canadian Maple. And they all sang to the children and the children were all very happy again.

Then Glooskap sent the little birds all away to a warm country until the rule of the Giant of the Frost from the Night-Night Land was over, for it was winter in all the land and it was very cold. But in the spring-time the little birds always come back from the Summer-Flower Land. And they build their nests among the trees as close as they can to their kindred, the leaves from which they came. And all day long they sing among the leaves for little children. At daybreak

they wake the children with their choir of dawn, and at twilight they lisp and twitter to lull the children to sleep. And at night they hide among the leaves from Wolf-Wind and are very still with never a twitter or a song. For they do not forget that they are the children's gift from Glooskap and that they came from the leaves stripped from the trees by Wolf-Wind because the leaves saved the little children from the giant long ago.

Rabbit and the Grain Buyers

Once long ago when the Indians lived in Canada before the white men came. Rabbit was very lazy. He had worked long for Glooskap, the great ruler of the people, as a forest guide, but his toil was not appreciated or rewarded. He saw all the other animals idling their time away, taking their ease all day long, and doing nothing but filling their bellies with food, and sleeping all the afternoon in the hot sunshine. And he said, "Why should I work for other people when nobody works for me? I will take mine ease like all the other animals." So he sulked in his little house for a long time and could not be coaxed or driven to do any work. But as he was a lonely fellow who always lived by himself with very few friends in the world except little children, he soon got tired of this lazy life. For by nature he was industrious and energetic and he always liked to be doing something or prowling alone in the forest. So he said, "I must find some work to do or I shall surely lose my wits. But it must be labour that brings profit to myself and not to other people." For a long time Rabbit puzzled his brains thinking on a business or a profession to follow. But nothing seemed to be to his liking. At last one day he saw some Indians trading skins and knives. One was selling and others were buying and they seemed to be making a great deal of money without doing very much work. Rabbit thought that here indeed was an easy way to make a living. Then he saw Duck coming along carrying a basket of eggs. He said to Duck, "How do you get along in the world? You seem to do nothing but eat and cackle and swim in the pond. You never seem to work." And Duck said, "I lay eggs and sell them in exchange for corn. Why don't you lay eggs? It is all very easy."

But Rabbit knew that Duck was only laughing at him, and that he was not meant to make a living in that way.

Then he met Bee on the forest path and he said, "How do you make a living, you wandering bee? You do nothing but gad about all day long, going from flower to flower dressed in your good clothes of yellow and black and always singing your tuneless song?" And Bee said, "I make honey and wax and sell them. I have a great store for sale now. Why don't you do as I do? I am always happy. I always sing at my work, and what's more, my song is not tuneless. And just for your impudence, take that." And so saying he stung Rabbit on the nose and went on his way, singing his droning song. Rabbit rubbed his nose in the earth to ease his pain and he swore vengeance on Bee, for he knew that Bee too was only laughing at him. But he could think of no way to make an easy living, for he had nothing to sell but his coat, and he could not very well barter that, for winter would soon be coming on. He was very angry and troubled and he envied Duck and Bee their good fortune because of their eggs and honey and wax.

At last he thought of the Indians he had watched buying and selling skins. "I have it," he cried, "I have it. I will become a great merchant. I will be a great trader. I will live on a farm where they grow corn and vegetables, and I will steal them and sell them to the other animals and thereby make a great store of money. I shall be very rich in a short time." So, very happy, he went to a field near which was a vegetable garden. And in it were growing Indian corn and all kinds of grain which he knew the other birds and animals would gladly buy. So he made a sign and put it up in front of his house, and it said, "Buy Rabbit's corn, the best in all the land; it will grow without rain; there is only a small quantity left. Orders taken here." Then he sat in his house and waited.

Soon many buyers began to arrive. They were curious, and they wanted to see what kind of a merchant Rabbit would make. Rabbit explained to them that he was only an agent,

that they must pay him their money, and he would take it to the farmer, and deliver their grain at his house one week from that day. The buyers paid him the money and went away, for they were afraid the farmer would kill them if they went themselves for the corn. They left a great store of money with Rabbit. That night when the moon rose over the hills Rabbit went to the field of corn nearby. But the farmer had spied him thieving that afternoon, and he had placed around his corn a fence of strong netting which poor Rabbit could not get through. And he had also placed around the field many watch-dogs which growled and snarled and frightened thieves away. Night after night Rabbit tried to slip into the field, but without success, and the week passed and still he had no corn for the customers who, he knew, would soon be arriving for their goods. And meanwhile he had spent all their money and he knew they would all fall upon him and kill him if he failed to keep his word and deliver their purchases.

At last when the day agreed on arrived, he saw his customers coming for their grain. And he hoped that his tricks would save him as they had saved him many times before. He sat in his yard playing his flute, when Earth-Worm, the first customer arrived. "Good day," said Rabbit. "Good day," said Earth-Worm, "I have come for my corn, for a week has gone by." "Very good," said Rabbit, "but first we shall have dinner. It will be ready in a few minutes. You must be hungry after your long journey." As they sat waiting for their dinner they saw Duck, another customer, waddling up the path with her basket on her neck. And Rabbit said, "Will not old Duck who comes here want to eat you up?" And Earth-Worm said, "Yes, yes, where shall I hide?" and he was much excited. "Hide under this clam-shell," said Rabbit. So Earth-Worm crawled under the clam-shell and sat very still, trembling for his life.

When Duck arrived, Rabbit said, "Good morning." "Good morning, Mr. Merchant," said Duck, wishing to be polite. "I have come for my corn, for it is the appointed day of delivery."

"True, true," said Rabbit, "but first we shall have dinner. It will be ready in a few minutes. It will be an honour for me to have you dine with me." As they sat waiting for their dinner, Rabbit said, "Would you care to eat an Earth-Worm before your dinner? It would be a good appetizer for you." And Duck said, "Thank you very much. I am very fond of Earth-Worms." Rabbit lifted the clam-shell and poor Earth-Worm was quickly gobbled up by Duck. And Rabbit, laughing to himself, thought, "Now I am getting rid of my customers."

As Rabbit and Duck sat talking, they saw Fox trotting up the path. He was another customer coming for his corn. And Rabbit said courteously, "Madam, I see your old enemy Fox approaching. He will probably wish to eat you up; you had better hide." And Duck with her feathers all ruffled with excitement said, "Yes, yes, where shall I hide?" And Rabbit said, "Hide under this basket." So Duck crawled under the over-turned basket and sat very still.

Fox soon came in and said, "Good day. Rabbit. I have come for my corn, for I am in sore need of it to catch chickens, and the seven days have passed." "You are very punctual," said Rabbit, "but first let us have dinner. It will be ready in a few minutes. It will make you stronger to carry your heavy load." As they sat waiting for their dinner, Rabbit said, "Listen, Fox. Would you care to eat a fat Duck now? It would be a tasty bit for you before you dine." And Fox said, "You are very kind. I always like to eat a Duck before my dinner." Rabbit knocked over the basket and Fox quickly devoured poor Duck until not a feather remained. And Rabbit laughed to himself and said, "Surely I am getting rid of my customers very easily."

As Rabbit and Fox sat talking over old times in the forest, they saw Bear coming lumbering up the path, tossing his head from side to side, and sniffing the air. And Rabbit said, "Bear is in a bad temper to-day. I wonder what can be the cause." And Fox said, "This morning I stole all his honey and he saw

me running away." "He scents you here," said Rabbit, "will he not kill you if he finds you? Perhaps you ought to hide." "Yes, yes," said Fox, "but where shall I hide?" "Hide in this box," said Rabbit, and Fox sprang into the box, and Rabbit closed down the lid.

When Bear arrived he said gruffly, for he was in a bad temper, "Good day. Rabbit. I have come for my corn and I must have it quickly, for I must be on my way. It is the appointed time." "It is indeed the appointed time," said Rabbit, "but first we shall have dinner. It will be ready in a few minutes and I never let a wayfarer leave my house without first taking nourishment. I have to-day a dish of fresh fish which you like very well, and we have never yet dined together." And Bear agreed to wait and his gruffness left him at the thought of his good meal, for he was a great fish-eater, and he talked pleasantly. Then Rabbit said, "I have a secret to tell you. Let me whisper it." He put his mouth close to Bear's ear and said, "Old Fox, the sly thief who stole all your honey this morning is hiding in the box by your side. He came here to boast about his theft and he laughed loudly to me as he told me how easily you were cheated. He called you Lack-Brains." Bear was very angry and at once he knocked the lid from the box and killed Fox with one blow of his powerful paw. And Rabbit said to himself, "What luck I am having; there is another of my customers gone." But he wondered how he was to get rid of Bear, and he scratched his head in thought. While Bear and Rabbit sat talking, they saw Rabbit's last customer, the Hunter, coming along. Bear would have run away, but it was too late. "Will the Hunter not want to kill you?" said Rabbit, glad to think that here was the end of poor Bear, "Indeed he will," said Bear. "Oh dear, oh dear, where shall I hide?" "Hide under my bed in my house," said Rabbit. Poor Bear quickly dashed into the house and crawled under Rabbit's bed with great difficulty for he was very fat and the bed was very low and he had to lay himself out flat on the floor, but he was

comfortable in the thought that he would soon escape. When Hunter arrived he said, "Good day, Rabbit, I have come for my corn, for my children need bread." "You shall have it," said Rabbit. "But first we must have a bite to eat. I have not very much to offer you, but I can give you in a few minutes some hot pancakes and fresh maple syrup." The Hunter was well pleased with the thought of such a good meal and he said he would be glad to wait. Then Rabbit said, "Would you like some bear meat for your children, and a good warm bear skin for your hearth?" And the Hunter said, "Indeed I would. But in these days such luxuries are hard to find." And Rabbit said, "Oh no, they are not; under my bed in my house, a good fat bear is hiding. He is lying flat on his back, and you can easily kill him." The Hunter hurried to the house, and sure enough there he found Bear hiding under the bed, flat upon his back. He killed him with a blow and skinned him and cut him up into small pieces and put the meat and the skin into a bag to take home to his children. But while he was about it, Rabbit slipped away into the forest, saying to himself, "Now I have got rid of all my customers and I am safe. But the life of a merchant is not to my liking. I will not be a trader any more. I will gather corn for myself, but not to sell to others." And he ran quickly away and hid himself in a dense thicket.

When the Hunter went to look for Rabbit, he could not find him, nor was he able to find his grain. And although he thought he had fared pretty well by getting so much bear meat, he swore vengeance on Rabbit for his deceit, and to this day he searches for him, and if he meets him, he will not let him escape. And Rabbit lives by himself and keeps away from the Hunter as far as he can, for he fears him because of the trick he played upon him in the olden days.

The Boy Who Was Called Thick-Head

Three brothers lived with their old Indian mother in the forest near the sea. Their father had long been dead. At his death he had little of the world's goods to his credit and his widow and her sons were very poor. In the place where they dwelt, game was not plentiful, and to get food enough to keep them from want they had often to go far into the forest. The youngest boy was smaller and weaker than the others, and when the two older sons went far away to hunt, they always left him behind, for although he always wished to accompany them they would never allow him to go. He had to do all the work about the house, and all day long he gathered wood in the forest and carried water from the stream. And even when his brothers went out in the spring-time to draw sap from the maple trees he was never permitted to go with them. He was always making mistakes and doing foolish things. His brothers called him Thick-head, and all the people round about said he was a simpleton because of his slow and queer ways. His mother alone was kind to him and she always said, "They may laugh at you and call you fool, but you will prove to be wiser than all of them yet, for so it was told me by a forest fairy at your birth."

The Chief of the people had a beautiful daughter who had many suitors. But her father spurned them all from his door and said, "My daughter is not yet of age to marry; and when her time of marriage comes, she will only marry the man who can make great profit from hunting." The two older sons of the old woman decided that one of them must win the girl. So they prepared to set out on a great hunting expedition far away in the northern forest, for it was now autumn, and the

hunter's moon had come. The youngest boy wanted to go with them, for he had never been away from home and he wished to see the world. And his mother said he might go. His brothers were very angry when they heard his request, and they said, "Much good Thick-head can do us in the chase. He will only bring us bad luck. He is not a hunter but a scullion and a drudge fit only for the fireside." But his mother commanded them to grant the boy's wish and they had to obey. So the three brothers set out for the north country, the two older brothers grumbling loudly because they were accompanied by the boy they thought a fool.

The two older brothers had good success in the chase and they killed many animals—deer and rabbits and otters and beavers. And they came home bearing a great quantity of dried meat and skins. They each thought, "Now we have begun to prove our prowess to the Chief, and if we succeed as well next year when the hunter's moon comes again, one of us will surely win his daughter when she is old enough to marry." But all the youngest boy brought home as a result of his journey into the game country was a large Earth-Worm as thick as his finger and as long as his arm. It was the biggest Earth-Worm he had ever seen. He thought it a great curiosity as well as a great discovery, and he was so busy watching it each day that he had no time to hunt. When he brought it home in a box, his brothers said to their mother, "What did we tell you about Thick-head? He has now surely proved himself a fool. He has caught only a fat Earth-Worm in all these weeks." And they noised it abroad in the village and all the people laughed loudly at the simpleton, until "Thick-head's hunt" became a by-word in all the land. But the boy's mother only smiled and said, "He will surprise them all yet."

The boy kept the Earth-Worm in a tiny pen just outside the door of his home. One day a large Duck came waddling along, and sticking her bill over the little fence of the pen, she quickly gobbled up the Worm. The boy was very angry and

he went to the man who owned the Duck, and said, "Your Duck ate up my pet Worm. I want my Worm." The man offered to pay him whatever price he asked, but the boy said, "I do not want your price. I want my Worm."

But the man said, "How can I give you your Worm when my Duck has eaten it up? It is gone for ever." And the boy said, "It is not gone. It is in the Duck's belly. So I must have the Duck." Then to avoid further trouble the man gave Thick-head the Duck, for he thought to himself, "What is the use of arguing with a fool."

The boy took the Duck home and kept it in a little pen near his home with a low fence around it. And he tied a great weight to its foot so that it could not fly away. He was quite happy again, for he thought, "Now I have both my Worm and the Duck." But one day a Fox came prowling along looking for food. He saw the fat Duck tied by the foot in the little pen. And he said, "What good fortune! There is a choice meal for me," and in a twinkling he was over the fence. The Duck quacked and made a great noise, but she was soon silenced. The Fox had just finished eating up the Duck when the boy, who had heard the quacking, came running out of the house. The Fox was smacking his lips after his good meal, and he was too slow in getting away. The boy fell to beating him with a stout club and soon killed him and threw his body into the yard behind the house. And he thought, "That is not so bad. Now I have my Worm and the Duck and the Fox."

That night an old Wolf came through the forest in search of food. He was very hungry, and in the bright moonlight he saw the dead Fox lying in the yard. He pounced upon it greedily and devoured it until not a trace of it was left. But the boy saw him before he could get away, and he came stealthily upon him and killed him with a blow of his axe. "I am surely in good luck," he thought, "for now I have the Worm and the Duck and the Fox and the Wolf." But the next day when he told his brothers of his good fortune and his great

skill, they laughed at him loudly and said, "Much good a dead Wolf will do you. Before two days have passed it will be but an evil-smelling thing and we shall have to bury it deep. You are indeed a great fool." The boy pondered for a long time over what they had said, and he thought, "Perhaps they are right. The dead Wolf cannot last long. I will save the skin."

So he skinned the Wolf and dried the skin and made a drum from it. For the drum was one of the few musical instruments of the Indians in those old times, and they beat it loudly at all their dances and festivals. The boy beat the drum each evening, and made a great noise, and he was very proud because he had the only drum in the whole village. One day the Chief sent for him and said to him, "I want to borrow your drum for this evening. I am having a great gathering to announce to all the land that my daughter is now of age to marry and that suitors may now seek her hand in marriage. But we have no musical instruments and I want your drum, and I myself will beat it at the dance." So Thick-head brought his drum to the Chief's house, but he was not very well pleased, because he was not invited to the feast, while his brothers were among the favoured guests. And he said to the Chief, "Be very careful. Do not tear the skin of my drum, for I can never get another like it. My Worm and my Duck and my Fox and my Wolf have all helped to make it."

The next day he went for his drum. But the Chief had struck it too hard and had split it open so that it would now make no sound and it was ruined beyond repair. He offered to pay the boy a great price for it, but the boy said, "I do not want your price. I want my drum. Give me back my drum, for my Worm and the Duck and the Fox and the Wolf are all in it." The Chief said, "How can I give you back your drum when it is broken? It is gone for ever. I will give you anything you desire in exchange for it. Since you do not like the price I offer, you may name your own price and you shall have it." And the boy thought to himself, "Here is a chance for good

fortune. Now I shall surprise my brothers." And he said, "Since you cannot give me my drum, I will take your daughter in marriage in exchange." The Chief was much perplexed, but he had to be true to his word. So he gave his daughter to Thick-head, and they were married, and the girl brought him much treasure and they lived very happily. And his brothers were much amazed and angered because they had failed. But his mother said, "I told you he was wiser than you and that he would outwit you yet although you called him Thick-head and fool. For the forest fairy said it to me at his birth."

Great Heart and the Three Tests

Somewhere near the sea in olden times a boy was living with his father and mother. He had no brothers or sisters. His father was a great hunter and the boy inherited something of his power, for he was always very successful in the killing of game. And his mother said, "Some day he will be a great man, for before his birth a vision came to me in the night and told me that my son would win wide fame. And fairy gifts were laid by the fairies in his cradle." And his father, listening to her boasting, said, "Time will tell; time will tell; but if he is to be a great man it is his own deeds and not your boasting that must prove it." As the boy grew up he became strangely beautiful and he had great strength. And his father said, "It is time he set out to seek his fortune. I was in the forest doing for myself when I was no older than he." And his mother said, "Wait a little and be not so impatient. He is yet young and there is yet much time." So the boy remained at home a while longer.

Now it happened that far away in a distant village there lived a young girl of very great beauty and grace. Her father had been a great Chief, but he was now dead. Her mother too was dead, and she was all alone in the world. But her parents had left her vast lands and a great store of goods and many servants, and because of her treasures and her great beauty she had many suitors. But she was not easily pleased by men and on all who came to seek her hand she imposed severe feats of skill to test their sincerity and their worth. She was carefully guarded by an old woman and many servants who kept troublesome and meddlesome people away.

Soon the fame of the girl's wealth and beauty spread

through all the land. It reached the sea coast village where the young man dwelt. His father thought to himself, "Here is a good chance for my son to prove his worth." So he called his boy to him and said, "It is time you were setting out to seek your fortune in the world and to find a wife, for your spring-time is passing and your summer of life will soon be here, and before you know it your autumn will be upon you and your winter will be near. There is no time to lose. Seek out the beautiful girl of the rich treasures in the distant inland village and try to win her as your wife." And his mother gave him the fairy gifts which had been laid in his cradle at his birth, and he said good-bye to his parents and set out on his long journey. He had no misgivings, for he was very vain of his beauty and he was sure, too, of his strength.

As he travelled inland he came one day upon a man clad in scarlet sitting on the side of a rocky hill tying stones to his feet. "Hello," he said to the man, "why are you tying these heavy rocks to your ankles?" "I am a hunter," replied the man, "but when I follow the deer I run so fast that I am soon far in front of them instead of behind them, and I am putting heavy weights on my feet so that I will not run so rapidly." "You are indeed a wonderful man," said the boy; "but I am alone and I need a companion. Let us go along together." "Who are you?" said the man. "I am Lad of the Great Heart," said the boy, "and I can do great deeds and I can win for you great treasure." So the Scarlet Runner went along with him.

Towards evening when they were now far inland, they came to a large lake. Among the trees on the fringe of the lake a large fat man was lying flat on his stomach with his mouth in the water drinking as hard as he could. For some time they watched him, but still he drank and the lake grew smaller and smaller and still his thirst was not quenched. They laughed at such a strange sight, and as they approached him the boy said, "Hello! Why do you lie there drinking so much water?" "Oh," answered the fat man, "there are times

when I cannot get enough water to drink. When I have drunk this lake dry I shall still be thirsty." "Who are you?" asked the boy. "I am Man of the Great Thirst," said the fat man. "That is well," said Great Heart, "we two need a third companion. We can do great deeds and we can win for you great treasure." So the three went along together.

They had not gone far when they came to a wide open plain where they saw a man walking along with his face raised upwards, peering at the sky. He moved along rapidly and seemed to find his way without his eyes, for he gazed steadily at the heavens. "Hello," said Great Heart as the sky-gazer rushed past him and almost knocked him over, "what are you looking at so intently?" "Oh," said the man, "I have shot an arrow into the sky and I am waiting for it to fall. It has gone so far that it will be some time before it drops." "Who are you?" asked the boy. "I am the Far-Darter," said the sky-gazer. "We three need a fourth companion," said the boy. "We can do great deeds and win for you much treasure. Come along with us." So the four went along together.

They had gone but a short distance across the plain to the edge of a forest when they came upon a man lying down at full length with his head upon his hand. The edge of his hand was on the ground and it was half closed around his ear, which rested upon it. As he saw the four men approaching him he placed a finger of his other hand upon his lips and signalled to them to keep quiet. "Hello," said Great Heart in a whisper, "what are you doing there with your ear to the ground?" "I am listening to the plants growing far away in the forest," he answered. "There is a beautiful flower I wish to find, and I am trying to hear it breathing so that I may go and get it. Aha! I hear it now." So saying he rose from the ground. The boy said, "Who are you?" "I am Keen Ears," said the listener. "We four need another companion," said Great Heart. "We can do great deeds and win for you much treasure. Come along with us." So the four men and the boy went along together, Keen

Ears, and Scarlet Runner, and Far Darter, and Man of the Great Thirst, and Lad of the Great Heart. Then Great Heart unfolded to the others his plan to win the beautiful girl who lived with her treasures in the distant village. And they gladly agreed to help him in his dangerous undertaking.

When they reached the village, the people were all very curious when they saw the five strangers. They marvelled at Great Heart's beauty. But when they heard that he wished to marry the daughter of the former Chief they shook their heads gravely and said, "It will never be. She places hard conditions on all who seek her hand. He who fails in the tests is doomed to death. Many suitors have tried and failed and died." But Great Heart was not alarmed, and with his four companions he went to the girl's home. The old woman who guarded her met him at the door and he made known his wishes. She laughed scornfully when she saw his great beauty, and she said, "You look more like a girl than like a warrior. You cannot endure the tests." But the young man insisted on making the trials.

The old woman said, "If you fail in the tests you will die," and Great Heart said, "It is so agreed." Then the woman said, "If you wish to win the maiden you must first push away this great rock from before her window. It keeps the sunlight from her in the mornings." Then Great Heart, calling to his aid the fairy gifts of his cradle, placed his shoulder against the huge stone which rose higher than the house, and he pushed with all his strength. With a mighty crash it rolled down the hill and broke into millions of pieces. The bits of rock flew all over the earth so great was the fall, and the little pebbles and stones that came from it are seen throughout the world to this day. The sunlight streamed in at the window, and the maiden knew that the first test had been successfully passed by a suitor.

Then came the second test. The old woman and her servants brought great quantities of food and drink and bade the

strangers consume it all at one meal. They were very hungry, for they had eaten nothing all day and they easily ate up the food. But when Great Heart saw the great barrels of water, his spirits sank, and he said, "I fear I am beaten." But Man of the Great Thirst said, "Not so fast, my friend. The spell of great stomach-burning is again upon me. I am very dry as if there was a fire in my belly. Give me a chance to drink." He went from barrel to barrel and in a twinkling he had drained them all of every drop. And the people wondered greatly.

But there was still another test. "You must have one of your party run a race," said the old woman to Great Heart. And she brought out a man who had never been beaten in running. "Who is your choice of runners?" she asked; "he must race with this man, and if he wins you may have the maiden for your wife and all the treasure with her, for this is the final test. But if he loses the race you shall die." Great Heart called Scarlet Runner to the mark and told the old woman that this was the man selected. Then he untied the rocks from the runner's feet, and when all was ready the race began. The course lay far across the plains for many miles until the runners should pass from sight, and back again to the starting point. The two runners kept together for some distance, talking together in a friendly way as they ran. When they had passed from sight of the village the maiden's runner said, "Now we are out of sight of the village. Let us rest here a while on this grassy bank, for the day is hot." The Scarlet Runner agreed to this and they both stretched out on the grass. Now this was an old trick of the maiden's runner, who always won by craft rather than by speed. They had not lain down long on the grass when Scarlet Runner fell asleep under the hot sun, just as his rival had hoped. When the latter was sure that his rival was sound asleep, he set out for the village, running as fast as he could. The people soon saw their runner approaching far off on the plains, but there was no sign of the stranger, and they thought that the new suitor for the girl's

hand had at last failed like all the others before him.

Great Heart was much puzzled when Scarlet Runner did not appear, and as he saw the maiden's runner coming nearer, he said, "What can have happened? I fear I am beaten." But Keen Ears threw himself flat on the ground and listened. "Scarlet Runner is asleep," he called; "I hear him snoring on the plains far away." And with his keen sense of sound he located the exact spot where the runner was lying. "I will soon wake him," said Far-Darter, as he fitted an arrow to his bow-string. The people all thought him mad, for they had never seen an arrow shot so great a distance beyond their sight. But Far-Darter was not dismayed. He quickly shot an arrow from his bow to the spot which Keen Ears had indicated. His aim was so true that the arrow hit Scarlet Runner on the nose and aroused him from his sleep. But when he rose to his feet he found that his rival was gone and he knew that he had been deceived. So in a great rage because of the trick and the pain in his nose, he set out for the village running like the wind. His rival had almost reached the end of the race, but by putting all his strength into his effort, Scarlet Runner quickly overtook him and passed him near the winning-post and won the race. And the people wondered greatly at these great deeds of the strangers.

Then the old woman said to Great Heart, "You have won the maiden as your wife, for you alone have succeeded in these tests." So the two were married with great ceremony. Great Heart gave much treasure to his companions, and they promised to help him always in his need. Then with his wife and her servants and her great store of goods he went back to his native village by the sea. His father and mother were glad to see him again and to hear of his success, and his mother said, "I told you he would win great fame because of the fairy gifts that were laid in his cradle at his birth." And they all lived together and were henceforth very happy.

The Boy of the Red Twilight Sky

Long ago there dwelt on the shores of the Great Water in the west a young man and his younger wife. They had no children and they lived all by themselves far from other people on an island not far from the coast. The man spent his time in catching the deep-sea fish far out on the ocean, or in spearing salmon in the distant rivers. Often he was gone for many days and his wife was very lonely in his absence. She was not afraid, for she had a stout spirit, but it was very dismal in the evenings to look only at the grey leaden sky and to hear only the sound of the surf as it beat upon the beach. So day after day she said to herself, "I wish we had children. They would be good company for me when I am alone and my husband is far away."

One evening at twilight when she was solitary because of her husband's absence on the ocean catching the deep-sea fish, she sat on the sand beach looking out across the water. The sky in the west was pale grey; it was always dull and grey in that country, and when the sun had gone down there was no soft light. In her loneliness the woman said to herself, "I wish we had children to keep me company." A Kingfisher, with his children, was diving for minnows not far away. And the woman said, "Oh, sea bird with the white collar, I wish we had children like you." And the Kingfisher said, "Look in the sea-shells; look in the seashells," and flew away. The next evening the woman sat again upon the beach looking westward at the dull grey sky. Not far away a white Sea-gull was riding on the waves in the midst of her brood of little ones. And the woman said, "Oh, white sea bird, I wish we had

children like you to keep us company." And the Sea-gull said, "Look in the seashells; look in the sea-shells," and flew away.

The woman wondered greatly at the words of the Kingfisher and the Sea-Gull. As she sat there in thought she heard a strange cry coming from the sand dunes behind her. She went closer to the sound and found that the cry came from a large sea-shell lying on the sand. She picked up the shell, and inside of it was a tiny boy, crying as hard as he could. She was well pleased with her discovery, and she carried the baby to her home and cared for him. When her husband came home from the sea, he, too, was very happy to find the baby there, for he knew that they would be lonely no more.

The baby grew very rapidly, and soon he was able to walk and move about where he pleased. One day the woman was wearing a copper bracelet on her arm and the child said to her, "I must have a bow made from the copper on your arm." So to please him she made him a tiny bow from the bracelet, and two tiny arrows. At once he set out to hunt game, and day after day he came home bearing the products of his chase. He brought home geese and ducks and brant and small sea birds, and gave them to his mother for food. As he grew older the man and his wife noticed that his face took on a golden hue brighter than the colour of his copper bow. Wherever he went there was a strange light. When he sat on the beach looking to the west the weather was always calm and there were strange bright gleams upon the water. And his foster-parents wondered greatly at this unusual power. But the boy would not talk about it; when they spoke of it he was always silent.

It happened once that the winds blew hard over the Great Water and the man could not go out to catch fish because of the turbulent sea. For many days he stayed on shore, for the ocean, which was usually at peace, was lashed into a great fury and the waves were dashing high on the beach. Soon the people were in need of fish for food. And the boy said, "I will

go out with you, for I can overcome the Storm Spirit." The man did not want to go, but at last he listened to the boy's entreaties and together they set out for the fishing grounds far across the tossing sea. They had not gone far when they met the Spirit of the Storm coming madly from the south-west where the great winds dwelt. He tried hard to upset their boat, but over them he had no power, for the boy guided the frail craft across the water and all around them the sea was calm and still. Then the Storm Spirit called his nephew Black Cloud to help him, and away in the south-east they saw him hurrying to his uncle's aid. But the boy said to the man, "Be not afraid, for I am more than a match for him." So the two met, but when Black Cloud saw the boy he quickly disappeared. Then the Spirit of the Storm called Mist of the Sea to come and cover the water, for he thought the boat would be lost if he hid the land from the man and the boy. When the man saw Mist of the Sea coming like a grey vapour across the water he was very frightened, for of all his enemies on the ocean he feared this one most. But the boy said, "He cannot harm you when I am with you." And sure enough, when Mist of the Sea saw the boy sitting smiling in the boat he disappeared as quickly as he had come. And the Storm Spirit in great anger hurried away to other parts, and that day there was no more danger on the sea near the fishing grounds.

The boy and the man soon reached the fishing grounds in safety. And the boy taught his foster-father a magic song with which he was able to lure fish to his nets. Before evening came the boat was filled with good fat fish and they set out for their home. The man said, "Tell me the secret of your power." But the boy said, "It is not yet time." The next day the boy killed many birds. He skinned them all and dried their skins. Then he dressed himself in the skin of a plover and rose into the air and flew above the sea. And the sea under him was grey like his wings. Then he came down and dressed himself in the skin of a blue-jay and soared away again. And the sea over which

he was flying was at once changed to blue like the blue of his wings. When he came back to the beach, he put on the skin of a robin with the breast of a golden hue like his face. Then he flew high and at once the waves under him reflected a colour as of fire and bright gleams of light appeared upon the ocean, and the sky in the west was golden red. The boy flew back to the beach and he said to his foster-parents, "Now it is time for me to leave you. I am the offspring of the sun. Yesterday my power was tested and it was not found wanting, so now I must go away and I shall see you no more. But at evening I shall appear to you often in the twilight sky in the west. And when the sky and the sea look at evening like the colour of my face, you will know that there will be no wind nor storm and that on the morrow the weather will be fair. But although I go away, I shall leave you a strange power. And always when you need me, let me know your desires by making white offerings to me, so that I may see them from my home far in the west."

Then he gave to his foster-mother a wonderful robe. He bade his parents good-bye, and soared away to the west, leaving them in sadness. But the woman still keeps a part of the power he gave her, and when she sits on the island in a crevice in the dunes and loosens her wonderful robe, the wind hurries down from the land, and the sea is ruffled with storm; and the more she loosens the garment the greater is the tempest. But in the late autumn when the cold mists come in from the sea, and the evenings are chill, and the sky is dull and grey, she remembers the promise of the boy. And she makes to him an offering of tiny white feathers plucked from the breasts of birds. She throws them into the air, and they appear as flakes of snow and rise thickly into the winds. And they hurry westward to tell the boy that the world is grey and dreary as it yearns for the sight of his golden face. Then he appears to the people of earth. He comes at evening and lingers after the sun has gone, until the twilight sky is red, and

the ocean in the west has gleams of golden light. And the people then know that there will be no wind and that on the morrow the weather will be fair, as he promised them long ago.

How Raven Brought Fire to the Indians

Many ages ago when the world was still young, Raven and White Sea-gull lived near together in Canada, far in the north country on the shores of the Great Water in the west. They were very good friends and they always worked in harmony and they had much food and many servants in common. White Sea-gull knew no guile; he was always very open and frank and honest in his dealings with others. But Raven was a sly fellow, and at times he was not lacking in treachery and deceit. But Sea-gull did not suspect him, and the two lived always on very friendly terms. In these far-back times in the north country all the world was dark and there was no light but that of the stars. Sea-gull owned all the daylight, but he was very stingy and he kept it always locked up in a box. He would give none of it to anyone else, and he never let it out of the box except when he needed a little of it to help himself when he went far away on his journeys.

After a time Raven grew envious of Sea-gull's possession. And he said, "It is not fair that Sea-gull should keep the daylight all to himself locked up in a box. It was meant for all the world and not for him alone, and it would be of great value to all of us if he would sometimes let a little of it out." So he went to Sea-gull and said, "Give me some of your daylight. You do not need it all and I can use some of it with advantage." But Sea-gull said, "No. I want it all for myself. What could you do with daylight, you with your coat as black as night?" and he would not give him any of it. So Raven made up his mind that he would have to get some daylight from Sea-gull by stealth.

Soon afterwards Raven gathered some prickly thorns and burdocks and scattered them on the ground between Sea-gull's house and the beach where the canoes were lying. Then he went to Sea-gull's window and cried loudly, "Our canoes are going adrift in the surf. Come quickly and help me to save them." Sea-gull sprang out of bed and ran half-asleep on his bare feet. But as he ran to the beach the thorns stuck in his bare flesh, and he howled with pain. He crawled back to his house, saying, "My canoe may go adrift if it pleases; I cannot walk because of the splinters in my feet." Raven chuckled to himself, and he moved away, pretending to go to the beach to draw up the canoes. Then he went into Sea-gull's house. Sea-gull was still howling with pain; he was sitting crying on the side of his bed and he was trying to pull the thorns from his feet as best he could. "I will help you," said Raven, "for I have often done this before. I am a very good doctor." So he took an awl made from whale-bone and he caught hold of Sea-gull's foot, with the pretence of removing the thorns. But instead of taking them out he only pushed them in farther until poor Sea-gull howled louder than ever. And Raven said, "It is so dark I cannot see to pull these thorns from your feet. Give me some daylight and I will soon cure you. A doctor must always have a little light." So Sea-gull unlocked the box and lifted the cover just a little bit so that a faint gleam of light came out. "That is better," said Raven. But instead of picking out the thorns he pushed them in as he had done before, until Sea-gull howled and kicked in pain. "Why are you so stingy with your light?" snapped Raven. "Do you think I am an owl and that I can see well enough in the darkness to heal your feet? Open the box wide and I will soon make you well." So saying he purposely fell heavily against Sea-gull and knocked the box on the floor. The cover flew open and daylight escaped and spread quickly over all the world. Poor Sea-gull tried his best to lure it back again into the box, but his efforts proved fruitless, for it had gone for ever. Raven said he

was very sorry for the accident, but after he had taken all the thorns from Sea-gull's feet he went home laughing to himself and well pleased because of the success of his trick.

Soon there was light in all the world. But Raven could not see very well, for the light was too bright and his eyes were not accustomed to it. He sat for a time looking towards the east, but he saw there nothing of interest. The next day he saw a bit farther, for he was now getting used to the new conditions. The third day he could see distinctly a line of hills far in the east, rising against the sky, and covered with a blue mist. He looked long at the strange sight. Then he saw far away towards the hill a thin column of smoke lifting heavenwards. He had never seen smoke before, but he had often heard of it from travellers in strange places. "That must be the country of which I have been told," he said. "In that land dwell the people who alone possess Fire. We have searched for it for many ages and now I think we have found it." Then he thought, "We now have the daylight, and what a fine thing it would be if we could also have Fire," and he determined to set out to find it.

On the following day he called his servants together and told them of his plans. He said, "We shall set out at once, for the distance is far." And he asked three of his best servants, Robin, Mole and Flea, to go with him. Flea brought out his little wagon and they all tried to get into it, but it was much too small to hold them. Then they tried Mole's carriage, but it was much too frail, and it had scarcely started to move when it broke down and they all fell out in a heap. Then they tried Robin's carriage, but it was much too high and it toppled over under its heavy load and threw them all to the ground. Then Raven stole Sea-gull's large strong carriage, for Sea-gull was asleep, and it did very well, and they started on their journey, taking turns pushing the carriage along with a pole over the flat plain.

After a strange journey in queer places they reached the

land of the people who owned Fire, guided along by the thin column of smoke. The people were not people of earth. Some say they were the Fish people, but that, no man knows. They sat around in a large circle with Fire in their midst, for it was autumn and the days and nights were chill. And Fire was in many places. Raven looked on for a while from afar thinking of the best plan to obtain Fire. Then he said to Robin, "You can move faster than any of us. You must steal Fire. You can fly in quickly, pick it up in your bill and take it back to us and the people will not see nor hear you." So Robin picked out a spot where there were few people, and he darted in quickly and picked up fire in a twinkling and flew back unharmed towards his companions. But he had only taken a very little bit of it. When he got half-way back to his friends, Fire was so hot in his bill that it gave him a strange pain and he had to drop it on the ground. It fell to the earth with a crash and it was so small that it flickered faintly. Robin called to his companions to bring the carriage. Then he stood over Fire and farmed it with his wings to keep it alive. It was very hot, but he stood bravely to his task until his breast was badly scorched and he had to move away. His efforts to save Fire were of no avail, and before his companions reached him Fire had died, and only a black coal remained. And poor Robin's breast was singed, and to this day the breasts of his descendants are a reddish-brown colour because he was scorched while trying to steal Fire ages ago.

Then Raven asked Flea to make the attempt to steal Fire. But Flea said, "I am too little. The heat would roast me to death; and, further, I might miscalculate the distance and hop into the flame." Then Raven asked Mole to try, but Mole said, "Oh no, I am better fitted for other work. My fur would all be singed like Robin's breast." Raven took good care that he would not go himself, for he was a great coward. So he said, "There is a better and easier way. We will steal the baby of the Chief and hold him for ransom. Perhaps they will give us

Fire in exchange for him," and they all thought this was a very good idea. Raven asked, "Who will volunteer to steal the baby?" for he always made the others do all the work. Flea said, "I will go. In one jump I will be into the house, and in another jump I will be out again, for I can hop a great distance." But the others laughed and said, "You could not carry the baby; you are too small." The Mole said, "I will go. I can tunnel a passage very quietly under the house and right up to the baby's cradle. I can then steal the baby and no one will hear me or see me." So it was agreed that Mole should go. In a few minutes Mole made his tunnel, and he was soon back with the baby. Then they got into their carriage and hurried home with their prize. When the Chief of the Fire people discovered the loss of his child he was very angry. And in all the land there was great sorrow because the Chief's heir, the hope of the tribe, had gone. And the child's mother and her women wept so bitterly that their tears fell like rain on all the land. The Chief said he would give anything he possessed to find his child. But although his people searched far and near, they could not find the baby. After many days a wayfarer who had come far from the Great Water in the west brought them news that a strange child was living far to the westward in the village by the sea. He said, "He is not of their tribe. He looks like the children of your village," and he advised them to go to see him for themselves. So the Chief sent his men to search for them guided by the wayfarer. When they reached Raven's village they were told that a strange baby was indeed there; the child was described to them, but he was kept out of sight, and Raven would not tell how he had happened to come there. And Raven said, "How do I know he is your Chief's child? People tell strange lies these days. If you want him you can pay for him, for he has caused us much trouble and expense." So the messengers went back and reported to the Chief what they had heard. From the description, the Chief knew that the child was his, so he gave the messengers very

valuable presents of pearls and rich robes and sent them back again to ransom his boy.

But Raven, when he saw the presents, said, "No, I do not want these gifts; they do not pay me for my trouble," and he would not part with the baby. The messengers again reported to the Chief what had happened. Then the Chief gave them still richer gifts, the best he had in all his land, and sent them back. But again Raven said, "No, your gifts are valueless, compared with my trouble and expense. Say this to your Chief."

When the Chief heard this from his messengers he was sore perplexed, for he had offered the best he had, and he thought that he had reached the end of his resources. So he said, "Go back and ask the people to demand what they wish in exchange for my boy and they will receive it if it can be provided." So the messengers went back to Raven and spoke as they had been commanded. And Raven said, "Only one thing can pay for the child, and that is Fire. Give me Fire and you can take the baby." The messenger laughed and said, "Why did you not say so at first and save us all this trouble and anxiety? Fire is the most plentiful thing in our kingdom, and we hold it in no value." So they returned happy to the Chief. And he sent back much Fire and received his child unharmed from Raven in exchange. And he sent Raven two small stones which the messengers taught Raven how to use. And they said, "If you ever lose Fire or if it dies for lack of food you can always call it back to life with these two little stones." Then they showed him how to make Fire with the two little stones and withered grass, and birch-bark and dry pine, and Raven thought it was very easy. And he felt very proud because he had brought Fire and Light to the earth. He kept Fire for himself for a long time, and although the people clamoured loudly for it, he would not give any of it away. Soon, however, he decided to sell a quantity of it, for he now had the power of making it. So he said to himself, "This is a

good way to get many wives," and he announced that he would only sell some of his fire in return for a wife. And many families bought his fire and in exchange he received many wives. And to this day he still has many wives and he still moves about from place to place with a flock of them always around him. But the Indians when they arrived took Fire away from him. Thus Fire came to the Indians in the olden days. And when it has died, as it often does, they still sometimes use Raven's flint stones to bring it back to life.

The Girl Who Always Cried

On the bank of a stream far in the West, Owl-man lived long ago in a little house under the ground. He had very strange habits. He always kept away from the Great Water and he dwelt for the most part in the forest. He had very few friends, and he usually went hunting by himself. He lived on toads and frogs and flies. He would say but little, and when other people sat around him talking pleasantly, he was always silent, gazing into space with wide-open eyes, and trying to look wiser than he really was. Because of this, people thought he was very queer, and strange stories about him soon spread far and wide. It was said that he was very cruel, and that he was silent because he was always brooding over his past wickedness or thinking about some evil deed he was soon going to do. And when children were troublesome or disobedient, their mothers always frightened them into goodness by saying, "The Owl-man from the stream will come and take you if you do not mend your ways." And although the Owl-man was a solitary fellow he thus had great influence in all the land.

Not far away lived a man and a woman who had one adopted daughter. Because she was the only child in the house she was much petted, and she was never satisfied, and she cried and fretted all the time, and kept always asking for things she could not get. She disturbed all the neighbours round about so that they could not sleep because of her constant wailing and complaining. At last her foster-parents grew tired of her weeping and they said, "The Owl-man will carry you off if you do not stop crying." But still she pouted

and fretted. And the old man of the house said, "I wish the Owl-man would come and take her away." Now the old man was a great magician, and as he wished, so it came to pass.

That evening it happened that the people were gathered at a feast of shell-fish on the beach by the bright moonlight, as was their weekly custom. But the sorrowful girl would not go with the others. She stayed at home and sulked. As she sat alone in the house, old Owl-man came along carrying his basket full of toads and frogs. The girl was still crying when he came in. "I have come for you," he said, "as the old man wished." And he put her in his basket with the toads and frogs and carried her off. She yelled and kicked and scratched, but the lid of the basket was tightly closed and Owl-man laughed to himself and said, "Now I have a wife at last. I shall be alone no more, and the people will not now think I am so queer." So he took her to his underground house by the stream. That night the people noticed that the girl's cries were no longer heard and they said, "What can have cured Sour-face; what can have pleased Cry-Baby into silence?" And the girl's foster-mother wondered where she had gone. But only the old man knew that it had happened as he had wished, because of his magic power, and that Owl-man had taken her away.

The girl was not happy in her new home, for she would not be happy in any place. She still kept up her caterwauling and there was no peace in the house. Owl-man was a great hunter. Every day he went out hunting with his big basket on his arm, but he always locked his wife in the house before he went away. He was always very successful in the chase, and each night he came back with his basket full of toads and frogs and field-mice and flies. But his wife would eat none of them and she threw them in his face when he offered them to her, and said in a bad temper, "I will not eat your filthy food. It is not fit food for gentle-folk." And Owl-man said, "Gentle-folk indeed! You should find a more suitable name; you are not gentle; you are a wild evil thing, but I am going to tame you."

And the girl wept again and sulked and stamped her feet in her temper.

At last the girl became very hungry, for there was little to eat except the food that Owl-man brought home for himself. He gathered a few berries for her, but even these did not satisfy her hunger. So she thought out a plan of escape. One day when Owl-man was away, she took some oil she found in the house and rubbed it all over her face and hair. When Owl-man came home in the evening, he said, "You are very pretty to-night. What have you done to make yourself look so sleek and shiny?" And she answered, "I have put on my face and hair gum which I picked from the trees last night when I went walking with you." And he said, "I should like to put some on too, for perhaps it would make me beautiful." The girl told him that if he would go out and gather some gum she would put it on his face and hair for him. So he went out and gathered a great store of gum from the trees and brought it back to her. She melted it on a hot stove until it was balsam again and would pour easily out. Then she said, "Shut your eyes so that it will not harm your sight, and I will make your face and hair beautiful and shining like mine." Owl-man shut his eyes, and the girl soon covered his face and head with the soft gum. She put it on very thick, and she said, "Keep your eyes shut until it dries or it may blind you." Owl-man did as he was told, but when the gum dried he could not open his eyes, and while he was trying to rub it off, the girl slipped out the door and ran back to her parents, far away by the Great Water.

Owl-man scraped the gum from his face and head as best he could, and when he could open his eyes again and could see pretty well, he went out into the night in search of his wife.

And as he went along he cried, "Oh, oh, oh, where is my wife? Where is my girl? I have lost my wife. I have lost my girl. Oh, oh, oh." And when the people heard him calling they

thought they would play a trick on him. So they said, "She is here, she is here." But when he entered their houses, the woman they showed him was not his wife, and he went away sorrowful. And the people all laughed at his confusion, and said, "Owl-man is getting queerer each day. He is far gone in his head." Owl-man went from house to house, but he could not find his wife. Then he went to the trees and searched among the branches. He pulled the trees up by the roots, thinking she might be hiding underneath. And he looked into the salmon-traps in the rivers, and kicked them to pieces in his frenzy. But nowhere was his wife to be found.

Then he went to the girl's house, where she was hiding, and he yelled, "Oh, oh, oh, give me my wife. Give me my girl. I know she is here. Oh, oh, oh." But the girl's foster-mother would not give her up. Then he began to tear down the house over their heads, for the old man of the house was away and there was no one else strong enough to stop Owl-man in his rage. When the woman saw her house in danger of falling about her ears, she cried, "Stop; your wife is here." And she brought forth the girl from her hiding-place. When Owl-man saw her, his rage left him and he was happy again.

But just then the old man of magic power came home.

He had heard the hub-hub from a distance. When he came in and saw the great holes in the roof and the side of his house where Owl-man had torn away the logs, he was very angry and he said to himself, "I will punish both Owl-man and the girl for this night's work." And he hit upon a plan. He said to Owl-man, "We must give you a hot bath to melt the gum and take it from your hair, for it will do you no good, and it will take all the hair off your head." And Owl-man gladly agreed. So they filled a great bark tub with water and heated it by placing at the bottom of it many red-hot stones, after the fashion of Indians in those old days. But the old man put so many hot stones in the water that it was soon almost boiling with the heat, and when they put Owl-man into the tub he

was almost scalded to death and he yelled loudly in pain. Then the old man said, "Now I will take vengeance. You will trouble me no more. You have broken my house. Henceforth you will be not a man but an Owl, and you will dwell alone in the forest with few friends, and you will live always on frogs and toads and field-mice, and people will hear you at night crying for your wife all over the land, but you shall never find her." Then with his magic power he changed him to an Owl and sent him on his way.

He said to the girl, "You have done me much harm too, and you have brought all this trouble upon me. Henceforth you will be not a girl but a Fish-Hawk, and you will always cry and fret and scream as you have done before, and you will never be satisfied." And with his magic power he changed her into a Fish-Hawk, and sent her out to the ocean. And there she screams always, and she is a great glutton, for she can never get enough to eat. And since that time, Owl and Fish-Hawk have not dwelt together and have not been on friendly terms. They live far apart, and Owl keeps to the forest and the mountains, while the other keeps to the sea. Thus was the old man avenged, and thus was the weeping maiden punished for her tears. And the cries of Owl and Fish-Hawk are still heard in many places, one calling for his wife, the other screaming unsatisfied for something she cannot get.

How Rabbit Deceived Fox

Long ago in Indian days in Canada, when Rabbit worked for Glooskap as his forest guide, he was a great thief. He liked most of all to steal by moonlight, and he crept quietly into gardens and fields where Indian vegetables were growing, for he was very fond of cabbage and lettuce and beans. Not far from his home there lived alone an old widow woman who had no children. She could not hunt game because she was a woman, and she had never been trained to the chase, so she kept a little garden from which she made a good living. All day long from dawn until sunset she toiled hard, tilling her little garden, watering her vegetables and keeping them free from weeds. And she grew green cabbages and red carrots and yellow beans and big fat pumpkins and Indian corn, which she traded with Indian hunters in return for fish and meat. In this way she always had plenty of food, and she lived very well on good fare. But Rabbit, going his rounds one day, discovered her garden, although it was deep in the forest, and every night by moonlight or starlight he robbed it, and grew sleek and fat from the results of his thefts. And morning after morning the old widow woman found that many cabbages and carrots were missing and that much harm had been done to her plants. She had an idea that Rabbit was the pilferer, for she had heard that he was a great thief, but she was not very sure. She watched many nights, but she was never able to catch the robber, so stealthily did he come, and it was not easy to see him in the shadows. So she said to herself, "I will set up a scarecrow, a figure in the shape of a little man, and I will place it at my garden gate, and it will frighten away the robber,

whoever he may be, for I must save my vegetables or I shall starve when the cold winter comes."

She picked from the spruce and the fir trees close by a great store of gum and balsam. This she formed into a figure in the shape of a little man. She made two eyes from glass beads that would shine like fire in the starlight, and a nose from a pine cone, and hair from the corn tassels and yellow moss. Then she placed the figure at the entrance to the garden where she knew the robber would come. "Now," she thought, "I will scare away the thief."

When night fell and the moon rose above the trees, Rabbit came along, as was his custom, to steal his nightly meal. As he came near the garden very softly, he saw in the moonlight what he thought was a man standing in the path by the garden gate. The moon hung low over the forest, and there was a thin grey mist on the earth, for it was near to autumn and the nights were already cool; and the figure of the little man looked larger than human in the misty light, and it cast a long black shadow like that of a giant on the grass. Rabbit was much afraid and he trembled like an aspen leaf, but he stood quiet behind a tree and watched the strange figure. For a long time he stood still and watched and listened. But the strange figure did not move, and not a sound did Rabbit hear but the chirp of a cricket. Then with great caution he came closer. But still the figure did not move. Then his fear left him and he grew bolder, for he was very hungry, and he could smell the vegetables and the wild honeysuckle in the still night air. So he walked bravely up to the little dummy man and said, "Get out of my way and let me pass." But the man did not move. Then Rabbit struck the man a sharp blow with his fist. But still the figure did not move. Rabbit's fist stuck fast in the gum and he could not pull it away. Then he struck out with his other fist, and it too, like the other, was held firm. "I shall kick you," said Rabbit in a rage. "Take that," and he struck out wildly with his foot. But

his foot, like his fists, stuck fast. Then he kicked with the other foot, but that too was held in the gum. Rabbit was now very cross, and in his anger he said, "Now I shall bite you," but when he bit the little man, his teeth, like his feet and hands, stuck fast. Then he pushed with his body with all his might, hoping to knock the little man down, but his whole body stuck to the dummy figure.

He cried out loudly, for he was now beside himself with fear, and the old woman, when she heard his yells, came running out of her house. "Aha!" she said, "so you are the robber who has been stealing from my garden. I will rid the world of a pilfering pest, for I will kill you this very night." Then she pulled him away from the gum figure and put him in a strong bag and tied the mouth of the bag with a stout string. She left the bag on the path by the garden gate and went to look for her axe to kill Rabbit. While Rabbit lay there wondering how he was going to escape. Fox came prowling along. He stumbled over the bag, for he did not see it in the shadows, and he plunged forward headlong to the ground with a great thud. He got up and rained kicks upon the bag. He was mad because he had been tripped. He kicked poor Rabbit's back until Rabbit cried in pain. "Who are you in the bag?" asked Fox when he heard the cries. "I am your friend Rabbit," was the answer. "What are you doing, hiding in the bag?" asked Fox. Then Rabbit suddenly thought of a way of escape. He knew that Fox had long been looking for a wife, but that no one would have him as no one trusted him because his fame for treachery and slyness was so great. "I am not hiding," he said. "The old woman who owns this garden wants me to marry her grand-daughter, and when I refused to do it she caught me and shut me up in this bag; she has just gone to bring the girl from her house, for she is determined to make me marry her here in the moonlight this very night. I don't want to marry her, for she is very big and fat, and I am very small and lean." Then he cried "Boo-hoo-hoo" again,

and Fox said, "I have been looking for a wife for a long time, and I like fat people. Let me get into the bag in your place, and I will marry the grand-daughter instead, for the old woman will not know me in the shadows." And Rabbit gladly agreed. Then Fox untied the bag and let Rabbit out and got into the bag himself, and Rabbit tied up the mouth of the bag and hurried away as quickly as he could.

Soon the old woman came back, carrying her axe. She sharpened it on a stone and said, "Now I will kill you, and you will thieve no more in my garden. A poor woman must live untroubled by such pilfering rogues." When Fox heard these words and the sound of the stone upon the axe, he knew that he had been deceived by Rabbit, and when the old woman opened the bag he sprang nimbly out with a sudden bound and was away before she could catch him. He swore by the Starlight that he would have vengeance on Rabbit. All night long he searched for him and all the next day, but he could not find him. At last in the gathering twilight he came upon him in an open space in the forest, on the other side of a stream, eating his fill of wild vegetables. Fox tried to coax him across the stream to his side, for he himself was afraid of the water, but Rabbit would not go. "Why don't you eat some cheese?" said Rabbit; "there is a big round cheese in the stream." Fox looked into the stream where Rabbit pointed, and there he saw the reflection of the big round yellow moon. He thought it was a round cheese, and he plunged in after it, for he was very fond of cheese. Rabbit hoped he would be drowned, but the stream was shallow and Fox climbed out with no cheese and with only a bad fright and a wet coat for his pains. He was very cross, for he knew that Rabbit wished to do him harm, but he kept his anger to himself. Rabbit was still eating contentedly.

"What are you eating?" said Fox, trying to hold him in talk until he could think of a plan to catch him. "I am eating good ripe fruit," said Rabbit. "I am eating Indian melons."

"Throw me one," said Fox, for he was hungry. Rabbit threw him a large round wild cucumber all covered with green prickles. "Swallow it whole at a mouthful," said Rabbit; "it is very good that way." It was night and the moon shone dimly through the trees, and Fox could not see what he was eating. He swallowed the cucumber at one gulp, as Rabbit had told him, but the prickles stuck in his throat and he almost choked to death. And while he was choking and spluttering and trying to cough up the cucumber, Rabbit ran away as fast as he could, laughing heartily to himself. Fox knew that he had been tricked again, and this time he swore he would kill Rabbit as soon as he could find him; he resolved that when next he saw him he would not give him a moment to live.

Rabbit hid among the dry underbrush all the next day. But when the day went down and the sky was red in the west and the wind was very still, he sat on a log, as was his custom, and played softly on his flute, for he was a great player on the Indian pipe. While he was playing, Fox suddenly came upon him unawares. Rabbit saw him watching him through the trees close at hand, but although taken by surprise, he was not to be outdone. Fox was just about to spring upon him when Rabbit said, "The Chief's daughter has just been married to a great warrior, and the wedding party will soon be along this way. They asked me to sit here and make music for them with my flute as they pass by. They have promised to pay me well, and they have invited me to the wedding feast. Come and join me and play too, and you will be well paid, and we will go to the wedding feast together and get good things to eat." Fox thought he would let Rabbit get the pay he had been promised, for he was a very greedy fellow; then he would rob him and kill him, and he would take his flute and go to the wedding feast alone, and his vengeance would then be complete. So he decided to let his anger cool for a little time. And he said, "I have no flute, and I cannot therefore make music; but I will sit with you to see the wedding guests go by."

But Rabbit said, "Take my flute. I have another at home. I will go and get it, for there is yet time."

So Fox took the flute and began to play loudly, and Rabbit slipped hurriedly out of sight, pretending to go for his Indian pipe. But he resolved to make an end of Fox, for he feared for his own life, and instead of going home, he set the underbrush on fire. He kindled the fire at many places all around the log on which Fox sat. Fox could not hear the fire crackling because of the loud music of his flute, and he thought the light was but the bright light of the moon. And the fire was almost upon him before he knew that he was in danger. Then he tried to get away, but on all sides his escape was stopped by the flames and he could not find an opening. At last, in despair, to save his life, he jumped through the ring of fire. He escaped with his life, but his eyelids were singed, and his sleek black coat with its silver spots was scorched to a red-brown colour. He was in great pain. He concluded that Rabbit was too clever for him to cope with, and he resolved to leave him alone and to forego his revenge, for he was glad to get away with his life. But he decided never again to live on friendly terms with Rabbit. And since that night Rabbit and Fox have never hunted together. And to the present day the descendants of this Fox have red eyes and a red-brown coat, because Rabbit scorched their ancestor in the olden times.

The Boy and the Dragon

Once, long ago, before the white man came to Canada, a boy was living with his parents in a village near the ocean. As he had no brothers or sisters, he was often lonely, and he longed for adventure and companionship. At last he decided to set out to seek his fortune elsewhere. He was just on the point of leaving his home when it was noised abroad one day that there had come into the land a great dragon, who was doing great havoc and damage wherever he went. The country was in great terror, for the dragon carried off women and children and devoured them one by one. And what was still more mystifying, he had power to take on human form, and often he changed himself into a man of pleasing shape and manner and came among the people to carry out his cruel designs before they knew that he was near. The Chief of the tribe called for volunteers to meet the dragon-man, but none of his warriors responded. They were strong and mighty in combat with men, but it was a different matter to encounter a dragon.

When the youth heard this dreadful story and saw the terror of his people, he said, "Here is my chance to do a great deed," for somehow he felt that he had more than human power. So he said good-bye to his parents and set out on his adventure. He travelled all day inland through the forest, until at evening he came to a high hill in the centre of an open space. He said, "I will climb this hill, and perhaps I can see all the country round about me." So he went slowly to the top. As he stood there, looking over the country which he could see for many miles around, a man suddenly appeared

beside him. He was a very pleasant fellow, and they talked together for some time. The boy was on his guard, but he thought, "Surely this man with the good looks cannot be the dragon," and he laughed at his suspicions and put them from his mind.

The stranger said, "Where are you going?" And the boy answered, "I am going far away. I am seeking adventure in the forest for it is very lonely down by the sea." But he did not tell him of his real errand. "You may stay with me to-night," said the new-comer. "I have a very comfortable lodge not far from here, and I will give you food." The boy was very hungry and tired, and he went along with the man to his lodge. When they reached the house the boy was surprised to see a great heap of bleached bones lying before the door. But he showed no fear nor did he comment on the horrible sight. Inside the lodge sat a very old and bent woman, tending a pot. She was stirring it with a big stick, and the boy saw that it contained meat stew. When she placed the stew before them, the boy said he would rather have corn, for he feared to taste the meat. The old woman fried some corn for him, and he had a good meal.

After they had eaten, the man went out to gather wood for the fire, and the boy sat talking to the old woman. And she said to him, "You are very young and beautiful and innocent—the most handsome I have yet seen in this place. And because of that, I will take pity on you and warn you of your danger. The man whom you met in the forest and whom you supped with to-night is none other than the dragon-man of whom you have often heard. He cannot be killed in ordinary combat, and it would be folly for you to try. To-morrow he will kill you if you are still here. Take these moccasins that I will give you, and in the morning when you get up put them on your feet. With one step you will reach by their power the hill you see in the distance. Give this piece of birch bark with the picture on it to a man you will meet there, and he will tell

you what next to do. But remember that no matter how far you go, the dragon-man will overtake you in the evening." The youth took the moccasins and the birch bark bearing the mystic sign and hid them under his coat, and said, "I will do as you advise." But the woman said,

"There is one more condition. You must kill me in the morning before you go, and put this robe over my body. Then the dragon-man's spell over me will be broken, and when he leaves me, I will rouse myself with my power back to life."

The youth went to sleep, and the dragon-man slept all night beside him so as not to let him escape. The next morning, when the dragon-man was out to get water from the stream some distance away, the boy at once carried out the old woman's orders of the night before. First of all he killed the old woman with a blow and covered her body with a bright cloak, for he knew that when the dragon-man would leave the place she would soon rise again. Then he put the magic moccasins on his feet and with one great step he reached the distant hill. Here, sure enough, he met an old man. He gave him the piece of birch bark bearing the mystic sign. The man looked at it closely and smiled and said, "So it is you I was told to wait for. That is well, for you are indeed a comely youth." The man gave him another pair of moccasins in exchange for those he was wearing, and another piece of birch bark bearing another inscription. He pointed to a hill that rose blue in the distance and said, "With one step you will reach that hill. Give this bark to a man you will meet there, and all will be well."

The boy put the moccasins on his feet, and with one step he reached the distant hill. There he met another old man, to whom he gave the birch bark. This man gave him another pair of moccasins and a large maple leaf bearing a strange symbol, and told him to go to another spot, where he would receive final instructions. He did as he was told, and here he met a very old man, who said, "Down yonder there is a stream.

Go towards it and walk straight into it, as if you were on dry ground. But do not look at the water. Take this piece of birch bark bearing these magic figures, and it will change you into whatever you wish, and it will keep you from harm." The boy took the bark and did as he was told, and soon found himself on the opposite bank of the stream. He followed the stream for some distance, and at evening he came to a lake. As he was looking about for a warm place to pass the night, he suddenly came upon the dragon-man, now in the form of a monster dragon, hiding behind the trees. The old woman's words had come true, for his enemy had overtaken him before nightfall, as she had said. There was no time to lose, so the boy waved his magic bark, and at once he became a little fish with red fins, moving slowly in the lake.

When the dragon-man saw the little fish, he cried, "Little fish of the red fins, have you seen the youth I am looking for?" "No, sir," said the little fish, "I have seen no one; I have been asleep. But if he passes this way I will tell you," and he moved rapidly out into the lake.

The dragon-man moved down along the bank of the lake, while the youth watched him from the water. He met a Toad in the path, and said, "Little Toad, have you seen the youth I am looking for? If he passed this way you would surely have seen him." "I am minding my own business," answered the Toad, and he hopped away into the moss. Then the dragon-man saw a very large fish with his head above water, looking for flies, and he said, "Have you seen the boy I am looking for?" "Yes," said the fish, "you have just been talking to him," and he laughed to himself and disappeared. The dragon-man went back and searched everywhere for Toad, but he could not find him. As he looked he came upon a musk-rat running along by the stream, and he said angrily, "Have you seen the person I am looking for?" "No," said the rat. "I think you are he," said the dragon-man. Then the musk-rat began to cry bitterly and said, "No, no; the boy you are looking for passed

by just now, and he stepped on the roof of my house and broke it in." The dragon-man was deceived again. He went on and soon came upon old Turtle splashing around in the mud. "You are very old and wise," he said, hoping to flatter him, "you have surely seen the person I am looking for." "Yes," said Turtle, "he is farther down the stream. Go across the river and you will find him. But beware, for if you do not know him when you see him, he will surely kill you." Turtle knew well that the dragon-man would now meet his fate.

The dragon-man followed the lake till he came to the river. For greater caution, so that he might be less easily seen, he changed himself to a Snake. Then he attempted to cross the stream. But the youth, still in the form of a fish and still using the power of his magic bark with the mystic sign, was swimming round and round in a circle in the middle of the river. A rapid whirlpool arose where he swam, but it was not visible on the surface. As the Snake approached it, he saw nothing but clear water. He failed to recognize his enemy, and as Turtle had told him, he swam into the whirlpool before he was aware of it, and was quickly drawn to the bottom, where he was drowned.

The youth fished him up and cut off his head. Then he changed back to his own form. He went to the dragon-man's lodge to see how the old woman had fared, but she had gone with her bright robe, and the lodge was empty. Then the youth went back to his home and reported what he had done. And he received many rich gifts from the Chief for his brave deed, and the land was never troubled again by dragons. But from that time the snake family was hated because its shape had concealed the dragon-man, and to this day an Indian will not let a snake escape with his life if he meets one of them in his path. For they still are mindful of the adventure of their ancestor in the old days, and they are suspicious of the evil power the snake family secretly possess.

The Children with One Eye

Two little children, a boy and a girl, lived long ago with their widowed mother in the Canadian forest. The woman was very poor, for her husband had long been dead and she had to work very hard to provide food for herself and her children. Often she had to go far from home in search of fish and game, and at times she was absent for many days. When she went on these long journeys she left her children behind her, and thus they were allowed to grow up with very little oversight or discipline or care. They soon became very unruly because they were so often left to have their own way, and when their mother returned from her hunting trips she frequently found that they would not obey her, and that they did pretty much as they pleased. As they grew older they became more headstrong and disobedient, and their mother could do very little to control them. And she said, "Some day they will suffer for their waywardness."

One day the woman went to visit a neighbour not far away. She left a large pot of bear-fat boiling on the fire. And she said to the children, "Do not meddle with the pot while I am gone, for the fat may harm you if it catches fire." But she was not gone long when the boy said to the girl as they played around the pot, "Let us see if the fat will burn." So they took a burning stick of wood and dropped it into the fat, and stood looking into the large pot to see what would happen. The fat sputtered for an instant; then there was a sudden flash, and a tongue of flame shot upwards from the pot into the faces of the children. Their hair was burned to a crisp and their faces were scorched, and they ran from the house crying with pain.

But when they reached the outer air, they found that they could not see, for the fire had blinded their eyes. So they stumbled around in darkness, crying loudly for help. But no help came.

When their mother came home she tried every remedy she thought might restore their sight. But all her medicine was unavailing, and she said, "You will always be blind. That is the punishment for your disobedience."

So the children lived in darkness for a long time. But they were no longer headstrong and unruly, and although they could no longer see, they were less trouble to their mother than they were when they had their sight, for they did not now refuse to do her bidding.

One day, when their mother was far away hunting in the forest, an old woman came along and asked the children for food. And they brought good food to her as she sat before the door. After she had eaten, she said, "You are blind, but I can help you, for I am from the Land of the Little People. I cannot give you four eyes, but I will give you one eye between you. You can each use it at different times, and it will be better than no sight at all. But handle it with great care and do not leave it lying on the ground." Then she gave them an eye which she took from her pocket, and disappeared. So they used the one eye between them, and when the boy had the eye and the girl wished to see anything, she would say, "Give me the eye," and her brother would carefully pass it to her. When their mother came home she was very glad when she found that they had now some means of sight.

One day when their mother was away again, the boy went into the forest with his bow and arrows. He carried the eye with him. He had not gone far when he saw a fat young deer, which he killed. The deer was too heavy for him to carry home alone. So he said, "I will go and get my sister, and we shall cut it up and put it in a basket and carry it home together." He went home and told his sister of his good

fortune, and he led her to where the deer lay, and they began to cut up the body. But they had forgotten to bring a basket or a bag. He called to his sister saying, "You must weave a basket into which we can put the meat to carry it home." And his sister said, "How can I make a basket when I cannot see? If I am to weave a basket, I must have the eye." The boy brought the eye to her and she made a large basket from green twigs.

When she had finished making the basket the boy said, "I must finish cutting up the meat. Give me the eye." So she brought him the eye, and he proceeded to chop up the meat and to put it in the basket. Then he said, "Why can we not have a meal here? I am very hungry." His sister agreed that this was a good idea, and he said, "You cook the meal while I pack the meat." The girl made a fire, but she was afraid she would burn the meat, so she said, "I cannot see to cook. I must have the eye." By this time her brother had finished packing the meat into the basket, and he brought her the eye and she went on with her cooking. The fire was low and she said, "I must have some dry wood. Bring me some dry pine." The boy wandered off into the forest in search of wood, but he had not gone far when he stumbled over a log and fell to the ground. He called to his sister in anger, saying, "You always want the eye for yourself. How can I gather dry pine when I cannot see? Give me the eye at once."

His sister ran to him and helped him up and gave him the eye. She found her way back to the fire, but as she reached it she smelled the meat burning on the spit. She shouted, "The meat is burning and our dinner will be spoiled. Give me the eye at once, so that I may see if the meat is cooked." The boy was some distance away, and in his anger he threw the eye to her, saying, "Find it. I am not going to walk to you with it if you are too lazy to come and get it." The eye fell to the ground between them, and neither of them knew where it lay. They groped for it among the dead leaves, but as they searched for

it, a wood-pecker, watching from a branch of a tree near by, swooped suddenly down and gobbled it up and flew away.

As they were still searching for it, the old woman who had given it to them came along. She had been hiding among the trees, and she had seen the wood-pecker flying away with her gift. She said, "Where is the eye I gave you?" "It dropped from my head," answered the boy, "and I cannot find it in the grass." "Yes," said the girl, "it dropped from his head, and we cannot find it." "You have lied to me," said the old woman, "and you have disobeyed, and for that I shall punish you." And with her magic power she changed the boy into a mole and the girl into a bat, and said, "Now live blind upon the earth, with only your sense of sound to guide you." At once the boy and the girl were changed. And so the Mole and the Bat appeared upon the earth.

The Boy Who Was Saved by Thoughts

A poor widow woman once lived near the sea in Eastern Canada. Her husband had been drowned catching fish one stormy day far off the coast, and her little boy was now her only means of support. He had no brothers or sisters, and he and his mother, because they lived alone, were always good comrades. Although he was very young and small, he was very strong, and he could catch fish and game like a man. Every day he brought home food to his mother, and they were never in want.

Now it happened that the Great Eagle who made the Winds in these parts became very angry because he was not given enough to eat. He went screaming through the land in search of food, but no food could he find. And he said, "If the people will not give me food, I will take care that they get no food for themselves, and when I grow very hungry I shall eat up all the little children in the land. For my young ones must have nourishment too." So he tossed the waters about with the wind of his great wings, and he bent the trees and flattened the corn, and for days he made such a hurly-burly on the earth that the people stayed indoors, and they were afraid to come out in search of food.

At last the boy and his mother became very hungry. And the boy said, "I must go and find food, for there is not a crumb left in the house. We cannot wait longer." And he said to his mother, "I know where a fat young beaver lives in his house of reeds on the bank of the stream near the sea. I shall go and kill him, and his flesh will feed us for many days." His mother did not want him to make this hazardous journey, for the

Great Eagle was still in the land. But he said to her, "You must think of me always when I am gone, and I will think of you, and while we keep each other in our memories I shall come to no harm." So, taking his long hunting knife, he set out for the beaver's home in his house of reeds on the bank of the stream near the sea. He reached the place without mishap and there he found Beaver fast asleep. He soon killed him and slung him over his shoulder and started back to his mother's house. "A good fat load I have here," he said to himself, "and we shall now have many a good dinner of roast beaver-meat."

But as he went along with his load on his back the Great Eagle spied him from a distance and swooped down upon him without warning. Before he could strike with his knife, the Eagle caught him by the shoulders and soared away, holding him in a mighty grip with the beaver still on his back. The boy tried to plunge his knife into the Eagle's breast, but the feathers were too thick and tough, and he was not strong enough to drive the knife through them. He could do nothing but make the best of his sorry plight. "Surely I can think of a way of escape," he said to himself, "and my mother's thoughts will be with me to help me." Soon the Eagle arrived at his home. It was built on a high cliff overlooking the sea, hundreds of feet above the beach, where even the sound of the surf rolling in from afar could not reach it. There were many young birds in the nest, all clamouring for food. Great Eagle threw the boy to the side of the nest and told him to stay there. And he said, "I shall first eat the beaver, and after he is all eaten up we shall have a good fat meal from you." Then he picked the beaver to pieces and fed part of it to his young ones.

For some days the boy lay in terror in the nest, trying to think of a way of escape. Birds flew high over his head, and far out on the ocean he could see great ships going by. But no help came to him, and he thought that death would soon be upon him. And his mother sat at home waiting for him to

return, but day after day passed and still he did not come. She thought he must surely be in great danger, or that perhaps he was already dead. One day, as she was weeping, thinking of her lost boy, an old woman came along.

"Why do you cry?" she asked. And the weeping woman said, "My boy has been away for many days. I know that harm has come upon him. The men of my tribe have gone in search of him, and they will kill whatever holds him a prisoner, but I fear he will never come back alive." And the old woman said, "Little good the men of your tribe can do you! You must aid him with your thoughts, for material things are vain. I will help you, for I have been given great power by the Little People of the Hills." So the woman used her thoughts and her wishes to bring back her boy.

That night the boy noticed that the beaver had all been eaten up and that not a morsel remained. He knew that unless he could save himself at once he would surely die on the morrow. The Great Eagle, he knew, would swoop down upon him and kill him with a blow of his powerful beak and claws. But when the boy slept, he saw his mother in his slumber. And she said to him, "To-morrow when Great Eagle goes from the nest, brace your knife, point upwards, against the rock. When he swoops down to kill you his breast will strike the knife, and he will be pierced to death. You are not strong enough to cut through his feathers with your knife, but he is powerful enough to destroy himself." The next morning when Great Eagle went out, the boy did as the vision of the night had told him. He braced his sharp hunting-knife, point upwards, against the rock and sat still and waited. Then he heard the young eagles making a great noise and crying loudly for their breakfast. He knew that his hour had come. Soon the Great Eagle, hearing the screams of his young ones, came flying back to the nest to kill the boy. He circled around above him with loud cries and then with great force swooped down upon him, hoping to kill him with his beak and claws. But instead, he

struck the blade braced upwards against the rock. The knife pierced far into his breast, and with a loud scream he rolled over dead into the nest. The boy then killed the young eagles, and he knew that now for a time he was safe.

But he did not know how to get down from the Eagle's nest, for it jutted out like a shelf far over the beach, and behind it was a wall of rock around which he could not climb. He had no means of making a ladder, and his cries would not be heard upon the beach because of the constant roaring of the surf. He thought he would surely starve to death, and that night he cried himself to sleep. But in the night he again saw his mother in his slumbers. And she said, "You are a foolish boy. Why do you not use the thoughts I send you? To-morrow skin the eagle and crawl inside the skin. If the wide wings can hold the Eagle in the air they can likewise hold you. Drop off from the cliff and you will land safely on the beach." The next day the boy did as the vision of the night had told him. He carefully skinned the Great Eagle. Then he crawled inside the skin and thrust his arms through the skin just above the wings, so that his extended arms would hold the wings straight out beneath them. Then he prepared to drop down. But when he looked over the cliff, he was very frightened, for the sight made him dizzy. On the beach, men looked like flies, they were so far away. But he remembered the promise made to him in his slumbers. So he pushed himself from the cliff and dropped down. The wings of Great Eagle let him fall gently through the air and he landed safely and unhurt upon the beach. He crawled out of the skin and set out for his home. It was a long journey, for Great Eagle had carried him far away, but towards evening he reached his home safely, and his mother received him with great gladness.

The boy began to boast of his adventure, and he told how he had killed Great Eagle and how he had dropped down unscathed from the cliff. He spoke of himself with great pride and of his strength and his shrewdness. But the old woman

from the Land of the Little People, the fairies of the hills, who was still present with his mother, said, "Oh, vain boy, do not think so highly of yourself. Your strength is nothing; your shrewdness is nothing. It was not these things that saved you, but it was the strength of our thoughts. These alone endure and succeed when all else fails. I have taught you the uselessness of all material things, which in the end are but as ashes or as dust. Our thoughts alone can help us in the end, for they alone are eternal." And the boy listened and wondered at what the old woman from the Land of Little People had said, but he boasted of his strength no more.

The Song-Bird and the Healing Waters

Once when the snow lay very deep on the ground and the days were grey with frost, there was great sorrow in an Indian village. A dreadful plague had come upon the place and had carried away many of the people. Neither old nor young were proof against its ravages, and the weak and the strong fell helpless before its power. The people tried every means to get rid of the plague, but they had no success. And they prayed to all their good spirits to help them, but no help came. In the tribe was a young warrior who had lost his parents and all his brothers and sisters because of the dreaded disease. Now his young wife fell sick, and he was in great sorrow, for he thought that she would soon follow his parents into the Land of the Shadows. And so he went about in great fear, not knowing when the end would come.

One day he met an old woman in the forest. "Why do you look so sorrowful?" she asked him. "I am sad because my young wife is going to die," he answered; "the plague will carry her off like the others." But the old woman said, "There is something that will save your wife from death. Far away in the East is a bird of sweet song which dwells close to the Healing Waters. Go until you find it. It will point you to the spring, the waters of which alone can heal." And the young man said, "I must find the Healing Waters. Wherever they may be upon the earth, I must find them." So he went home and said good-bye to his friends, and set out eastward on his quest.

All the next day he searched eagerly for the Waters, listening always for the bird of the sweet song. But he found nothing. The snow lay deep in the forest and he moved along

with difficulty. He met a rabbit in his path and he said, "Tell me where I shall find the Healing Spring?" But the rabbit scurried away over the snow and made no answer. Then he asked a bear, but he met with the same rebuff. Thus for many days and nights he wandered on, crossing rivers and climbing steep hills, but always without success.

Then one day he emerged from the snow country and came to a land where the airs were warmer and where little streams were flowing. Suddenly he came upon the body of a dead man lying across his path. He stopped and buried the body, for he thought that it was not right to leave it lying bare upon the ground for the birds to peck at. That night as he went along in the moonlight he met a Fox in his path. "Hello," said the Fox. "What are you looking for so late at night in the forest?" And he answered, "I am looking for the bird of the sweet song, who will show me the way to the Healing Waters." And the Fox said, "I am the spirit of the man you buried yesterday by the forest path, and in return for your kindness to me I shall do a kindness to you. You have always been good to the animals and the birds, and you have never killed them needlessly, nor when you did not require them for clothing or for food. And you have always been careful of the flowers and the trees, and you have often protected them from harm. So now they want to be good to you, and I am going to guide you. But first you must rest, for you are tired from your long journey."

Then the young man lay down to sleep and the Fox stood guard beside him. As he slept he dreamed. And in his dream he saw his wife pale and thin and worn, and as he looked he heard her singing a song of wonderful melody. Then he heard a waterfall rippling near him and it said, "Seek me, O warrior, and when you find me your wife shall live, for I am the Healing Waters." In the morning the Fox led him but a short distance through the forest and on the branch of a tree he heard a bird singing a song of wonderful melody, just as he

had heard in his dream of the night before. He knew now that this was the bird of the sweet song of which the old woman in the forest had spoken. Then, as he listened, he heard the sound of a waterfall rippling not far away. He searched for it, but he could not find it. And Fox said, "You must seek it; you must not despair; it will not come to you unless you search." So he searched again, and soon he thought he heard a voice speaking beneath his feet. "Release us," it called, "set us free and your wife and your people shall be saved." He seized a sharp stick and dug rapidly into the earth where he had heard the voice. He worked eagerly and quickly, and he had not dug far when the spring gushed forth and boiled upwards carrying to the world its healing power. And the young man knew that at last he had found the cure for his ills. He plunged into the spring and bathed himself in the water, and all his weariness left him and he was strong again.

Then the young man moulded from the soft earth a large pot. He baked it in the fire until it was quite hard. "Now," said the Fox spirit, "I will leave you. Your kindness has been rewarded. You will need me no more, for you have found the Healing Waters." And he disappeared as mysteriously as he had come. The young man filled his clay pot with the sparkling water and hastened back to his home, running through the forest with the speed of the wind, because of his renewed strength.

When he reached his native village, the people met him with sad faces, for the plague was still raging and they told him that his young wife was about to pass to the Land of the Shadows. But he hurried to his home, and he forced some of the Healing Waters between his wife's parched lips, and bathed her hands and her brow until she fell into a deep slumber. He watched by her side until she awoke, and when sleep left her she was well again. Then with his Healing Waters he cured all the people in the village, and the cruel plague left them and there was no more sickness in the land.

And since that time no plague has spread among his tribe. In this way the Mineral Springs, the places of Healing Waters, came upon the earth, bearing health and happiness wherever they rise, and accompanied always by the songs of birds.

The Youth and the Dog-Dance

Once long ago, when the Indians dwelt in the country in the north-west, a youth went far away from his native village to catch birds. His people lived near a lake where only small birds nested, and as he wanted large and bright-coloured feathers for his arrows and his bonnet he had to go far into the forest, where larger birds of brilliant plumage lived. When he reached the Land of Many Feathers far in the north country, he dug a pit on the top of a high hill. Then he covered the pit with poles and over the poles he spread grass and leaves so that the place looked like the earth around it. He put meat and corn on the grass, and tied the food to the poles so that the birds could not carry it away. Then he climbed down into the pit and waited for the birds to come, when he could reach up and catch them by the feet and kill them.

All day long and far into the night the youth waited for birds, but no birds came. Towards morning he heard a distant sound like that of a partridge drumming. But the sound did not come nearer. The next night, as the youth watched and waited in the pit, he heard the same sound, and he said, "I will see where the noise comes from and I will discover the cause, for it is not a partridge, and it is very strange." So he climbed out of the pit and went in the direction of the sound. He walked along rapidly through the forest until he came at dawn to the shore of a large lake. The drumming came from somewhere in the lake, but as he stood listening to it, the sound suddenly stopped. The next night the youth heard the drumming louder than before. Again he went to the lake. The sound was again distinct as it rose from the water, and when

he looked he saw great numbers of birds and animals swimming in the lake in the moonlight. But there was no explanation of the strange sound. As he sat watching the animals and birds, he prayed to his guardian spirit to tell him the cause of the drumming. Soon an old man came along. He was old and bent and wrinkled, but his eyes were kind. The youth gave him some tobacco and they sat down together on the edge of the lake and watched the swimmers in the dim light, and smoked their pipes.

"What are you doing here?" asked the old man. "I am trying to learn the cause of the strange drumming," said the youth. "You do well indeed to seek it," said the old man, "and to seek to know the cause of all things. Only in that way will you be great and wise. But remember there are some things the cause of which you can never find." "Where have you come from?" said the boy. "Oh," said the man, "I lived once upon a time like you in the Country of Fancy where great Dreams dwell, and indeed I live there still, but your dreams are all of the future while mine are of the past. But some day you too will change and your thoughts will be like mine." "Tell me the cause of the drumming," said the boy. And the old man said, "Take this wand that I will give you and wave it before you go to sleep, and maybe you will see strange things." Then he gave the boy a wand and disappeared into the forest and the boy never saw him again. The boy waved the wand and fell asleep on the sand as the old man had told him. When he awoke he found himself in a large room in the midst of many people. Some of them were dancing gracefully, and some sat around and talked. They wore wonderful robes of skins and feathers, of many different colours. The boy wished he could get such feathers for his own clothes and his bonnet. But as he looked at the people he was suddenly aware that they were none other than the animals and birds he had seen for two nights swimming in the lake in the moonlight. They were now changed into human form, through some

strange and miraculous power. They were very kind to the youth and treated him with great courtesy.

At last the dancing ceased and the talking stopped, and one who seemed to be the Chief stood up at the end of the room and said, "Oh, young stranger, the Great Spirit has heard your prayers, and because of your magic wand we have been sent to you in these shapes. The creatures you see here are the animals and birds of the world. I am the Dog, whom the Great Spirit loves well. I have much power, and my power I shall give to you, and I shall always protect you and guard you. And even if you should treat me with cruelty I shall never be unfaithful to you, nor shall I ever be unkind. But you must take this Dance home with you and teach it to your people and they must celebrate the Dance once a year." Then he taught the youth the secrets of their Dance.

When the youth had learned the Dance, the Chief turned to his companions and said, "My comrades and brothers, I have taught the young stranger the secrets of the Dance. I have given him my own power. Will you not have pity on a creature from earth and give him some of the power of which you too are possessed?"

For a long time no one spoke, but at last Owl arose and said, "I too will help him. I have power to see far in the darkness, and to hunt by night. When he goes out at night I will be near him and he shall see a great distance. I give him these feathers to fasten in his hair." And the Owl gave him a bunch of feathers, which the youth tied to his head.

Then Buffalo came forward and said, "I too will help him. I will give him my endurance and my strength, and my power to trample my enemies underfoot. And I give him this belt of tanned buffalo-hide to wear when he goes to war." And he gave the youth a very wondrous belt to fasten around his waist.

The animals and birds, one after the other, gave him gladly of their power. Porcupine gave him quills with which

to decorate his leather belt and his bonnet, and he said, "I too will aid you, and when you make war I will be near you. I can make my enemies as weak as children, and they always flee when I approach, for they fear the shooting of my quills. When you meet your foes you will always overcome them, for I give you power as it was given to me."

And Bear said, "I will give you my toughness and my strength, and a strip of fur for your leather belt and your coat. And when you are in danger, I will not be far away."

Then Deer said, "I give you my swiftness so that you may be fleet of foot. And when you pursue your enemies you will always overtake them, and should you flee from them, you will always out-run them in the race."

Then the birds spoke again, and Crane said, "I give you a bone from my wing to make a war-whistle to frighten your enemies away or to summon your people to your assistance when you need them. And I give you my wings for your head-dress."

The giant Eagle then spoke and said, "Oh, youth, I will be with you wherever you go, and I will give you my strength and my power in war. And even as I do, you will always see your enemies from afar, and you can always escape them if you so desire." And he gave him a large bunch of wonderful eagle feathers to tie in his hair as a token of his fidelity.

And finally, Wild-Cat said, "I give you my power to crawl stealthily through the grass and the underbrush and to spring unexpectedly on your foes and take them unawares. And I give you too my power of hiding from my enemies." And he gave him strips of his fur to decorate his clothing in token of his friendship.

From all the animals and the birds the youth received power and gifts. Then he waved his magic wand and lay down to sleep. When he awoke, he found himself on the shore of the lake, and far in the east the dawn was breaking. But he could see farther than he had ever seen before, and away in

the distance he could make out blue hills and smoke rising from far-off villages. And he knew that strange power was upon him. But not a sound came from the lake, and the drumming had for ever ended.

The youth took his magic wand and his gifts and set out for his home. And he told his people what had happened and he taught them the secrets of the Dance which was to make them strong and victorious in war. And among his people it became a great ceremony and was practised for long ages, and was known as the Dog-Dance. And since that time, the animals and birds have been friends to the Indians, and the Indians have acquired much of their cunning and skill and power. And ever after the night of moonlight by the lake when the youth with the magic wand received the strange gifts, the Indians have decorated their war clothes with fur and quills and feathers from the animals and the birds. And in the far north country, the Dog-Dance is still held at intervals out of gratitude for the gifts, for the Indians do not forget the promise of long ago.

Sparrow's Search for the Rain

Long ago, in a village near the sea, many Indian people were living. Among them was a very nice old warrior who had been given great power at his birth, and who, therefore, could do many wonderful deeds. There was nothing that was beyond his understanding, for he knew all things. His wife had long been dead, but he had one daughter. She was very beautiful and gentle, and she was as nearly perfect as any woman could be. She took no interest in frivolous things and she lived a very quiet life, but all the people liked her well, and she was always welcome wherever she went. Her old father was very proud of her, and he said boastfully, "She has inherited much of my wisdom, and some day she will marry a great man." But the girl on her part had little thought of marriage or of men, for she said they had small minds, and she would rather live alone than listen always to their boastfulness and their foolish chatter.

Soon the daughter's fame spread far and wide through the sea-coast villages, and many suitors came seeking for her hand. But her father said, "I have nothing to say. She will make her own choice. She must please herself. For to-day children please themselves and not their parents." And she said, "I will marry only some one who can amuse me and interest me and keep me company. I have scant liking for dull people." One day Loon came to see her. He was very good looking although he was somewhat tall and skinny, and his neck was a bit longer and more scrawny than ordinary, but he wore good clothes and he had great skill as a fisherman. He came because he thought he was very handsome, and he

believed that his good looks would win the maiden. But she had no love for Loon, for he had not a word to say. When she talked to him he only stared, and at last he burst out into loud and foolish laughter. Then the maiden said, "You have a small mind like the others," and in disgust she withdrew from his presence.

Then Fox came in an effort to win the maiden as his wife. And for a whole day he cut capers, and chased his tail round and round in a circle, trying to amuse the serious girl. But he did not succeed very well, and like Loon he departed in despair. And many others came, but they met the same fate, and at last the girl decided to see no more of them, but to live alone with her father. The young men of the village were all very angry because the girl had spoken of them all so scornfully, and often they talked among themselves of her proud and haughty air. "She calls us Scattered-Brains," said one. "She says we have small minds," said another. "She must pay for these insults," said a third. So they vowed that they would somehow break her proud spirit and bring her sorrow because of her ideas and her decision to stay single all her life. One of the great men of the village was Whirlwind. He could make himself invisible, and he was often guilty of many wicked pranks. So the young men went to him and asked his aid in humbling the pride of the haughty maiden. As they were talking to him, they saw the girl approaching not far off. And quite unawares, Whirlwind rushed towards her and knocked her down in the mud and tore her hat from her head and swept it into the sea. The young men looked on at her plight and they all laughed loudly, and the girl was very much ashamed. She went back home and told her father what had happened, and showed him her soiled clothes and her blown hair falling about her face. Her father was very angry, and he said, "Whirlwind must pay for this. He shall be banished at once."

Then her father went to the Chief and made complaint

against Whirlwind, and the Chief decreed that Whirlwind must leave the village forthwith. He did not consider very carefully what the result of this decree might be, and he acted hastily and without thought, for he feared to differ from the wise man. So Whirlwind prepared to leave the place. Now his best friend was Rain. Rain had been born without eyes. He was black blind, and Whirlwind always had to lead him along wherever he wished to go. So Rain said, "If you are leaving the village, I want to leave it too, for I cannot live here without you. I will be helpless if I have no one to lead me." So the two set out together, Whirlwind leading old Rain along by his side. Where they went no man knew, for they had told nobody of their destination. They were gone for many months before the people missed them very much. Then their absence began to be felt in all the land, for there was no wind and there was no rain.

At last the Chief summoned a council, and the decree of banishment against Whirlwind was revoked. The people decided to send messengers to the two wandering ones to tell them what had happened and to bring them back. So they first sent Fox out on the quest. Fox went through the land for many weeks, running as fast as he could over many roads, in and out among marshy lake shores and over high wooded mountains. He searched every cave and crevice, but he had no success. Not a leaf or a blade of grass was stirring, and the country was all parched and the grass was withered brown and the streams were all getting dry. At last, after a fruitless search, he came home and shamefully confessed that his quest had failed.

Then the people called on Bear to continue the search. And Bear went lumbering over the earth, sniffing the air, and turning over logs and great rocks with his powerful shoulders, and venturing into deep caverns. And he made many inquiries, and he asked the Mountain Ash, "Where is Whirlwind?" But Mountain Ash said, "I do not know. I have not

seen him for many months." And he asked the Red Fir, and the Pine, and the Aspen, which always sees Whirlwind first, but they were all ignorant of his whereabouts. So Bear came home and said, "Not a trace of either of them have I found."

The Chief was very angry because of the failure of Fox and Bear, but the wise man said, "The animals are useless in a quest like this. Let us try the birds. They often succeed where the animals fail." And the Chief agreed, for the land was in great distress. Many fishing-boats lay silent on the sea near the coast unable to move because Whirlwind was away, and the wells and streams were all dry because Rain was absent, and the grass and the flowers were withering to decay. So they called the birds to their aid. The great Crane searched in the shallows and among the reeds, thrusting his long neck into deep places, and Crow looked among the hills, and Kingfisher flew far out to sea, but they all came back and said, "We, too, have failed. The wandering ones are nowhere on the land or upon the sea." Then little Sparrow took up the search. Before he set out, he plucked from his breast a small down-feather and fastened it to a stick no bigger than a wisp of hay. He held the stick in his bill and flew off. For many days he went towards he south-land, all the time watching the feather hanging to the stick in his bill. But it hung there motionless. One day, after he had travelled a great distance, he saw the down-feather moving very gently, and he knew that Whirlwind must be not far away. He went in the direction from which the feather was blowing. Soon he saw beneath him soft green grass and wonderful flowers of varied colours, and trees with green leaves and many rippling streams of running water. And he said to himself, "At last I have found the wanderers." He followed a little stream for some distance until it ended in a cave in the hills. In front of the cave many flowers were blooming and the grass was soft and green, and the tall grasses were nodding their heads very gently. He knew that those he was seeking were inside, and he entered the cave very quietly.

Just beyond the door a fire was smouldering and near it lay Rain and Whirlwind both fast asleep. Sparrow tried to wake them with his bill and his cries, but they were sleeping too soundly. Then he took a coal from the fire and put it on Rain's back, but it spluttered and fizzled and soon went out. He tried another, but the same thing happened. Then he took a third coal, and this time Rain woke up. He was much surprised to hear a stranger in the cave, but he could not see him because he was blind. So he woke up Whirlwind to protect him.

Then Sparrow told them of the great trouble in the north country and of the great hardship and sorrow their absence had brought to the people, and of how sadly they had been missed and of the decision of the council to call them back. And Whirlwind said, "We shall return to-morrow if we are so badly needed. You may go back and tell your people that we are coming. We shall be there the day after you arrive." So Sparrow, feeling very proud of his success, flew back home. But when he arrived after many days, he went first to his own people to tell them the good news. And the Sparrow-people all gathered together and held a feast of celebration, and they twittered and danced and made a great hub-bub in their excitement because Rain was coming back on the morrow. Then Sparrow went to the Chief and said, "Oh, Chief, I have found Rain and Whirlwind and to-morrow they will be here," and he told the story of his flight to the south and of his discovery. And the Chief said, "Because of your success, you will never be hunted for game or killed for food."

The next morning the two travellers who had been so long away came back to the land. Whirlwind came first and great clouds of dust foretold his coming, and the sea dashed high against the rocks, and the trees shrieked and tossed their heads, all dancing gaily because of his return. When Whirlwind had passed by, Rain came along following close, because of his blindness. For several days Rain stayed with the people and the flowers bloomed and the grass was green again and

the wells and streams were no longer dry. And since that time Wind and Rain have never long been absent from the Atlantic Coast. And to this day the Sparrow-people know when Rain is coming, and to signal his approach they gather together and twitter and hop along and make a great hub-hub, just as they did when their ancestor found him by means of his down feather in the olden days. But the Indians have been true to the Chief's promise, and they will not hunt Sparrows for game nor kill them for food or for their feathers. For they remember that of all the birds it was old Sparrow who long ago searched successfully for the Rain.

The Boy in the Land of Shadows

Two orphan children, a boy and a girl, lived alone near the mountains. Their parents had long been dead and the children were left to look after themselves without any kindred upon the earth. The boy hunted all day long and provided much food, and the girl kept the house in order and did the cooking. They had a very deep love for each other and as they grew up they said, "We shall never leave each other. We shall always stay here together." But one year it happened that in the early spring-time it was very cold. The snow lingered on the plains and the ice moved slowly from the rivers and chill winds were always blowing and grey vapours hovered over all the land. And there was very little food to be had, for the animals hid in their warm winter dens and the wild-geese and ducks were still far south. And in this cruel period of bad weather the little girl sickened and died. Her brother worked hard to provide her with nourishing food and he gathered all the medicine roots he thought could bring her relief, but it was all to no purpose. And despite all his efforts, one evening in the twilight his sister went away to the West, leaving him alone behind upon the earth.

The boy was heart-broken because of his sister's death. And when the late spring came and the days grew warm and food was plentiful again, he said, "She must be somewhere in the West, for they say that our people do not really die. I will go and search for her, and perhaps I can find her and bring her back." So one morning he set out on his strange quest. He journeyed many days westward towards the Great Water, killing game for food as he went, and sleeping at night under

the stars. He met many strange people, but he did not tell them the purpose of his travels. At last he came to the shore of the Great Water, and he sat looking towards the sunset wondering what next to do. In the evening an old man came along. "What are you doing here?" asked the man. "I am looking for my sister," said the boy; "some time ago she sickened and died and I am lonely without her, and I want to find her and bring her back." And the man said, "Some time ago she whom you seek passed this way. If you wish to find her you must undertake a dangerous journey." The boy answered that he would gladly risk any dangers to find his sister, and the old man said, "I will help you. Your sister has gone to the Land of Shadows far away in the Country of Silence which lies out yonder in the Island of the Blest. To reach the Island you must sail far into the West, but I warn you that it is a perilous journey, for the crossing is always rough and your boat will be tossed by tempests. But you will be well repaid for your trouble, for in that land nobody is ever hungry or tired; there is no death and no sorrow; there are no tears, and no one ever grows old."

Then the old man gave the boy a large pipe and some tobacco and said, "This will help you in your need." And he brought him to where a small canoe lay dry upon the beach. It was a wonderful canoe, the most beautiful the boy had ever seen. It was cut from a single white stone and it sparkled in the red twilight like a polished jewel. And the old man said, "This canoe will weather all storms. But see that you handle it carefully, and when you come back see that you leave it in the cove where you found it."

Soon afterwards, the boy set out on his journey. The moon was full and the night was cold with stars. He sailed into the West over a rough and angry sea, but he was in no danger, for his canoe rode easily on the waters. All around him he saw in the moonlight many other canoes going in the same direction and all white and shining like his own. But no

one seemed to be guiding them, and although he looked long at them not a person could he make out. He wondered if the canoes were drifting unoccupied, for when he called to them there was no answer. Sometimes a canoe upset in the tossing sea and the waves rose over it and it was seen no more, and the boy often thought he heard an anguished cry. For several days he sailed on to the West, and all the time other canoes were not far away, and all the time some of them were dropping from sight beneath the surging waters, but he saw no people in them.

At last, after a long journey, the sea grew calm and the air was sweet and warm. There was no trace of the storm, for the waves were quiet and the sky was as clear as crystal. He saw that he was near the Island of the Blest of which the old man had spoken, for it was now plain to his view, as it rose above the ocean, topped with green grass and trees, and a snow-white beach. Soon he reached the shore and drew up his canoe. As he turned away he came upon a skeleton lying flat upon the sand. He stopped to look at it, and as he did so, the skeleton sat up and said in great surprise, "You should not be here. Why have you come?" And the boy said, "I seek my sister. In the early springtime she sickened and died, and I am going to the Land of Shadows in the Country of Silence in search of her." "You must go far inland," said the skeleton, "and the way is hard to find for such as you." The boy asked for guidance and the skeleton said, "Let me smoke and I will help you." The boy gave him the pipe and the tobacco he had received from the old man, and he laughed when he saw his strange companion with the pipe between his teeth. The skeleton smoked for some time and at last, as the smoke rose from his pipe, it changed to a flock of little white birds, which flew about like doves. The boy looked on in wonder, and the skeleton said, "These birds will guide you. Follow them." Then he gave back the pipe and stretched out again flat upon the sand, and the boy could not rouse him from his sleep.

The boy followed the little white birds as he had been told. He went along through a land of great beauty where flowers were blooming and countless birds were singing. Not a person did he meet on the way. The place was deserted except for the song-birds and the flowers. He passed through the Country of Silence, and came to a mysterious land where no one dwelt. But although he saw no one he heard many voices and he could not tell whence they came. They seemed to be all around him. At last the birds stopped at the entrance to a great garden, and flew around his head in a circle. They would go no further and they alighted on a tree close by, all except one, which perched on the boy's shoulder. The lad knew that here at last was the Land of Shadows.

When he entered the garden he heard again many low voices. But he saw no one. He saw only many shadows of people on the grass, but he could not see from what the shadows came. He wondered greatly at the strange and unusual sight, for back in his homeland in that time the sunlight made no shadows. He listened again to the voices and he knew now that the shadows were speaking. He wandered about for some time marvelling greatly at the strange place with its weird unearthly beauty. At last he heard a voice which he knew to be his sister's. It was soft and sweet, just as he had known it when they were together on the earth, and it had not changed since she left him. He went to the shadow from which the voice came, and throwing himself on the grass beside it, he said, "I have long sought you, my sister. I have come to take you home. Let me see you as you were when we dwelt together." But his sister said, "You have done wisely to keep me in your memory, and to seek to find me. But here we cannot appear to the people of earth except as shadows. I cannot go back with you, for it is now too late. I have eaten of the food of this land; if you had come before I had eaten, perhaps you could have taken me away. Who knows? But my heart and my voice are unchanged, and I still remember my dear ones,

and with unaltered love I still watch my old home. And although I cannot go to you, you can some day come to me. First you must finish your work on earth. Go back to your home in the Earth Country. You will become a great Chief among your people. Rule wisely and justly and well, and give freely of your food to the poor among the Indians who have not as much as you have. And when your work on earth is done you shall come to me in this Land of Shadows beyond the Country of Silence, and we shall be together again and our youth and strength and beauty will never leave us."

And the boy, wondering greatly and in deep sorrow, said, "Let me stay with you now." But his sister said, "That cannot be." Then she said, "I will give you a Shadow, which you must keep with you as your guardian spirit. And while you have it with you, no harm can come to you, for it will be present only in the Light, and where there is Light there can be no wickedness. But when it disappears you must be on your guard against doing evil, for then there will be darkness, and darkness may lead you to wrong."

So the boy took the Shadow, and said good-bye for a season and set out on his homeward journey. The little white birds, which had waited for him in the trees, guided him back to the beach. His canoe was still there, but the skeleton-man had gone and there was not a trace of him to be found upon the sand. And the Island of the Blest was silent except for the songs of the birds and the ripple of the little streams. The boy embarked in his canoe and sailed towards the east, and as he pushed off from the beach the little white birds left him and disappeared in the air. The sea was now calm and there was no storm, as there had been on his outward journey. Soon he reached the shore on the other side. He left his canoe in the cove as the old man had told him, and in a few days he arrived at his home, still bearing the Shadow from the Country of Silence.

He worked hard for many years but he did no evil, and in

the end he became a great Chief and did much good for his people. He ruled wisely and justly and well, as his sister had commanded him. Then one day, when he was old and his work was done, he disappeared, and his people knew that he had gone to join his sister in the Land of Shadows in the Country of Silence far away somewhere in the West. But he left behind him the Shadow his sister had given him; and while there is Light the Indians still have their Shadow and no harm can come to them, for where there is Light there can be no evil.

But always in the late autumn the Shadows of the Indian brother and sister in the Country of Silence are lonely for their former life. And they think of their living friends and of the places of their youth, and they wish once more to follow the hunt, for they know that the hunter's moon is shining. And when their memory dwells with longing on their earlier days, their spirits are allowed to come back to earth for a brief season from the Land of Shadows. Then the winds are silent and the days are very still, and the smoke of their camp fires appears like haze upon the air. And men call this season Indian Summer, but it is really but a Shadow of the golden summer that has gone. And it always is a reminder to the Indians that in the Land of Shadows, far away in the Country of Silence in the West, there are no dead.

Star-Boy and the Sun Dance

Once long ago when the Blackfeet Indians dwelt on the Canadian prairies, it happened that a band of the people were camped near the mountains. It was spring-time, and the warm winds blew over the prairies laden with the scent of wild flowers. One hot cloudless night two girls slept in the long prairie grass beside their tents with no covering but the sky. The elder awoke before dawn and saw the Morning Star just rising. Very beautiful and bright he looked in the clear morning air, with no smoke or dust to hide him. The girl looked long at the Star, and she had strange fancies, and imagined that he was her lover. At last she called her sister and said, "Look at the Morning Star. He is bright and wise. I love only the Morning Star for he is more beautiful than man."

One day in the autumn when the flowers were faded and the grass was yellow with age and the cool winds blew over the prairie and the birds were flying south, as the girl was returning home from a long walk she met a young man on the trail. In his hair was a yellow plume, and in his hand a small shrub with a big spider-web hanging to it. He was very beautiful, and he wore fine clothes of soft skins, and the odour of his dress was that of the sweet-grass and the pine. As the girl drew aside from the trail to pass, he put forth his hand and stopped her. "Stand aside," she said, "and let me pass." But he answered, "I am the Morning Star. One night in spring when the flowers were blooming, I saw you sleeping in the long grass outside your tent, and I loved you. I heard you say you loved only me, and now I have come to ask you to come

with me to the sky to the home of my father, the Sun, where we shall live together and you will have no more troubles nor cares. It is the Land of Little People, the Land of the Ever-Young, where all are happy like children, and no one ever grows old." Then the girl remembered the hot cloudless night in the spring-time when she slept in the tall grass, and she knew now that Morning Star was to be her husband.

And she said, "I must first say good-bye to my father and mother." But Morning Star said, "There must be no leave-taking," and he would not let her go home. He fastened his yellow plume in her hair, and gave her the shrub to hold. He told her to place her feet upon the lowest strand of the spider's web and to hold the uppermost strand in her hands. Then he told her to shut her eyes. After a brief time when he asked her to open her eyes, they were in the sky. They passed on to a large tent. Morning Star said, "This is the home of my father and mother, the Sun and the Moon," and he asked her to enter. As it was day, the Sun was away on his long journey, but the Moon was at home and she welcomed the girl as her son's bride. And the girl lived happy in the Star country with her husband, and she learned many wonderful things. Not far from her home, near the tent of the Spider Man who weaved webs, a large turnip was growing about which she wondered greatly. But the Moon seeing her wonder said, "You may dig any roots that grow in the sky, but I warn you not to dig up the large turnip. If you do, unhappiness will follow you."

After a time a son was born to the girl, and everywhere the girl went she carried the child. She called him Star-Boy. She often saw the large turnip near the tent of the Spider Man who weaved webs, but mindful of the Moon's warning, she was afraid to touch it. One day, however, her wonder overcame her, and she decided to see what was underneath the turnip. She tried to pull it up but it stuck fast, and she was unable to move it. Then two large cranes, flying from the east, came to her aid, and catching the turnip with their long bills

they moved it from side to side, loosened it, and pulled it up. The girl looked through the hole, and saw the earth far beneath her. It was the same hole through which Morning Star had brought her to the sky. She looked long through the hole, and she saw the camps of her people, the Blackfeet, on the plains far below. What she saw was well known to her. It was summer on the prairies. The men were playing games; the women were tanning skins or gathering berries on the rolling hills. She grew very lonely as she watched, for she wanted to be back on the green prairies with her own people, and when she turned away to go home she was crying bitterly.

When she reached home, Morning Star and his Mother the Moon were waiting for her. Morning Star at once knew from her face what had happened, and he said, "You have pulled up the sacred turnip." When she did not answer, the Moon said, "I warned you not to dig it up, because I love Star-Boy and I do not wish to part with him." It was day, and the Sun was away on his long journey. When he came home in the evening, he asked what was the matter with his daughter for she looked sad and troubled. And the girl answered that she was lonely because she had looked down that day upon her people on the plains. Then the Sun was very angry, and said to Morning Star, "If she has disobeyed, she must go back to her people. She cannot live here." Morning Star and the Moon pleaded with the Sun to let her remain, but the Sun said that it was better that she should go back to the prairies, for she would no longer be happy in the sky.

Then Morning Star led the girl to the house of the Spider Man who had weaved the web that had drawn her up to the sky. He placed Star-Boy on her breast, and wrapped around them both a bright robe. Then he bade them farewell, saying, "We will let you down where your people on the plains can see you as you fall." Then the Spider Man with his web let her down as she had come, through the hole in the sky.

It was a hot still evening in midsummer when the girl

returned to her people. Many of the people were outside their tents, and they saw a bright light in the northern sky. They watched it slowly drop until it reached the ground. They thought it was a shooting star. They ran to the place where the bright light fell, and there they found a strange bundle, inside of which were the woman and her child. Her parents knew her, and she returned with them to their home and lived with them. But she was never happy. Often she took Star-Boy to the top of a high hill in the west, where she sat and mourned for her home in the sky. And daily she watched Morning Star rise from the plains. Once she begged him to take her back to the country of the stars, but he answered, "You disobeyed, and therefore I cannot take you back. Your sin is the cause of your sorrow, and it has brought great trouble to you and your people."

So the Star-woman lived alone and unhappy upon the earth because she had disobeyed. After a time she died, and her son, Star-Boy, was left alone. Although born in the home of the Sun, he was very poor. He had little of the world's goods, and but few clothes to wear. He was so timid that he never played with other children, and he lived much by himself. On his face was a strange scar which became more marked as he grew older. Because of this and his shy and timid ways, he was laughed at by everybody; other boys stoned him and abused him and called him Scarface.

When Star-Boy became a man he loved a girl of his own people. She was very beautiful, and many young men wanted to marry her, but she refused them all. She told Star-Boy that she would not marry him until he removed the strange scar from his face. He was much troubled by this answer and he talked about it to an old medicine-woman who knew many things. The medicine-woman told him that the scar had been placed on his face by the Sun and that only the Sun himself could take it off. So he decided to go to the home of the Sun.

He went across the prairies and over the mountains for

many days, meeting many dangers and suffering great hardships. At last he came to the Great Water in the West—the Pacific Ocean. For three days and nights he lay on the sand fasting and praying to the Sun God. On the evening of the fourth day he saw a bright trail leading across the water to the west. He ran along this path across the water until he came at last to the home of the Sun, where he hid himself and waited. Early next morning the Sun came out of his tent, ready for his day's journey. He saw Star-Boy, but he did not know him, for Star-Boy had grown since he left the country of the stars. The Sun was angry when he saw a creature from earth, and calling his wife, the Moon, he said, "We will kill him, for he comes from a good-for-nothing race." But the Moon, being kind, prevented it and saved the boy's life. Then Morning Star, the boy's father, handsome and bright, came from his tent. He recognized his child. And, after the usual fashion in the sky, he brought dried sweet-grass and burned it so that the smoke curled around the boy and cleansed him from the dust of the earth. Then he brought him to his father and mother, the Sun and the Moon, and told them who the boy was. And Star-Boy told his story of his long journey, and of the marriage refusal of the girl he loved because of the scar on his face. And they took pity on him, and promised to help him.

Star-Boy lived in the home of the Sun and Moon with Morning Star. Once he went hunting and killed seven large birds which had threatened the life of his father. He gave four of the dead birds to the Sun and three to the Moon. And the Sun, glad to be rid of these pests, resolved to pay him well for his work. As a reward, he took the scar from his face, as the medicine-woman had said. And he made him his messenger to the Blackfeet people on the Canadian plains, and promised that if they would give a festival in his honour once a year, he would heal their sick. The festival was to be known as the Sun Dance. He taught Star-Boy the secrets of the dance and the

songs to be used in it, so that he could tell his people. And he gave him two raven feathers to wear, as a sign that he came from the Sun, and a very wonderful robe. And he gave him a magic flute and a wonderful song, with which he could charm the heart of the girl he loved.

So Star-Boy returned to his people, the Blackfeet of the plains, running along by the Milky Way, the short, bright path to the earth. When he had taught them the secret of the Sun Dance, he married the girl he loved, and the Sun took them back to live with him in the sky. And he made him bright and beautiful, just like his father Morning Star, and gave him work to do. Sometimes the father and son can be seen together in the sky; the people of earth sometimes call the father Venus, and the son Jupiter, but Indians call them Morning Star and Little Morning Star. And since that time, once a year, the Blackfeet of the plains hold the Sun Dance that their sick may all be healed, as it was promised to Star-Boy by the Sun God in the old days.

The Boy and the Dancing Fairy

Long ago two Indian boys lived in the Canadian forest with their parents. One boy was much older and larger and stronger than the other. He forced his little brother to do all the hard work about the place. He stole from him all the good things his parents gave him and often he beat him until he cried with pain. If the little boy told his parents of his brother's cruelty, his brother beat him all the harder, and the little boy found that it was more to his comfort not to complain. But at last he could stand the cruelty no longer, and he decided to run away from home. So one morning he took his bow and arrows and an extra pair of moccasins, and set out alone to seek his fortune and to find a kinder world.

Although the boy was small and young, he could run very fast. He could run so fast that when he shot an arrow from his bow, he could outstrip the arrow in its flight. So he ran along very quickly, and when night came on he was very far from home. He was lonely too, for he thought of the bright warm camp fires in the twilight at home, and of his father and mother, and he wished he was back again in his own soft bed. He was frightened too by the strange noises, and every sound startled him. At last when he was about to cry in his loneliness, an old man came along. The man was very old but he had a kindly face, all wrinkled and weather-beaten, and twinkling eyes that told of a merry heart. "Hello," he said to the boy, "where are you from, and where are you going?" "I have come a long way," said the boy, "and I am very tired and lonesome and far from home, and I don't know where I am going. I am looking for a pleasant land." "You look like a good

boy," said the old man; "you say you have come a long way, but I have come much farther than you, and from a very pleasant place. When I began my journey I was young like you. I have never stopped, and now you see that I am very old and bent and wrinkled, while there is not a line in your face. I have travelled a very long road, the road of Long Life." Then the boy said, "I want to go to the place you came from since it is pleasant." But the old man answered, "You can never reach it; it is the Land of Youth; the Childhood Land, men call it, and those who leave it never go back. It is a land of wonderful sights and sounds and dreams. It can be reached only from the road on the other side; you have passed that road and it is too late for you now to go back to it." Then they were silent for a long time, and the boy looked at the old man and wondered. He saw that the old man's shoes were worn out from his long journey and that his feet were sore and weary. So he gave him the extra pair of moccasins he carried. The old man was very thankful. He gave the boy a little box he had in his pocket and he said, "Take this box; you will find it will help you in times of need, and it will be useful to you in your travels. I am near the end of my journey, and I shall need it no more. You have a long journey before you." The boy put the box in his pocket and lay down to sleep. Then the old man went on his way, and the boy never saw him again.

The next morning, before the boy began his day's journey, he wondered what was in the box the old man had given him. He took it out and opened it. Inside was a little man no bigger than his own thumb, dancing as hard as he could. As soon as the cover was opened and light entered the box, the little man stopped dancing and called to the boy, "What do you want?" The boy knew then that the old man had given him a little fairy to help him in his need. He closed the box and answered, "I wish to be carried far away to a beautiful land where I can get a lovely girl for a comrade, for I am very lonely." At once darkness came upon him and he slept. When he awoke he

found he had been asleep but a few seconds, but he was now in a large village in a beautiful land. It was a land of trees and flowers and wonderful streams, where many birds were singing. He came to a house on the border of the village and entered it. Inside was a very old woman; she was the only person in the house. When she saw the boy, she began to cry. He asked her why she was weeping. She answered, "I know why you have come here. I knew from a dream that you were coming. You have come to seek a very lovely girl as your wife and comrade. She lives in the village. Her father is very rich. He is a great Chief. He asks that each man who seeks to win his daughter must do very hard and dangerous and impossible tasks. If they fail they are put to death. The girl has had many suitors, but all have failed to do her father's tasks and all have been killed. You too will fail and you will surely die." Then the old woman cried louder than before. But the boy said, "I can do any task he sets for me. He cannot kill me." For the boy knew that the dancing fairy would save him.

Soon the boy went to the Chief's house to ask him for his lovely daughter. The Chief told him the conditions on which she could be won. He said that all her suitors had to try to do hard tasks. If they failed they were put to death; the suitor who succeeded should win his daughter. The boy agreed to do as he wished. The Chief said, "The mountain before my house keeps me from seeing the sun in the mornings. You must take it away before you can win my daughter. If you fail you shall be put to death." The boy said he would take away the mountain that night, but the Chief did not think he could do it.

That night when all the village was asleep the boy went to the foot of the mountain. It was a high granite hill, with great trees growing on its top. The boy took out his box and opened it. The little fairy was dancing as hard as he could, but when he saw the light he stopped and said, "What do you want?" And the boy said, "I want you to take away this

mountain before morning." "It shall be done," said the little man. Then the boy closed the box and lay down and went to sleep. He slept soundly all night. When he awoke in the early morning the mountain was gone. All around was only a level meadow. The sun was still low in the eastern sky, but all the village could see it. When the Chief awoke, he wondered greatly. He thought he had lost his daughter at last. But he decided to set another hard task for the boy to do.

Soon the boy went to the Chief to claim his bride. But the Chief said, "You must do another task for me. Not far away there is a village where my enemies live. They have caused me great trouble. You must destroy the village and drive all the people away before you can win my daughter. If you fail to do it to-night, you shall be put to death tomorrow." The boy agreed to do as he wished. And the Chief thought the boy would surely be killed in making the attempt.

That night the boy set out for the distant village. He ran very fast and soon reached the border of it. Then he took out his box and opened it. The fairy stopped dancing and said, "What do you want?" "I want you to destroy this village to-night and drive all the people away," said the boy. "It shall be done," said the fairy. Then the boy closed the box and went to sleep under a tree. He slept soundly all night. In the morning when he awoke, there was no village in sight. All around him was silence; not a sound of life came to him but the sounds of the forest; the village had been destroyed in the night and all its people were now far away. Then the boy went back and told the Chief that he had done the deed. The Chief sent a messenger to see if the boy spoke the truth, and the messenger came back and said that the task had been done. Then the Chief knew that he was beaten. He knew that the boy had very great power which he could not understand, and he said, "You may take my lovely daughter." So the boy took the girl as his wife and comrade. The Chief gave them a great lodge to live in and servants to wait on them, and they were

very happy.

But their happiness was soon ended for a time. One day the boy went away with many others to hunt far in the forest. He put on a hunting suit, but he forgot to take his magic box along with him. He left it behind in the pocket of his coat. In the house was a wicked servant who wanted the boy's possessions for himself. One day he had seen his master opening the box and talking to it. He wondered what his master meant and what was in the box. When his master had gone hunting, the servant went to hang up his clothes. He found the box in the coat pocket. He took it out and opened it. Inside, the little man was dancing as hard as he could. When he saw the light, he stopped and said, "What do you want?" The servant knew that at last he had found the secret of his master's power. "What do you want me to do?" repeated the little man. The manservant said, "I want you at once to remove this house and all it contains to some place far away." Then he closed the box. At once there was darkness, and when light came again in a few seconds, the house and all in it were far away in the depths of the forest. The servant was very pleased.

Soon the hunters came back. They had taken much game. When the boy came to where his home had been, he found that his house was gone, and his wife and servants and all his possessions were gone with it. He knew at once what had happened. But he knew how to overcome his wicked servant. He took a magic bow and arrow that his mother had given him before he left his old home long before. Then he went out and shot his arrow into the woods. He ran as fast as he could, following the arrow. He ran so fast that he could follow it in its flight. And he kept under the arrow as it sped on and on. When the arrow dropped far in the forest, the boy stopped. Not far in front of him he saw his own house. He hid among the trees until night came. Then he crept softly to the house. There was not a sound. Everyone was asleep. He went in, and there, sure enough, was his coat hanging on a peg. He slipped

it on, and in the pocket he found the magic box. He opened it, and there was the little man dancing as hard as he could. When the cover was lifted, the little man stopped and said, "What do you want?" The boy said, "I want you at once to take this house and all it contains back to the village where it was before." The little man said, "It shall be done." Then the boy went to sleep. He awoke in the morning before the others were up, and sure enough the house was back in the village. Then the boy asked the little man in the box to punish the wicked servant. And the servant was sent far away to be a wanderer on the face of the earth; and he wanders about to this day, and he is always looking for something that never comes, and he has always beautiful dreams that never come true.

After that, the boy and his wife lived happily. The boy never again left the box behind him; he kept it always with him. And when he wanted anything, the little fairy always brought it to him. Soon the old Chief died, and the boy became Chief in his place. He travelled the road of Long Life over which the wrinkled old man had come. When he grew old, he asked the fairy in the box to bring him back to the Land of Youth, but that was the one thing the dancing fairy could not do. So at the end of the long road the old man disappeared over the hill and left his box behind him with the great deeds it had done.

Glooskap's Country

In far back times many centuries before the white men came from Europe to live in the New World, Eastern Canada was inhabited by Indians. They were a mighty race, great in size and strong in battle. Their descendants live in certain of these parts still, dwelling in settlements of their own apart from the white folk. You may still see them in their strange tents or wigwams, making arrows and baskets and garden-seats. Some of them are still fleet of foot and can run many miles without tiring. But their real greatness has long since gone. They have grown smaller in size, and they are no longer powerful as in the old days. In early times they were called the Children of Light, for of all the people in America they dwelt nearest to the sun-rise. Their great lord and creator was Glooskap. Where he was himself born, and when, no man knows. From the place of his birth he sailed across the sea in a great stone canoe to the part of America nearest to the rising sun. He landed on the eastern shores of Canada. Far out he anchored his canoe and it was so large that it became an island, and great trees grew upon it. When he needed it, it was always ready to do his bidding, but it always became an island when it was not in use. On the shore of the Atlantic Ocean, Glooskap dwelt many years—ages and ages—until one day he sailed away to the hunting grounds of his fathers far over the sea.

About Glooskap's work many strange tales are told. From his birth and throughout his long life his deeds were very wonderful. He was one of twin brothers, the other being Wolf the son of Wickedness. Glooskap was the son of Goodness.

Their mother died at their birth and the two children were left alone. Both had magic power which could keep them from harm, and death could not come to them except in one way. Glooskap could be killed only by a flowering rush, and Wolf only by a fern root; and each alone knew the secret of his own death. Now it was known before Glooskap's birth that he should become the Lord of the Land of the Rising Sun in Canada. But Beaver and Squirrel who were great in those days—and even before his coming—were jealous of his power when he arrived, for they themselves wished to rule the land. They tempted Wolf to kill his brother, and he being the son of Wickedness would have been glad of the chance, but he did not know the secret of his brother's death. One night of bright starlight, Beaver hiding stealthily among the trees as was his custom, heard Glooskap boasting to the stars about his charmed life; he could trust the stars, and he told them that he could be killed only by means of a flowering rush. Then Beaver hurried away to Wolf; he told him that he knew the secret of Glooskap's death and that he would tell it if Wolf would give him what he wished. To this Wolf agreed and Beaver told him what he had heard Glooskap say to the stars. "What do you want in return for the secret?" asked Wolf. "Wings like a pigeon," answered Beaver. But Wolf said, "You have a tail like a file; what could you do with wings like a pigeon?" And he laughed at him scornfully and would not grant him his wish as he had promised. Thereupon Beaver was very cross and resolved to have vengeance on Wolf. He went quickly to Glooskap and told him that Wolf knew the secret of his death and that he had better be on his guard. The next night Glooskap hid himself among the trees near to Wolf's tent. He heard Wolf boasting to the stars about his charmed life, and telling them the secret of his death,—that he could be killed only by a fern root. And Glooskap, fearing for his own life, for he had no faith in the love of Wolf the son of Wickedness, at once slew his brother with a fern root. Then

he changed him into a mountain, where he sleeps to this day like a huge hill. Glooskap then ruled the country alone. But soon he grew lonely without companions and he decided to people his land. He first made the Fairies and the Elves, and sent them to dwell in the meadows and tiny streams and among the hills and caves. Then he took his bow and arrows, and for many days he shot at the ash trees in the forest. And out of the bark of the trees at which he shot there came first men whom he called Indians, the Children of Light. Then came the animals—all that had not before lived in his land—and the birds of the air and the fish of the sea, and he gave them each a name. At first all the animals were very large, so large that the head of the deer could touch the tops of the tallest pines. Even Squirrel could tear down the largest trees in the forest. One day Glooskap called all the animals to him to learn if they were friendly to his people. And he said to Bear, "What would you do if you should meet a man?" And Bear answered, "I should eat him up." And Glooskap sent Bear away to the Northland, far from the dwellings of men, to live on fish from the frozen sea. And he said to Squirrel, "What would you do if you should meet a man?" And Squirrel answered, "I should tear down trees on his head." And Glooskap, fearing for his men because of the strength of the animals, decided to make the animals smaller. So he took Squirrel and smoothed his back with his hand for a whole day, until he became very small as he is now, and he made him carry his tail on his back that he might thereby use up some of his strength; but Squirrel still scratches as in the old days.

Glooskap made all the animals smaller and weaker than they were when they were first created. He gave his people power over them, so that the greatest and strongest of all his creatures was man. The animals became his friends and the friends of his people; they could talk like men and they often spoke to them, and they were eager to obey Glooskap and to help him in his work. Two great wolves became his dogs; he

could change their size and make them kind or cruel as he willed. They guarded his tent by day and night and always followed him about, even swimming behind him when he went far away over the sea. The Loons of the beach became his messengers, and one of them—old Tatler—became his chief tale-bearer. They always brought him news from other lands over the water and they also kept him well informed about the deeds of his own people, telling him who were good and who were evil. Fox too brought him tales from places deep in the forest, and was one of his most trusted friends. The Rabbits became the guides of men; one of them—old Bunny—was his scout of the woods, and those who followed him never lost their way. The Partridge built boats for men and animals, until because of the bird's stupidity, Glooskap took away his power. The Whale became his carrier, and old Blob the whale came quickly to his call and carried him on her back when he wished to go far over the sea. The Great Eagle made the winds for him; when she moved her wings the winds blew; she could make them great or gentle as Glooskap commanded, and when Glooskap tied her wings, the winds were still. Each animal and bird had special work to do.

Glooskap's only enemies were Beaver and Badger and Bull Frog. These always plotted against him and tried to destroy his power by stirring up strife among his people.

At last he could be patient with them no longer, and he resolved to drive Beaver away. One day when Beaver watched him from a distance, Glooskap scooped up great handfuls of earth and stones and threw them in anger at his enemy, and Beaver in great fear because of Glooskap's great power, fled far away. The earth that Glooskap threw fell into the ocean and became islands. The spot from which Glooskap had taken the earth became a beautiful bay. To the shores of this bay Glooskap moved his tent, and lived there until he left the earth. When Beaver went away, he built a dam from a high place on the south to the shore on the north, and he thought

to live there in comfort. But the dam caused the high tides of the sea to overflow the valley, and it was a constant source of trouble and fear to the people who lived near it. Thereupon Glooskap in anger one day broke the dam and pushed part of it out into the sea. The broken part which he moved out became a cape stretching into the ocean, and there you may see it to this day. Then Beaver, knowing that Glooskap was more powerful than he, troubled him openly no more, but frequently by stealth he tried to do him harm.

When Bull Frog was first created, he was given power over all the fresh-water streams in the land. He dwelt in the stream from which Glooskap's people took water for their use—for drinking and cooking. But he too proved false to Glooskap, and grew vain of his own great power. Once, that he might show his skill and win a great reputation among men, he dried up the water in the stream until only the mud remained. The people thirsted without fresh water, and were much distressed, and at last they complained to Glooskap. Glooskap told them not to worry, for he would soon set things right. That he might make sure of Bull Frog's treachery he went himself to the bank of the stream, and there he asked a boy to bring him water to drink. The boy searched for water for a whole day, while Glooskap sat on a log and silently smoked his pipe. At last the boy came back bringing only a small cup, no larger than a thimble, filled with dirty water, and said it was all the water he could get.

Glooskap knew then that his people had told him the truth about Bull Frog's wickedness. In great anger he went himself to the mud where Bull Frog dwelt and asked for water. But Bull Frog stubbornly refused to let the water come forth. Then Glooskap grasped Bull Frog with a mighty grip and squeezed him tight until he crumpled his back and made him soft. With great force he hurled him far out into the mud, and said, "Henceforth you shall live in dirty water; and you shall always croak with a dry throat, as a punishment for your sins."

Then with his own magic power he brought forth water so that the stream flowed again, and the people all rejoiced. He promised that never again should any creature have power to dry up the streams. And since that time Bull Frog has lived in muddy pools; he still croaks, for his throat is always dry, and to this day his back is wrinkled and crumpled and bears the marks of Glooskap's mighty fingers. And since that day the supply of clear fresh water has never failed in the country and the streams have never dried up.

Glooskap was always kind to his people. He taught the men how to hunt and how to build huts and canoes. He taught them what plants were good to eat, and he told them the names of all the stars. But he did not dwell among his men. He dwelt apart from them in a great tent, but when they sought him they always found him. He never married as they did. There dwelt with him as his housekeeper a very wise old woman; her name was Dame Bear, but Glooskap called her always "grandmother." With him too there lived a little boy whom Glooskap always called "little brother." And Glooskap gave him a magic root from the forest by the use of which he could change his shape into various forms. Whether or not Dame Bear was really his grandmother or the little boy his brother, no man knows. But both lived with him until his death.

Glooskap and Dame Bear and the little boy lived together for many ages. Glooskap had a magic belt which gave him power over sickness and hunger and danger and death. And anyone on whom it was placed was given the same strange power. And while Glooskap was with them, his people lived very happily. They never wanted for food or clothing. For Glooskap was kind to his people and wished them to be contented and at peace.

How Summer Came to Canada

Once during Glooskap's lifetime and reign in Canada it grew very cold. Everywhere there was snow and ice, and in all the land there was not a flower nor a leaf left alive. The fires that the Indians built could not bring warmth. The food supply was slowly eaten up, and the people were unable to grow more corn because of the hard frozen ground. Great numbers of men and women and children died daily from cold and hunger, and it seemed as if the whole land must soon perish.

Over this extreme cold Glooskap had no power. He tried all his magic, but it was of no avail. For the cold was caused by a powerful giant who came into the land from the far North, bringing Famine and Death as his helpers. Even with his breath he could blight and wither the trees, so that they brought forth no leaves nor fruit; and he could destroy the corn and kill man and beast. The giant's name was Winter. He was very old and very strong, and he had ruled in the far North long before the coming of man. Glooskap, being brave and wishing to help his people in their need, went alone to the giant's tent to try to coax or bribe or force him to go away. But even he, with all his magic power, at once fell in love with the giant's home; for in the sunlight it sparkled like crystal and was of many wonderful colours, but in the night under the moonlight it was spotlessly white. From the tent, when Glooskap looked out, the face of the earth was beautiful. The trees had a covering of snow that gave them strange fantastic shapes. The sky was filled by night with flashing quivering lights, and even the stars had a new brightness. The forest,

too, was full of mysterious noises. Glooskap soon forgot his people amid his new surroundings. The giant told him tales of olden times when all the land was silent and white and beautiful like his sparkling tent. After a time the giant used his charm of slumber and inaction, until Glooskap fell asleep, for the charm was the charm of the Frost. For six months he slept like a bear. Then he awoke, for he was very strong and Winter could not kill him even in his sleep. But when he arose he was hungry and very tired.

One day soon after he awoke, his tale-bearer, Tatler the Loon, brought him good news. He told of a wonderful Southland, far away, where it was always warm, and where lived a Queen who could easily overcome the giant; indeed, she was the only one on earth whose power the giant feared. Loon described carefully the road to the new country. Glooskap, to save his people from Winter and Famine and Death, decided to go to the Southland and find the Queen. So he went to the sea, miles away, and sang the magic song that the whales obeyed. His old friend Blob the Whale came quickly to his call, and getting on her back he sailed away. Now, the whale always had a strange law for travellers. She said to Glooskap: "You must shut your eyes tight while I carry you; to open them is dangerous, for, if you do, I will surely go aground on a reef or a sand bar and cannot get off, and you may then be drowned." And Glooskap promised to keep his eyes shut. Many days the whale swam, and each day the water grew warmer, and the air grew gentler and sweeter, for it came from spicy shores; and the smells were no longer those of the salt sea, but of fruits and flowers and pines. Soon they saw in the sky by night the Southern Cross. They found, too, that they were no longer in the deep sea, but in shallow water flowing warm over yellow sands, and that land lay not far ahead. Blob the Whale now swam more cautiously. Down in the sand the clams were singing a song of warning, telling travellers in these strange waters of the treacherous sand bar beneath.

"Oh, big whale," they sang, "keep out to sea, for the water here is shallow and you shall come to grief if you keep on to shore." But the whale did not understand the language of the little clams. And he said to Glooskap, who understood, "What do they sing?" But Glooskap, wishing to land at once, answered, "They tell you to hurry for a storm is coming,—to hurry along as fast as you can." Then the whale hurried until she was soon close to the land.

Glooskap, wishing the whale to go aground so that he could more easily walk ashore, opened his left eye and peeped, which was contrary to the whale's laws. And at once the whale stuck hard and fast on the beach, so that Glooskap, springing from her head, walked ashore on dry land. The whale, thinking that she could never get off, was very angry, and sang a song of lament and blame. But Glooskap put one end of his strong bow against the whale's jaw, and taking the other end in his hands, he placed his feet against the high bank, and, with a mighty push, he sent old Blob again into the deep water. Then, to keep the whale's friendship, he threw her an old pipe and a bag of Indian tobacco leaves—for Glooskap was a great smoker—and the whale, greatly pleased with the gift, lighted the pipe and smoking it swam far out to sea. Glooskap watched her disappear from view until he could see only clouds of her smoke against the sky. And to this day the whale has Glooskap's old pipe, and sailors often see her rise to the surface to smoke it in peace and to blow rings of tobacco smoke into the air.

When the whale had gone, Glooskap walked with great strides far inland. Soon he found the way of which Loon had told him. It was the Rainbow Road that led to the Wilderness of Flowers; it lay through the land of the Sunrise, beautiful and fresh in the morning light. On each side were sweet magnolias and palms, and all kinds of trees and flowers. The grass was soft and velvety, for by night the dew was always on it; and snow and hail were unknown, and winds never blew

coldly, for here the charm of the Frost had no power.

Glooskap went quickly along the flower-lined Rainbow Road, until he came to an orange grove where the air was sweet with the scent of blossoms. Soon he heard sounds of music. He peered through the trees, and saw that the sounds came from an open space not far ahead, where the grass was soft and where tiny streams were flowing and making melody. It was lilac-time in the land, and around the open space all kinds of flowers in the world were blooming. On the trees numberless birds were singing—birds of wonderfully coloured feathers such as Glooskap had never heard or seen before. He knew that he had reached at last the Wilderness of Flowers, of which old Tatler the Loon had spoken. He drew deep breaths of honeysuckle and heliotrope and countless other flowers, until he soon grew strong again after his long voyage.

Then he crept close to the edge of the open space and looked in from behind the trees. On the flower-covered grass within, many fair maidens were singing and dancing, holding in their hands chains of blossoms, like children in a Maypole game. In the centre of the group was one fairer than all the others—the most beautiful creature he had ever seen,—her long brown hair crowned with flowers and her arms filled with blossoms. For some time Glooskap gazed in silence, for he was too surprised to move or to utter speech. Then he saw at his side an old woman—wrinkled and faded, but still beautiful—like himself watching the dance. He found his voice and asked, "Who are those maidens in the Wilderness of Flowers?" And the old woman answered, "The maiden in the centre of the group is the Fairy Queen; her name is Summer; she is the daughter of the rosy Dawn,—the most beautiful ever born; the maidens dancing with her are her children, the Fairies of Light and Sunshine and Flowers."

Glooskap knew that here at last was the Queen who by her charms could melt old Winter's heart and force him to go away, for she was very beautiful and good. With his magic

song he lured her from her children into the dark forest; there he seized her and held her fast by a crafty trick. Then, with her as a companion, he began his long return journey north by land. That he might know the way back to the Wilderness of Flowers, he cut a large moose hide, which he always carried, into a long slender cord, and as he ran north with Summer, he let the cord unwind behind him, for he had no time to mark the trail in the usual way. When they had gone, Summers children mourned greatly for their Queen. For weeks the tears ran down their cheeks like rain on all the land, and for a long time, old Dawn, the Queen's mother, covered herself with dark mourning clouds and refused to be bright.

After many days, still holding Summer in his bosom—for she loved him because of his magic power—Glooskap reached the Northland. He found none of his people, for they were all asleep under the giant's power, and the whole country was cold and lonely. At last he came to the home of old Winter. The giant welcomed him and the beautiful girl, for he hoped to freeze them both and keep them with him always. For some time they talked together in the tent, but, although he tried hard, the giant was unable to put them to sleep. Soon old Winter felt that his power had vanished and that the charm of the Frost was broken. Large drops of sweat ran down his face; then his tent slowly disappeared, and he was left homeless. Summer used her strange power until everything that Winter had put to sleep awoke again. Buds came again upon the trees; the snow ran down the rivers, carrying away the dead leaves; and the grass and the corn sprang up with new life. And old Winter, being sorrowful, wept, for he knew that his reign was ended, and his tears were like cold rain. Summer, the Queen, seeing him mourn and wishing to stop his tears, said: "I have proved that I am more powerful than you; I give you now all the country to the far north for your own, and there I shall never disturb you; you may come back to

Glooskap's country six months of every year and reign as of old, but you will be less severe; during the other six months, I myself will come from the south and rule the land." Old Winter could do nothing but accept this offer gracefully, for he feared that if he did not he would melt entirely away. So he built a new home farther north, and there he reigns without interruption. In the late autumn he comes back to Glooskap's country and reigns for six months, but his rule is softer than in olden times. And when he comes, Summer, following Glooskap's moose-hide cord, runs home with her birds to the Wilderness of Flowers. But at the end of six months she always comes back to drive old Winter away to his own land, to awaken the northern world, and to bring it the joys that only she, the Queen, can give. And so, in Glooskap's old country Winter and Summer, the hoary old giant and the beautiful Fairy Queen, divide the rule of the land between them.

Glooskap and the Fairy

One day Glooskap was in his tent with his old Grandmother. They heard a great noise. "A very big man is coming," said Glooskap, "I hear his footsteps." Time passed but no one came. Soon they heard a great noise again. "He must be a very big man," said Glooskap; "the earth is trembling under his tread, for the calves of my legs are shaking; he is coming nearer." Soon there was a knock at the door. "Come in," said Glooskap. In came a little fellow no bigger than a man's thumb. "You walk very heavily and make a great noise for so small a man," said Glooskap. "Yes," said the little fellow; but not another word would he say.

They sat silent for a long time. Then Glooskap tried to put his strange little caller to the test. "Take something to eat," he said, and he passed him a plateful of food. With his magic power he made the plate very heavy, and he thought that the little man could not hold it but would let it fall on his toes. But the little fellow took it easily, and held it while he ate all it contained. When he had finished eating, he passed it back. But it had grown so heavy because of the little man's power that Glooskap could hardly hold it up.

Then they went outside. It was blowing very hard. "It is a windy day," said Glooskap. "Oh no," said the little fellow, "it is very calm and pleasant; I should like to have a sail on the sea." Glooskap had a very large heavy canoe. He thought it would be fun to send the little fellow sailing in it, for he thought he could not paddle it. He told him there was a canoe on the beach and that he might take it for a sail. The little man thanked him and went to the beach. Glooskap went back

to his tent on the high cliff to watch what would happen. Soon he saw the little man out on the sea in the big heavy canoe. Then he untied the wings of the great Wind Bird, and the winds blew harder than ever and the waves rolled high. But the little man weathered the storm all right; he seemed to be enjoying his sail, and after a time he came ashore safely.

When he came in, Glooskap said, "Did you have a good sail?" "Very good," replied the little man, "but I like stronger winds and a rougher sea." And Glooskap wondered much. Then they went outside again. It was still blowing hard. The little man blew through his nostrils, and the wind from them blew so hard that the grass fell down before it, and Glooskap was knocked head over heels and had to put his arms around a big tree and hold on tight to keep from blowing over the cliff. Then the little man stopped blowing, and they agreed to end their contest and to rest together. Glooskap knew that the little man was the strong Fairy of the forest of whom he had long heard. The Fairy gave him new power to overcome evil, and then went back to the land-of-little-people from which he had come.

The Passing of Glooskap

Glooskap, the magic master of the Indian tribes along the Atlantic coast of Canada, had very great power for many ages. But as he grew old, his power gradually grew less. He had done in his long lifetime many great and noble deeds. He had freed his land of all the mighty monsters that had inhabited it before his coming. No evil beasts nor serpents nor dragons were now found near his home, and there were no longer cruel giants in the forest hard by. He had made his people happy. But, strangely enough, his people showed him but scanty gratitude. When he grew old they became evil, and they were not as faithful as in the days of his youth and strength. Even the animals grew treacherous. His dogs, once loyal, were no longer eager to do his bidding, and one stormy day as he fished for porpoises they stubbornly refused to obey his command to head off the fish. Thereupon, in anger, he changed his dogs into a stone island, now a rocky light-housed island on the Atlantic coast. All around him he saw signs of faithlessness, and often he was in great sorrow because of his people's ingratitude.

One afternoon in the autumn, Glooskap walked alone by the ocean, thinking silently of his people's evil ways and of his own vanished strength. Behind him the tall trees rose on the hills, their leaves now turned to a mass of many colours, yellow and red under the autumn sun. Here and there clusters of red autumn berries peeped through the dying leaves. On the high bank long stalks of golden-rod nodded their faded heads; the grass was withered brown, and from its depths came the doleful sounds of crickets. Before him lay the sea,

still and idle and grey in the soft mellow light. Subdued noises came from the tents near by, where his people, busy and expectant, were making arrows for the great annual autumn hunt, for the hunter's moon had come. Otherwise, a strange silence—the silence of Nature's death—filled the air. Glooskap knew, as he moodily walked along the beach, that Summer had gone, that she had fled from the Northland, following the moose-hide cord he had placed for her along the Rainbow Road to the Wilderness of Flowers. Closing his eyes, he could see her again in all her beauty as he had really seen her many years before when he had first found her dancing among her children, the Fairies of Flowers and Light. All the incidents of his long journey in search of her came back to him,—the sail with Old Blob the whale; the Southern Cross in the sky; the song of the clams under the golden sands; the lilac country with its magnolia and jessamine; the fair maiden dancers on the green; and Summer herself with her brown hair and her blossoms. Even his lost youth and his vanished strength seemed to come back to him. He could feel on his old cheeks again the soft air of the Southland; he could hear the music of its tiny streams; and he opened his nostrils wide in fancy to pleasant odours from scented flowers. And as he dreamed of the old days, he was lonely for Summer his Fairy Queen; for although he was a great warrior he had a woman's tender heart. Somehow, on this autumn day he was filled with a strange feeling of melancholy such as he had never known before. He could not shake the feeling from him. It brought him a deep sense of coming danger which he could not explain.

Suddenly he was aroused from his dreaming by the appearance of his messengers, the Loons, who were still loyal to him. They had been away many days in search of news, and now they came to him over the water uttering strange cries that sounded like foolish laughter. Glooskap knew from their cries that they brought unwelcome tidings. When they met

him on the beach they said, "Oh, Master, we bring you a sad message. From away across the ocean a race of strange pale-faced men is coming, smaller in size than our people but more powerful. One of their number is more than a match for a score of your best warriors, for they carry with them many deadly weapons the like of which you have never seen. They are coming in wonderful ships greater than your canoes. They will take all your lands, and will kill those of your people who refuse to submit to their rule." The Loons would have continued their story, but Glooskap wished to hear no more. He understood now the cause of his melancholy dread. He knew that the pale race of which the Loons had spoken was the race of which he had long heard, and that the white men were coming at last. He knew too that it would be useless to stay to give them battle. His reign on earth, he knew well, was ended for a time and now he must go away. Far out to sea was another hunting ground to which he must sail to join his fathers. It was a place, he had been told, pleasanter by far than his old home on the shores of the great water—a place to which good warriors went when their work on earth was done. So he returned silently to his tent to get ready for his long journey.

That night he called all his people to the gathering-place. He told them that he was going away, far away, miles and miles over the sunlit sea. Not one of them should go with him. He would be away, he said, many long years, but some day he would come back. He told them nothing of the message of the Loons, nothing of the white men's coming. But he offered as a parting gift to grant them each one last wish. And at once all the people wished for what they most desired, and all their requests were granted; for Glooskap's great power returned for a brief space before he went away.

The people's wishes were very strange and varied. An old man who had been of little value as a hunter asked that he might be great in the killing of game. And Glooskap gave him

a magic flute, which when played upon won the love of women, and brought the moose and caribou to his side to meet their death. And the old man, with not a care in his heart, went his way, for he knew now that he should always have food. A young Indian asked that he might have the love of many people. Glooskap gave him a bag very tightly tied; he told him not to open it until he reached his home, and then his wish would be granted. But the youth, being curious, opened the bag on the way. At once there flew from it numberless girls, all of whom strove for his affection, until in the struggle they trampled him to death. What became of the people no man knows. Another, a gay and frivolous fellow, asked that he might always amuse people. Glooskap gave him a magic root from the forest which would cause anyone who ate it to amuse all whom he met; he told him not to eat it until he reached his home, and then his presence would always be like sunshine to all. But he, being curious, ate the root on the way. For a time he amused all who met him, so that they all laughed and were of a merry heart. But soon, because he had not heeded Glooskap's command, the people grew tired of him and no longer laughed at him. And he grew weary of himself and found no pleasure in his power, which now no longer moved people to laughter. And his life became a burden until in despair he killed himself in the forest. And Old Night Hawk, the evil spirit of the night, came down from the clouds and carried him away to the dwelling place of Darkness and he was never afterwards heard of among men. Another wished to become a Fairy of the Forest. Glooskap washed him in the sea, and put a magic belt around his waist, and at once he became a Fairy Prince dwelling among the Elves. And he gave him a small pipe which made wondrous music, and to this day you can hear his pipe on sunny days in the meadows.

But the wish that was most difficult to gratify, for it tried Glooskap's greatest power, was that of a youth who wanted to

win a beautiful girl for his wife. She was the daughter of a powerful chief, who placed such hard work and cruel tasks on all who desired her that they died in attempting them. Glooskap gave him his stone canoe and bade him sail away to the chiefs home; he gave the Fairies of the Deep charge over him, and he tied the wings of the great Eagle, the Wind Bird, so that there might be no wind during his voyage. He gave him also a magic belt and taught him a magic song, both of which should help him in his need.

Soon the youth came without mishap to a large island, the home of the girl he loved. He hid the canoe in the trees and set out inland. At the end of a long road he reached the village where the cruel chief and his daughter lived. He said to the chief, after the fashion of Indians when they want to marry, "I am tired of the lonely life; I have come for your daughter." The chief replied that the youth might have his daughter if he could do certain feats of strength. The youth knew that these were the feats the attempt of which had cost many before him their lives, but trusting to Glooskap's help, he consented. The chief told him he must slay a great horned dragon that lived in the forest hardby, and that he must bring the dragon's head to his tent on the following morning.

In the night the youth went to the dragon's den. Over the mouth of it he placed a great log; then standing near it he sang the magic song that Glooskap had taught him. Soon the dragon came out in answer to the magic call; he waved his head all about looking for the sound; then he placed his head over the log to listen. At once the youth severed the creature's head with a blow of his axe, and taking it by one of its great horns he brought it in the morning to the chief's camp. And the chief, greatly surprised, said to himself, "I fear he will win my daughter." There were other difficult feats to try the young man's courage, but all of them he did without harm to himself, and with great wonder to the old chief.

Finally, the chief used one of his last and hardest tests. He

said, "There is a man of my tribe who has never been beaten in running; you must race with him and beat him if you would win my daughter; you must both run around the world." The old man was sure that here at last the youth would fail. But the youth put on the magic belt that Glooskap had given him, and when all the people were gathered to watch the contest, he met his rival without fear. He said to the chief's runner, "What do men call you?" And he answered, "I am Northern Light; and what do men call you?" The youth answered, "I am Chain-Lightning."

The starting signal was given by the chief, and the two rivals set out on their race. In a moment they were out of sight, away behind the distant hills. The people all waited patiently for their return. Soon the youth, Chain-Lightning, appeared; he had been around the world, but he was not breathing hard and he was not even tired from his long run. There was yet no sign of his rival. Late in the evening Northern Light came in; but he was very weary, and as he came near he trembled and tottered. He confessed that he had not been all around the world; he had turned back, for Chain-Lightning had gone too fast for him, yet he was very tired. He admitted his defeat. The people wondered greatly at the power of the victorious youth. And the old chief said, "I fear he has won my daughter."

There was still a final test. The chief said, "There is a man of my tribe who has never been overcome in diving and swimming under water. You must strive with him and defeat him if you would win my daughter." And the youth agreed. Again he put on the magic belt and met his rival without fear. When they met by the sea the youth asked the chief's swimmer, "What do men call you?" And he replied, "I am Black Duck; and what do men call you?" He answered, "I am Loon." When the chief gave the signal they dived and swam under water. In a few minutes Black Duck rose again, for he was out of breath; but the people waited in wonder many hours before

Loon rose; and when he came up he was not tired, but laughed heartily. And the old chief, well content, said to him, "My tests are ended; you have won my daughter." That night the great wedding feast was held; and the youth taking with him his bride, set sail for his home in Glooskap's canoe.

A few of those who asked gifts, Glooskap punished before he went away, because of their foolish requests. One who came was very tall and proud of his good looks. He always covered his moccasins with bright beads, and wore coloured coats, and sprinkled himself with strange perfumes, and on the top of his cap he wore a long feather. He asked Glooskap to make him taller and straighter than any of his fellows. And when Glooskap heard his wish, to punish him for his pride he changed him at once to a pine tree. He made him very tall and straight until his head rose above the forest. There he stands to this day, the high green feather in his cap waving always in the wind. And when the wind blows you can still hear him singing with a moaning voice, "I am a great man, I am a beautiful Indian, taller than my fellows." Many others Glooskap punished, but all who had diseases he healed, and sent away happy.

When Glooskap knew that the wishes of all the good people who had obeyed his commands had been granted, he was ready to set out on his last journey. One day on the shore of the wide ocean he made a great feast to which all his people came and all the animals with them. But it was not a merry gathering, for they knew that they met with Glooskap for the last time before his long absence. In the late autumn afternoon, when the feast was ended, Glooskap prepared to leave them. He threw his kettle into the sea, for he would need it no more, and it became an island. And he tied one wing of the Wind Bird, so that after he had gone away the gales would not blow so strong on the Atlantic coast as they had blown in his lifetime. And he talked long to his people and smoked his last pipe with them and gave them good advice; he spoke of

his going away, but of the land to which he was going he would say nothing; he promised that some day after many years had passed he would come again among them. Then in the evening a great stone canoe came over the ocean, guided by two of the Children of Light. And Glooskap, seeing it, said, "It is now the sunset hour, and I must leave you." Many of his people, his good followers who throughout his lifetime had been faithful to him, begged him to allow them to go with him. But he answered, "No; this last great journey I must make alone, for no man can come with me or help me." And just at the turn of the tide as the sun set behind the distant hills, he embarked in the great stone canoe and sailed far out to sea with the ebbing tide, singing as he went a strange sad song. His people and all the beasts looked after him until in the deepening twilight they could see him no more; but long after they had lost sight of him, his song came to them, weird and doleful, across the water; gradually the sounds grew fainter and fainter, until when night came they died entirely away. Then a strange silence fell upon the earth. The beasts mourned until they lost the power of speech; they fled into the forest in different ways, and since that time they have never met together in peaceful council as in the olden days, and they have never spoken like men. The Great Owl departed in sorrow, and hid himself in the deep forest; since that time he has seldom appeared by day, but at night he always cries, "Koo-koo-koo," which in the Indian language means, "I am sad, I am sad." And the Loon, Glooskap's old messenger, wanders up and down upon the beach calling for his master with loud wild cries. And Glooskap's people grow smaller and smaller in number because of their Master's absence, and they slowly waste away until some day they too shall vanish from the earth.

So Glooskap sailed away over the sea to the distant hunting grounds of his fathers. There he lives still in a great long tent, where he is making arrows, preparing for his last Great

Battle. And when the thunder rolls and the lightning flashes those of his people who still remain on earth know that he is angry; where the sea sparkles most brightly in the sunlight or moans most dismally in the storm, they know that Glooskap is there; when the phosphorescent lights appear at night upon the sea, they know that he is working late by the strange light; and when there are no stars, they know that Glooskap lies asleep, taking his rest. But when his great tent is filled with arrows, Glooskap will come back to fight his last battle and overcome the evil creatures of the world; he will then bring back the Golden Age of happiness to earth; and his people in hope and patience still await his coming.

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