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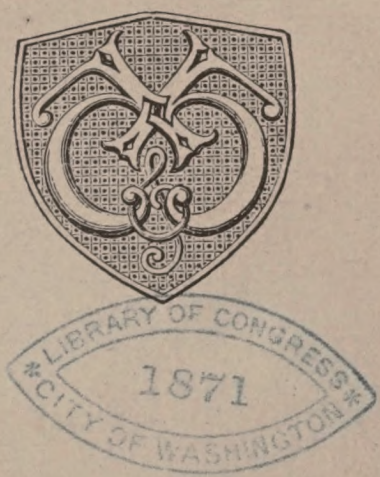
STORIES

FROM

OLD ENGLISH POETRY.

BY

ABBY SAGE RICHARDSON.



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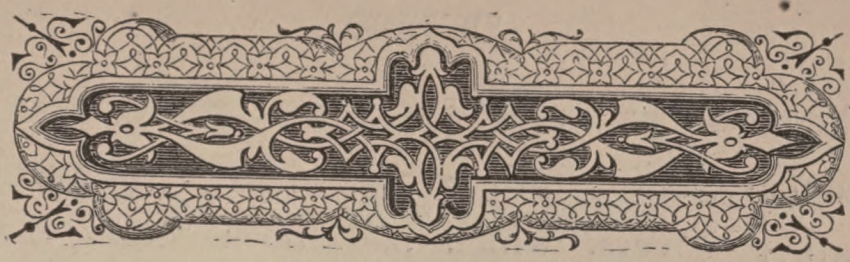

PREFACE.

TO THE GENTLE READER.

SOMETHING over twenty years ago, in a dusty garret filled with trunks, boxes, old articles of furniture, and all the other lumber in which our country garrets abound, a little girl was spending a rainy morning. I remember the child very well. She was just about eight years old, and had tangled masses of curly yellow hair, and big eyes always hungry for "something to read." For in those days — two or three years more than twenty, — how very long ago that is! — there were not so many children's books as now. No children's magazines except "Old Merry's Museum," and very few of the beautiful books in shining covers which are now written and printed expressly for the young folks.

The only books this little girl owned, and

which she had read and reread, were three in number: the first, quite a large volume in leather covers, which had been her grandmother's; the others, a red-bound book with one cover torn off, and two little rusty, dingy looking duodecimos, which any child nowadays would turn up her nose at sight of. These three books were the Bible, the Pilgrim's Progress, and Arabian Nights' Entertainment. Of the Bible she only cared to read the Old Testament. That she had read over and over, investing it meanwhile with the oriental landscape and atmosphere which she borrowed from the Arabian Nights, till she knew all its stories by heart.

I tell you all this that you may understand what a treasure this little girl found in rummaging the garret on this eventful rainy morning. For in an old chest, from way down at the bottom, she suddenly pulled out, as Jack Horner pulled the plum out of his Christmas pie, two little purple-covered books. They were so small — only about four inches long, three inches wide, and an inch thick — that from their size she instantly concluded they must be real "chil-

dren's books." She opened one of the tiny treasures, which was in print almost small enough to be legible only by aid of the microscope, and read on the title-page: "The Works of William Shakespeare, in 6 vols. — Vol. IV."

I grieve to say that the child did not consult anybody about the propriety of reading these books. Only a little while before, her papa had taken away from her a delightful novel, whose heroine (her name was either Melissa or Amanda, or something of that kind) had just got into the most dangerous part of the book. Her father had said it was not a fit story for a small girl to read, and she had shed some bitter tears over her loss, had thought her papa very cruel, and mentally resolved to read the rest of the story as soon as she was grown up. Alas! like many other things we mean to do some time, the resolution never was fulfilled; and though the little girl is now a woman, she does not know to this day what became of the forlorn Amanda, or Melissa, whose fortunes she left in such desperate condition.

Remembering her latest loss, therefore, the child concluded that at present no one should share the secret of the Shakespeare books. So she devised many hiding-places for them, and used to read them at night, and in the gray dawn of morning in her little bed, and out of school hours in the broad sunny window-seat in the attic, where she had a secure retreat.

I cannot tell you how eagerly this little girl devoured these books. No child of the present age would understand her delight, they have such plenty of new books, such a surfeit of literature. But to her, these two volumes were better than Aladdin's lamp or his ring. One of them contained "Macbeth," "Winter's Tale," and "The Merchant of Venice;" the other, "Romeo and Juliet" and "King Lear." There were other plays beside, but these were the ones which interested her, and she forgets what others were there. The dear little books have been lost long ago, the girl is now a grown woman, but years after, when she had a boy who had eyes and ears hungry for stories too, she used to tell this eager little lis-

tener the story of "Lear and his Daughters," or the story of "Hermione and the Statue," and many others which were locked up in the book and volume of her memory.

Afterwards she wrote these stories down, and added others to them almost as dear to her as the earlier ones she read, and so made the little book of Stories from Old English Poetry which you hold in your hand. If you learn to love the tales, and the poets who made them, half as well as she does, — through the imperfect medium in which she gives them to you, — the writer will be very proud and happy indeed.

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STORIES FROM OLD ENGLISH POETRY.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

YOU have heard of Dr. Samuel Johnson, have you not? He who made a great English dictionary, who was famous for saying wise things, and was in his way a very great man. One of his sayings was, that a *poet* ought to know everything and to have seen everything. And this seems to be proved true by the fact that most of the really wonderful poets have been men of very wide experience in life, or else they observed so closely and were gifted with such clear insight, that all things of which they wrote were as real to them as if they were a part of them.

So Shakespeare has been thought to be a school-teacher, a lawyer, a doctor, a soldier, as well as an actor and manager of a theatre. And Chaucer, about whom I wish to tell you, has been thought just such another Jack-at-all-trades.

Geoffrey Chaucer, who is called the "Father

of English poetry," — think what a title that is to wear for four centuries and a half! — was born in London in 1328 — nearly two hundred and forty years before Shakespeare, and over one hundred and fifty years before Columbus discovered this Continent. It is so long ago that all things about him are uncertain, except that he was a great poet. That will stand, I hope, while the English language lasts. Like Shakespeare, he is said to have studied law, and been a soldier, but the first we really know of him he is a courtier in the palace of King Edward III.

He was in great favor there, and a daily pitcher of wine used to be sent him from the king's own table, — a gift which was afterwards changed into a pension. So from this mark of the king's favor he has sometimes been called the first poet-laureate of England.

Several times Edward sent him to the Continent on political errands, and there he had many new opportunities to learn and observe things.

During Edward's reign he became attached to John of Gaunt, — whom Shakespeare calls "Time-honored Lancaster," — and, by his advice, the poet married a lady of Hainault, a province in Belgium. After Chaucer's marriage, John of Gaunt himself married an older sister of the same family. So the poet and his patron were brothers-in-law.

After Edward came Richard II., and in his reign were hot times. Wyclyfe, the great preacher, who fought stoutly against the bad and ignorant priests, and tried hard to make the Church better, began his career. John of Gaunt favored this great reformer, and so Chaucer did also. So the poet got in disgrace with the court. He fled to Hainault, where his wife's family lived, and was very kind to his fellow-countrymen there, who were also obliged to flee on account of these quarrels about religion. Wyclyfe was a very noble, fearless man, and it is one of the best things we know of Chaucer that he was on his side.

After a while he came back to England — a little too soon, however, for he was arrested and stripped of his revenue. Then he went to live in retirement on the estate of John of Gaunt, and here, when nearly sixty, he wrote "The Canterbury Tales," his greatest work.

These were the days of romance, of crusades, and tourneys, and Chaucer had plenty of material for stories. And at his ripe age he brought ripe learning and ripe experience to his work.

After a while Henry Bolingbroke, the son of John of Gaunt, became king. This was the "cankered Bolingbroke," whom Hotspur quarreled with. Through his accession to the throne Chaucer came into the sunshine of royal favor

again. But he was quite an old man at this time. The last we find of him he hired a house in the garden of Westminster Abbey, in which he lived till his death. Then he was buried in the great Abbey, the very first of a long line of poets who sleep there, in what is called the "Poets' Corner" of the grand old church.

Chaucer is said to have been very handsome, and I fancy it is true, since his beautiful works must have made him beautiful. But the only description I find of him does not read very flatteringly. This is it: —

> "His stature was not very tall;
> Lean he was, his legs were small;
> Hosed with a stock of red,
> A buttoned bonnet on his head."

His poetry is old-fashioned now — much of it is unfit to read. But in many of his verses, especially when he describes nature, we seem to see the daisy or the dewy grass, or smell the odor of new-mown hay in country pastures, and hear the cattle lowing, and feel the fresh air blowing from woods and fields.

The stories which I shall tell you from Chaucer, are all taken from "The Canterbury Tales." Each story is supposed to be related by one of a party of travellers who are journeying together. The one which follows is told by a knight, and is the story of the "Two Noble Kinsmen."

THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN.

(FROM THE KNIGHT'S TALE, BY CHAUCER.)

AFTER Theseus, duke of Athens, had married Hypolita, the fair and brave queen of the Amazons, all Greece dwelt for a time in peace and happiness. Hypolita herself shone in peace no less than in war, and was a noble ornament in the palace of the duke.

But Theseus was not a warrior to remain long idle. Very shortly after he had safely bestowed on his queen the half of his royal throne, chivalry called him to Thebes to avenge the wrongs some fair women had suffered at the hands of the Theban king. And after devastating that city, and slaying King Creon in honorable battle, the duke came back to Greece, again a conqueror.

Then the merry-making that was seen in Athens cannot now be told; nor how the queen Hypolita proudly greeted her victorious lord — nor how the ladies of the court vied to do him honor. All this you must fancy while you hear of sadder things.

In Thebes had lived two noble kinsmen, cous-

ins by birth, named Palamon and Arcite. These two, covered with wounds on the battle-field, had Theseus taken prisoner, and nursing their hurts carefully, had cured them, so they were able to be brought to Athens in the train of the conqueror. Now in one prison were the two shut up together to bewail the cruel stars which had spared their lives only that they might live in such misery.

The prison tower in which they were kept, overlooked the garden of the palace. Through the bars the sunlight slanted in, and the songs of the birds outside mocked them with thoughts of freedom. Sometimes, by standing on tiptoe, they caught glimpses of the garden paths, and saw where the many colored flowers blossomed below.

One beautiful May morning, sweet Lady Emelie, the youngest sister of Hypolita, who was like the queen in fairness as the soft evening star is like the full-orbed moon, must needs go walking in this very garden to pick flowers for a May-day wreath. Herself fairer than May, and sweeter than the roses, which were glad to borrow their red from her cheeks, she sang, as she wove her garland, a little song which fell like a bird's from her fair throat.

While she sang thus, Palamon, straining to catch a glimpse of the sun through his prison

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bars, beheld her in the garden path. At that moment he uttered a cry as if some sharp pain had stabbed him suddenly.

"What ails thee, dear cousin?" asked Arcite, coming hurriedly to his side.

"Indeed I know not if I dream, but something walks in the garden below; whether she is maid or a goddess I cannot tell, but I think none but Venus could so walk, or look thus."

Then, sinking on his knees, Palamon prayed, —"Sweet goddess (if it be indeed thy divine self I have seen), help us, thy servants, to escape these prison bars and find a way out of our captivity."

Burning with curiosity, Arcite meanwhile raised himself to the gratings and beheld Emelie. But his eye, less reverent than Palamon's, knew her at once for a mortal like himself.

"O lovely maiden," he cried piteously, "either I must have thy grace, or I am dead henceforth. All my life and all the deeds that my knighthood may yet be found worthy of, I lay at thy feet."

At this Palamon started up in anger.

"What dost thou say, Arcite?" he questioned. "The lady is my love. I saw her first."

"What of that?" rejoined Arcite. "Are not my eyes free to love her too?"

"No honorable knight loves the lady of his sworn brother," cried Palamon, fiercely.

"But you adored her as a goddess," said Arcite; "I loved her at once as a fair woman, and by all the stars and all the laws of knighthood, I *will* love her with all my heart till I die."

On this the quarrel between these two cousins, who had been so dear to each other that no manly friendship had ever exceeded theirs, became so hot, that, if it had not been for their unarmed condition, they would have fought till one was killed. And all the time the sweet Lady Emelie walked and sang in the garden below, and heard nothing and dreamed not of the two knights who quarreled for her sweet sake over her head.

From this time forth, day after day, month after month, the two cousins had no other hope than to espy Emelie in the garden under their prison tower. And still they contended with each other which had the right to love her, and each claimed her as his own lady.

Judge how mad this strife was, when both were locked in walls so thick that no hope of escape could pierce them. But fortune changed a little for one of the kinsmen. A noble duke, who was a friend to Theseus, had known and loved Arcite in Thebes. He interceded for his release, and after a time Theseus let him go, on

condition that he should instantly leave Athens, and never again set foot there on pain of death. Then it was hard to tell which of the two kinsmen made the most moan, — Arcite, that he must quit the prison where he might still behold Emelie, and depart her country forever, or Palamon, that he must remain alone behind his bars while his cousin went free.

Arcite left Athens and went straight to Thebes. But now Thebes was a prison, and liberty was bondage, because he was shut out from the sight of Emelie. He grieved so over the thought that he might never see her more, that his form became wasted, his eyes sunken and haggard, his locks hung disheveled, and his whole countenance was changed. In this plight it occurred to him that he was so altered that no one would recognize him if he should go to Athens in some other guise, and by that means see Emelie again.

So he put off his knightly attire, and wearing the coarser dress of a squire, he went to Athens. Fortune so favored him that he got a place in the duke's palace, and had leave to attend Emelie. He was known as Philostrate, and because his manners and bearing were so far above his feigned condition, he became famed throughout all the court, and at length attracted the notice of Theseus. Yet for all this he dared not reveal

himself nor own his love to Emelie, lest he should instantly be put to death.

And now it happened that, after many trials, Palamon escaped from prison. He determined to go at once to Thebes, and, if possible, stir up his friends to war against Theseus, that in this way he might force him to bestow Emelie on him as his wife. Just outside the city of Athens was a wood where Arcite was wont to walk and lament the cruel fate which placed him so near Emelie as her serving-man, while it forbade him to speak to her as a true knight who loved her. On the very eve that Palamon had escaped, he walked by himself in this wood and recounted aloud the sighs he had breathed, the pangs he had suffered, and all that had befallen him since his return to Athens. Now in this very spot Palamon was hiding to wait for the next day's dawn to go on his journey, and from a leafy covert he heard all Arcite's complaints. At the close of his speech he suddenly burst out upon him.

"False traitor!" he cried. "Stain on fair knighthood! Perjured Arcite! Darest still to love my lady, for whose sweet sake I have burst through stone walls and iron bars? If I had a weapon I could slay thee, but weaponless as I am, I defy thee here. Choose, then, if thou wilt give up Emelie or die."

At this Arcite answered more mildly, — "Be it so, cousin; I am willing to test this with the sword. Rest thee here to-night, for thou art still weak and prison-worn. I will bring here to this wood, food and a couch for to-night's comfort. To-morrow, or ere the rising of the sun, I will be here with two sets of armor, and swords for both. Thou shalt choose the best and leave the other for me. And we will fight till one of us is dead from his wounds."

Arcite kept his word in every point, and next day at early dawn he was in the wood with two sets of armor, and swords to match them. Palamon awaited him eagerly, and with all courtesy each helped the other buckle on his harness and make ready for the affray. Soon the clashing of their swords smote sparks of fire so thick that they shone in the green wood like myriads of fire-flies.

Suddenly, in the middle of their deadly sport, the knights heard the sharp bay of hounds, the blast of the horns, the rush of many steeds; and, looking up, they saw themselves surrounded by a royal hunting party. There was the noble Duke Theseus, and by his side Hypolita, with snow-white falcon on her wrist, while foremost among the ladies of the court, all clad in green, rode Emelie, the unconscious cause of all this strife.

When the duke demanded the reason of this affray, and their drawn weapons, there was no other way for the knights than to confess the truth, and tell the cause of their quarrel. This Palamon did, not hiding that he had broken loose from his strong prison, and accusing Arcite of having forsworn himself in returning to Athens to live as a menial in the palace of the duke.

When all this story had been told, the listeners were much moved. The hardy queen, more used to battles than to tears, wept for very womanhood; and Emelie, rosy with blushes that these two knights should so boldly avow their love for her, must needs cool the burning of her cheeks with overrunning crystal tears.

And the duke, while all cried out upon him to be merciful, at length gave this as his decree.

First, he exacted of the two kinsmen that they should promise never more to make war on his country, nor to plot any mischief against him; and when they had pledged this, he said,—"Now, though Emelie be a worthy match for any knight in Christendom, yet she cannot marry both, be your deserts equally great. Therefore ye shall abide the test of honorable combat. In one year's time, at Athens here, we will hold a tourney, at which both Palamon and Arcite, with each a hundred bravest knights, shall enter the lists, and he who comes off conqueror, shall

wed the lady. The other must do as he best can."

To this, with many praises of the duke's goodness, all assented.

Now, all the year Theseus was building the lists for the tournament. Never since the world began, were there such brave preparations. The field was made a circle, and walled about with stone. At three points in the walls a fair temple was built. One of pure marble, in honor of Venus, queen of Love and Beauty. The second, shining with gold, was to Mars, god of war. The third, of red and white coral, beautiful beyond compare, was dedicated to Diana, at whose altar sweet Emelie worshipped.

When the year was at an end, into Athens came Palamon with his hundred knights, each the flower of chivalry. First came the brave Lycurgus, of Thrace, riding in his golden chariot, drawn by four milk-white bulls. His long black hair streamed over his shoulders, and on his head he wore a heavy crown of gold, gleaming with jewels. Beside his car walked ten huge white mastiffs, each nearly as large as a steer, close muzzled to their very throats.

At the same hour, through another gate of the city, entered Arcite. With him came Emetrius, king of Ind, leading his hundred warriors.

Emetrius bestrode a horse whose trappings

were all of gold. His cloak also was cloth of gold, embroidered closely with great pearls, and a little mantle over his shoulder shone like a flame, so thick it was sown with fire-red rubies. Over his crisp curls of bright brown he wore a green laurel wreath, and his blue eyes glittered like steel, in his eagerness for the affray.

The morning dawned brightly, — such another May morning as that in which Palamon and Arcite first saw the Lady Emelie walking in the garden beside their prison walls. Two hours before day broke, Palamon had risen and gone into the Temple of Venus, and laid gifts on her altars. And after he had asked her aid, the goddess had smiled on him, and nodded in answer to his supplications. Emelie, too, as was her wont, went to the Temple of Diana, and the huntress queen then told her that one of the knights should be her wedded lord, but which one not even Emelie might know till the tourney was over.

Last of all, Arcite went to the Temple of Mars, and flinging sweet incense on his altar, prayed to him with many supplications. The statue of the god had clashed its glittering arms, and murmured "Victory." At which, full of hope, Arcite rose up to go and array himself for the combat.

Meanwhile, in the court of Jupiter, king of gods and of men, there was a great contention.

To Mars, Jupiter had promised the victory for his chosen knight; but Venus, her lovely eyes red with weeping, besought that her favored suitor, young Palamon, might have Emelie for his bride. While she thus prayed the stern Jupiter, her breast heavy with sighs, and her cheeks wet with silver tears, Saturn, oldest of the gods, thus whispered her, — "Grieve not, O fairest of the daughters of the gods. To Jupiter and Mars belong victory in war and honor among men; to me, dark treason and black pestilence; mine is the drowning in the lonely sea, the strangling rope, the deadly poison, and all means of sudden death. Weep no more, for I promise thy pleasure shall yet be done, and Palamon shall have Emelie."

Now in the broad daylight, Athens is all astir. Now is heard the clattering of hoofs; the ringing of hammers, which rivet together the links of the armor; the tramping of hurried feet; the sharp word of command, and the knights calling on their squires. Now is seen the glitter of gold and the flash of steel, the waving of plumes and fluttering of mantles. Now each man has fastened the last buckle and helped his master mount, and the steeds champ their shining bits, impatient to be gone.

Inside the walls of the tourney-ground, under a canopy, sit Theseus and his court. Among

all the ladies, none so lovely as Emelie. She is clad all in white, with her yellow hair garlanding her head; and so fair is she, that the very air seems to breathe her praises. And now Theseus gives aloud, by the mouth of the herald, the rules by which the tourney shall be conducted. First, in order to prevent loss of life, no man shall carry into the lists either bow and arrows, nor poleaxe, nor short sword. Neither shall he ride but one course with sharp-pointed spear.

If any transgress these rules, they shall be taken out from the lists, and stand at the stake till the tourney is ended. If either chieftain be overthrown or conquered, the victory is declared.

The weapons shall be only spears, lances, and the mace.

Now the heralds have cried aloud the charge, and the trumpets and clarions have blown, and the drums beat, and the fierce onset begun. The lances shiver, swords gleam, the maces ring heavily on steel helmets. Now this brave knight is unhorsed, and meets his enemy in fierce grapple; now one is trampled under foot; now clouds of dust hide all like a thick smoke; here they struggle unfairly and are led to the stake, till the affray is over; there one is borne bleeding from the field.

Many times the heralds sound the trumpets for

a breathing-space in the battle, and again and again they return to the charge. But alas for Palamon! just at evening he is overcome, when he would go to the help of the brave Lycurgus, who is unhorsed, and fighting bravely; and Theseus cries out that Arcite has the victory, and Palamon must yield himself conquered.

Then Palamon's heart sinks like lead in his breast, and by the throne of Jupiter, on high Olympus, Venus wrings her hands, in anguish of his defeat. But who is more proud than Arcite, and whose eyes beam so tenderly as Emelie's, since, woman-like, her heart is already moved with love for the victorious hero.

Now he rides forward, the dust on his armor, many a stain of red blood on his waving mantle, his plumes nodding proudly, his eyes full of gladness. Now Emelie bends forward, with the laurel wreath in her hand, when, alas that I must write it! the fiery steed of Arcite starts, plunges forward and then back, and over his arched neck flings Arcite on the stone pavement in front of the royal dais. Thus has Saturn redeemed his pledge to Venus, and sudden death overtaken the victor under the shadow of the laurel wreath.

They cleared the brave knight of his armor, and still he lingered a little, always crying for Emelie. Then he died, and his fair lady and

Palamon wept together at his bedside. Over all the land was great mourning. Theseus would hardly be comforted for the loss of this brave heart, and Hypolita bewailed this flower of knighthood rudely cut off in his prime. All the maidens cry by his bier, "Alas, alas! Arcite, why didst thou die thus? Hadst thou not gold enough, and Emelie?"

At last they made a great funeral pyre of all rare and costly woods, and Emelie herself lighted the torch which consumed it to ashes. After this she mourned him for a long time in deep widowhood; but when the period of mourning had been prolonged a year, Theseus called both Palamon and Emelie to his presence.

"It is not good to grieve always," he said to Emelie. "Arcite was a noble gentleman, and loved you dear, but you cannot call him back with grieving. Here is his kinsman, not less brave, who has loved you as long and as dearly. What say you to him, Emelie? As for Palamon, I warrant he will not say me nay."

And with these words, Theseus placed the hand of his sister in that of the knight, and Emelie looked at Palamon and smiled up in his face with a smile which made sunshine in his sad heart.

Then there was a royal wedding at the palace, and never was a more loving pair than these two,

no husband more tender, no wife more true. No grief ever came between them, and no shadow fell on their lives till death came to take them apart.

THE PIOUS CONSTANCE.

(FROM CHAUCER.)

ONCE upon a time the Emperor of Rome had a beautiful daughter named Constance. She was so fair to look on, that far and wide, she was spoken of as "the beautiful princess." But, better than that, she was so good and so saintly that everybody in her father's dominions loved her, and often they forgot to call her "the beautiful princess," but called her instead, "Constance the *good*."

All the merchants who came thither to buy and sell goods, carried away to other countries accounts of Constance, her beauty, and her holiness. One day there came to Rome some merchants from Syria, with shiploads of cloths of gold, and satins rich in hue, and all kinds of spicery, which they would sell in the Roman markets. While they abode here, the fame of Constance came to their ears, and they sometimes saw her lovely face as she went about the city among the poor and suffering, and were so pleased with the sight that they could talk of

nothing else when they returned home; so that, after a while, their reports came to the ear of the Soldan of Syria, their ruler, and he sent to the merchants to hear from their lips all about the fair Roman maiden.

As soon as he heard this story, this Soldan began secretly to love the fair picture which his fancy painted of the good Constance, and he shut himself up to think of her, and to study how he could gain her for his own.

At length he sent to all his wise men, and called them together in council.

"You have heard," he said to them, "of the beauty and goodness of the Roman princess. I desire her for my wife. So cast about quickly for some way by which I may win her."

Then all the wise men were horrified; because Constance was a Christian, while the Syrians believed in Mohammed as their sacred prophet. One wise man thought the Soldan had been bewitched by some fatal love-charm brought from Rome. Another explained that some of the stars in the heavens were out of place, and had been making great mischief among the planets which governed the life of the Soldan. One had one explanation and one another, but to all the Soldan only answered, — "All these words avail nothing. I shall die if I may not have Constance for my wife."

One of the wise men then said plainly, — "But the Emperor of Rome will not give his daughter to any but a Christian."

When the Soldan heard that he cried joyfully: "O, if that is all, I will straightway turn Christian, and all my kingdom with me."

So they sent an ambassador to the Emperor to know if he would give his daughter to the Soldan of Syria, if he and all his people would turn Christian. And the Emperor, who was very devout and thought he ought to use all means to spread his religion, answered that he would.

So poor little Constance, like a white lamb chosen for a sacrifice, was made ready to go to Syria. A fine ship was prepared, and with a treasure for her dowry, beautiful clothes, and hosts of attendants, she was put on board.

She herself was pale with grief and weeping at parting from her home and her own dear mother. But she was so pious and devoted that she was willing to go if it would make Syria a good Christian land. So, as cheerfully as she could, she set sail.

Now the Soldan had a very wicked mother, who was all the time angry in her heart that the Soldan had become a Christian. Before Constance arrived in Syria, she called together all the lords in the kingdom whom she knew to be friendly to her. She told them of a plot she had

made to kill the Soldan and all those who changed their religion with him, as soon as the bride had come. They all agreed to this dreadful plot, and then the old Soldaness went, smiling and bland, to the Soldan's palace.

"My dear son," she said, "at last I am resolved to become a Christian; I am surprised I have been blind so long to the beauty of this new faith. And, in token of our agreement about it, I pray you will honor me by attending with your bride at a great feast which I shall make for you."

The Soldan was overjoyed to see his mother so amiable. He knelt at her feet and kissed her hand, saying, — "Now, my dear mother, my happiness is full, since you are reconciled to this marriage. And Constance and I will gladly come to your feast."

Then the hideous old hag went away, nodding and mumbling, — "Aha! mistress Constance, white as they call you, you shall be dyed so red that all the water in your church font shall not wash you clean again!"

Constance came soon after, and there was great feasting and merry-making, and the Soldan was very happy.

Then the Soldaness gave her great feast, and while they sat at the table, her soldiers came in and killed the Soldan and all the lords who were

friendly to him, and slaughtered so many that the banquet-hall swam ankle-deep in blood.

But they did not slay Constance. Instead, they bore her to the sea and put her on board her ship all alone, with provisions for a long journey, and then set her adrift on the wide waters.

Fancy her, tossing about on the wild sea, amid waves and winds, all calm and pale, with her little crucifix, which she always wore round her neck, folded close to her bosom. So she sailed on, drifting past many shores, out into the limitless ocean, borne on by the billows, seeing the day dawn and the sun set, and never meeting living creature. All alone on a wide ocean! drifting down into soft southern seas where the warm winds always blew, then driving up into frozen waters where green, glittering icebergs sailed solemnly past the ship, so near, it seemed as if they would crush the frail bark to atoms.

So for three long years, day and night, winter and summer, this lonely ship went on, till at length the winds cast it on the English shores.

As soon as the ship stranded, the governor of the town, with his wife, and a great crowd of people, came to see this strange vessel. They were all charmed with the sweet face of Constance, and Dame Hennegilde, the governor's wife, on the instant, loved her as her life. So this noble couple took her home and made much

THE PIOUS CONSTANCE. Page 24.

of her. But Constance was so mazed with the peril she had passed that she could scarcely remember who she was or whence she came, and could answer naught to all their questionings.

While she lived with the good Hennegilde, a young knight began to love her, and sued for her love in return. But he was so wicked that Constance would not heed him. This made him very angry. He swore in his heart that he would have revenge. He waited until one night when the governor was absent, and going into the room where Dame Hennegilde lay, with Constance sleeping in the same chamber, this wicked knight killed the good lady. Then he put the dripping knife into the hand of Constance, and smeared her face and clothes with blood, that it might appear she had done the deed.

When the governor returned and saw this dreadful sight, he knew not what to think. Yet, even then, he could not believe Constance was guilty. He carried her before the king to be judged. This King, Alla, was very tender and good, and when he saw Constance standing in the midst of the people, with her frightened eyes looking appealingly from one to another like a wounded deer who is chased to its death, his heart was moved with pity.

The governor and all his people told how Constance had loved the murdered lady, and

what holy words she had taught. All except the real murderer, who kept declaring she was the guilty one.

The king asked her, "Have you any champion who could fight for you?"

At this Constance, falling on her knees, cried out that she had no champion but God, and prayed that He would defend her innocence.

"Now," cried the king, "bring the holy book which was brought from Brittany by my fathers, and let the knight swear upon it that the maiden is guilty."

So they brought the book of the Gospels, and the knight kissed it, but as soon as he began to take the oath he was felled down as by a terrible blow, and his neck was found broken and his eyes burst from his head. Before them all, in great agony, he died, confessing his guilt and the innocence of Constance.

King Alla had been much moved by the beauty of Constance and her innocent looks, and now she was proved guiltless, all his heart went out to her. And when he asked her to become his queen she gladly consented, for she loved him because he had pitied and helped her. They were soon married amidst the great rejoicing of the people, and the king and all the land became converted to the Christian faith.

This king also had a mother, named Done-

gilde, an old heatheness, no less cruel than the mother of the Soldan. She hated Constance because she had been made queen, though for fear of her son's wrath, she dared not molest her.

After his honeymoon, King Alla went northward to do battle with the Scots, who were his foemen, leaving his wife in charge of a bishop and the good governor, the husband of the murdered Hennegilde. While he was absent Heaven sent Constance a beautiful little son, whom she named Maurice.

As soon as the babe was born, the governor sent a messenger to the king with a letter telling him of his good fortune. Now it happened this messenger was a courtier, who wished to keep on good terms with all the royal family. So, as soon as he got the letter, he went to Donegilde, the king's mother, and asked her if she had any message to send her son.

Donegilde was very courteous and begged him to wait till next morning, while she got her message ready. She plied the man with wine and strong liquor till evening, when he slept so fast that nothing could wake him. While he was asleep she opened his letters and read all that the governor had written. Then this wicked old woman wrote to Alla that his wife Constance was a witch who had bewitched him and all his people, but now her true character

became plain, and she had given birth to a horrible, fiend-like creature, who, she said, was his son. This she put in place of the governor's letter, and dispatched the messenger at dawn.

King Alla was nearly heart-broken when he read these bad tidings, but he wrote back to wait all things till he returned, and to harm neither Constance nor her son. Back rode the messenger to Donegilde once again. She played her tricks over again and got him sound asleep. Then she took the king's letter and put one in its place commanding the governor to put Constance and her child aboard the ship in which she came to these shores and set her afloat.

The good governor could hardly believe his eyes when he read these orders, and the tears ran over his cheeks for grief. But he dared not disobey what he supposed was the command of his king and master, so he made the vessel ready and went and told Constance what he must do.

She, poor soul, was almost struck dumb with grief. But she uttered no complaint, only she prayed to the blessed Virgin to take pity on her and take care of her poor little baby. Then, kneeling before the governor, she cried, with many tears, —

"If I must go again on the cruel seas, at least this poor little innocent, who has done no evil, may be spared. Keep my poor baby till his

father comes back, and perchance he will take pity on him."

But the governor dared not consent, and Constance must go to the ship, carrying her babe in her arms. Through the street she walked, the people following her with tears, she with eyes fixed on heaven and the infant sobbing on her bosom. Thus she went on board ship and drifted away again.

Now, for another season, she went about at the mercy of winds and waves, in icy waters where winds whistled through the frozen rigging, and down into tropical seas where she lay becalmed for months in the glassy water. Then fresh breezes would spring up and drive her this way or that, as they listed. But this time she had her babe for comfort, and he grew to be a child near five years old before she was rescued. And this is the way it happened.

When the Emperor of Rome heard of the deeds the cruel Soldaness had done, and how his daughter's husband had been slain, he sent an army to Syria, and all these years they had besieged the royal city till it was burnt and destroyed. Now the fleet, returning to Rome, met the ship in which Constance sailed, and they fetched her and her child to her native country. The senator who commanded the fleet was her uncle, but he knew her not, and she did not

make herself known. He took her into his own house, and her aunt, the senator's wife, loved her greatly, never guessing she was her own princess and kinswoman.

When King Alla got back from his war with the Scots and heard how Constance had been sent away, he was very angry; but when he questioned and found the letter which had been sent him was false, and that Constance had borne him a beautiful boy, he knew not what to think. When the governor showed him the letter with his own seal which directed that his wife and child should be sent away, he knew there was some hidden wickedness in all this. He forced the messenger to tell where he had carried the letters, and he confessed he had slept two nights at the castle of Donegilde.

So it all came out, and the king, in a passion of rage, slew his mother, and then shut himself up in this castle to give way to grief.

After a time he began to repent his deed, because he remembered it was contrary to the gentle teachings of the faith Constance had taught him. In his penitence he resolved to go to Rome on a pilgrimage, to atone for his sin. So in his pilgrim dress he set out for the great empire.

Now when it was heard in Rome that the great Alla from the North-land had come thither

on a Christian pilgrimage, all the noble Romans vied to do him honor. Among others, the senator with whom Constance abode invited him to a great banquet which he made for him. While Alla sat at this feast, his eyes were constantly fixed upon a beautiful boy, one of the senator's pages, who stood near and filled their goblets with wine. At length he said to his host, — "Pray tell me, whence came the boy who serves you. Who is he, and do his father and mother live in the country?"

"A mother he has," answered the senator: "so holy a woman never was seen. But if he has a father I cannot tell you." Then he went on and told the king of Constance, and how she was found with this boy, her child, on the pathless sea.

Alla was overjoyed in his heart, for he knew then that this child was his own son. Immediately they sent for Constance to come thither. As soon as she saw her husband, she uttered a cry and fell into a deep swoon. When she was recovered, she looked reproachfully at Alla, for she supposed it was by his order she had been so ruthlessly sent from his kingdom. But when, with many tears of pity for her misfortunes, King Alla told her how he had grieved for her, and how long he had suffered thus, she was convinced.

Then they embraced each other, and were so happy that no other happiness, except that of heavenly spirits, could ever equal theirs.

After this, she made herself known to the Emperor, her father, who had great rejoicing over his long-lost daughter, whom he had thought dead. For many weeks Rome was full of feasting, and merry-making, and happiness. These being over, King Alla, with his dear wife, returned to his kingdom of England, where they lived in great happiness all the rest of their days.

THE KNIGHT'S DILEMMA.

(FROM CHAUCER.)

ONE of the nobles of King Arthur's court had grievously transgressed the laws of chivalry and knightly honor, and for this cause had he been condemned to suffer death. Great sorrow reigned among all the lords and dames, and Queen Guinevere, on bent knees, had sued the king's pardon for the recreant knight. At length, after many entreaties, Arthur's generous heart relented, and he gave the doomed life into the queen's hands to do with it as she willed.

Then Guinevere, delighted at the success of her suit with her royal husband, sent for the knight to appear before her, in her own bower, where she sat among the ladies of her chamber.

When the knight, who was called Sir Ulric, had reached the royal lady's presence, he would have thrown himself at her feet with many thanks for the dear boon which she had caused the king to grant him. But she motioned him to listen to what she had to say, before she would receive his gratitude.

"Defer all thanks, Sir Knight," said the queen, "until first I state to thee the conditions on which thou yet holdest thy life. It is granted thee to be free of death, if within one year and a day from this present thou art able to declare to me what of earthly things all women like the best. If in that time thou canst tell, past all dispute, what this thing be, thou shalt have thy life and freedom. Otherwise, on my queenly honor, thou diest, as the king had first decreed."

When the knight heard this he was filled with consternation and dismay too great for words. At once in his heart he accused the king of cruelty in permitting him to drag out a miserable existence for a whole year in endeavoring to fulfill a condition which in his thoughts he at once resolved to be impossible. For who could decide upon what would please all ladies best, when it was agreed by all wise men that no two of the uncertain sex would ever fix upon one and the same thing?

With these desponding thoughts Sir Ulric went out of the queen's presence, and prepared to travel abroad over the country, if perchance by inquiring far and wide he might find out the answer which would save his life.

From house to house and from town to town travelled Sir Ulric, asking maid, and matron, young or old, the same question. But never,

from any two, did he receive a like answer. Some told him that women best loved fine clothes; some that they loved rich living; some loved their children best; others desired most to be loved; and some loved best to be considered free from curiosity, which, since Eve, had been said to be a woman's chief vice. But among all, no answers were alike, and at each the knight's heart sank in despair, and he seemed as if he followed an *ignis fa uus* which each day led him farther and farther from the truth.

One day, as he rode through a pleasant wood, the knight alighted and sat himself down under a tree to rest, and bewail his unhappy lot. Sitting here, in a loud voice he accused his unfriendly stars that they had brought him into so sad a state. While he spoke thus, he looked up and beheld an old woman, wrapped in a heavy mantle, standing beside him.

Sir Ulric thought he had never seen so hideous a hag as she who now stood gazing at him. She was wrinkled and toothless, and bent with age. One eye was shut, and in the other was a leer so horrible that he feared her some uncanny creature of the wood, and crossed himself as he looked on her.

"Good knight," said the old crone, before he could arise to leave her sight, "tell me, I pray thee, what hard thing ye seek. I am old,

and have had much wisdom. It may happen that I can help you out of the great trouble into which you have come."

The knight, in spite of her loathsomeness, felt a ray of hope at this offer, and in a few words told her what he was seeking.

As soon as she had heard, the old creature burst into so loud a laugh that between laughing and mumbling Sir Ulric feared she would choke herself before she found breath to answer him.

"You are but a poor hand at riddles," she said at length, "if you cannot guess what is so simple. Let me but whisper two words in your ear, and you shall be able to tell the queen what neither she nor her ladies nor any woman in all the kingdom shall be able to deny. But I give my aid on one condition, — that if I be right in what I tell, you shall grant me one boon, whatever I ask, if the same be in your power."

The knight gladly consented, and on this the old hag whispered in his ear two little words, which caused him to leap upon his horse with great joy and set out directly for the queen's court.

When he had arrived there, and given notice of his readiness to answer her, Guinevere held a great meeting in her chief hall, of all the ladies in the kingdom. Thither came old and young, wife, maid, and widow, to decide if Sir Ulric answered aright.

The queen was placed on a high throne as judge if what he said be the truth, and all present waited eagerly for his time to speak. When, therefore, it was demanded of him what he had to say, all ears stretched to hear his answer.

"Noble lady," said the knight, when he saw all eyes and ears intent upon him, "I have sought far and wide the answer you desired. And I find that the thing of all the world which pleaseth women best, is *to have their own way in all things*."

When the knight had made this answer in a clear and manly voice, which was heard all over the audience chamber, there was much flutter and commotion among all the women present, and many were at first inclined to gainsay him. But Queen Guinevere questioned all thoroughly, and gave fair judgment, and at the end declared that the knight had solved the question, and there was no woman there who did not confess that he spoke aright.

On this Ulric received his life freely, and was preparing to go out in great joy, when suddenly as he turned to go, he saw in his way the little old woman to whom he owed the answer which had bought his life. At sight of her, more hideous than ever, among the beauty of the court ladies, who looked at her in horror of her ugli-

ness, the knight's heart sank again. Before he could speak she demanded of him her boon.

"What would you ask of me?" said Ulric, fearfully.

"My boon is only this," answered the hag, "that in return for thy life, which my wit has preserved to thee, thou shalt make me thy true and loving wife."

Sir Ulric was filled with horror, and would gladly have given all his goods and his lands to escape such a union. But not anything would the old crone take in exchange for his fair self; and the queen and all the court agreeing that she had the right to enforce her request, which he had promised on his knightly honor, he was at last obliged to yield and make her his wife.

Never in all King Arthur's court were sadder nuptials than these. No feasting, no joy, but only gloom and heaviness, which, spreading itself from the wretched Sir Ulric, infected all the court. Many a fair dame pitied him sorely, and not a knight but thanked his gracious stars that he did not stand in the like ill fortune.

After the wedding ceremonies, as Ulric sat alone in his chamber, very heavy-hearted and sad, his aged bride entered and sat down near him. But he turned his back upon her, resolving that now she was his wife, he would have no more speech with her.

While he sat thus inattentive, she began to speak with him, and in spite of his indifference, Sir Ulric could but confess that her voice was passing sweet, and her words full of wit and sense. In a long discourse she painted to him the advantage of having a bride who from very gratitude would always be most faithful and loving. She instanced from history and song all those who by beauty had been betrayed, and by youth had been led into folly. At last she said, —

"Now, my sweet lord, I pray thee tell me this. Would you rather I should be as I am, and be to you a true and humble wife, wise in judgment, subject in all things to your will, or young and foolish, and apt to betray your counsels. Choose now betwixt the two."

Then the knight, who had listened in much wonder to the wisdom with which she spoke, and had pondered over her words while speaking, could not help being moved by the beauty of her conversation, which surpassed the beauty of any woman's face which he had ever seen. Under this spell he answered her: —

"Indeed I am content to choose you even as you are. Be as you will. A man could have no better guidance than the will of so sensible a wife."

On this his bride uttered a glad cry.

"Look around upon me, my good lord," she said; "since you are willing to yield to my will in this, behold that I am not only wise, but young and fair also. The enchantment, which held me thus aged and deformed, till I could find a knight who in spite of my ugliness would marry me, and would be content to yield to my will, is forever removed. Now, I am your fair, as well as your loving wife."

Turning around, the knight beheld a lady sweet and young, more lovely in her looks than Guinevere herself. With happy tears she related how the enchantments had been wrought which held her in the form of an ancient hag until he had helped to remove the spell. And from that time forth they lived in great content, each happy to yield equally to each other in all things.

THREE UNKNOWN POETS.

THERE are some stories which may be called the world's property, since no one can find who told them first, or in what language they were first written. One of these old tales, which is found far back in English poetry, I am going now to tell you. Chaucer relates it in some of his loveliest verse, but he does not claim it as his own, and confesses that he got the story from a worthy clerk in Padua, called Francis Petrarch, whose

> " rhetoric sweet,
> Illumined all Italie of poesy."

And since Chaucer, many another poet has taken up this tale. Three friends of Shakespeare, named Thomas Dekker, Henry Chettle, and William Haughton, made the same tender story into a heart-breaking drama; and since their day, in many a different form, it has appeared in literature. But I have not yet told you its name. It is the story of

PATIENT GRISELDA.

Many years ago, in a lovely country of Italy, shut in by Alpine mountains, there lived a noble

young Duke, who was lord over all the land. He was one of a long line of good princes, and his people loved him dearly. They had only one fault to find with him, for he made good laws, and ruled them tenderly; but alas! he would not marry. So his people feared he would not leave any son to inherit his dukedom. Every morning his wise counselors asked him if he had made up his mind on the subject of marriage, and every morning the young Duke heard them patiently; and as soon as they had spoken, he answered, "I am thinking of marriage, my lords; but this is a matter which requires much thought."

Then he called for his black hunting-steed, and held up his gloved hand for his white falcon to come and alight upon his wrist, and off he galloped to the hunt, of which he was passionately fond, and which absorbed all the time that was not occupied with the cares of his government.

But after a while, his counselors insisted on being answered more fully.

"Most dear prince," urged they, "only fancy what a dreadful thing it would be if you should be taken from your loving people, and leave no one in your place. What fighting, and confusion, and anarchy there would be over your grave! All this could never happen, if you had a sweet wife, who would bring you, from God, a noble son, to grow up to be your successor."

The morning on which they urged this so strongly, Duke Walter stood on the steps of his palace, in his hunting-suit of green velvet, with his beautiful falcon perched on his wrist, while a page in waiting stood by holding his horse. Suddenly he faced about, and looked full at his advisers.

"What you say is very wise," he answered. "To-day I am going to follow your advice. This is my wedding-day."

Here all the counselors stared at each other with round eyes.

"Only you must promise me one thing," continued the Duke. "Whoever I marry, be she duchess or beggar, old or young, ugly or handsome, not one of you must find fault with her, but welcome her as my wife, and your honored lady."

All the courtiers, recovering from their surprise, cried out, "We will; we promise."

Thereupon, all the court who were standing about gave a loud cheer; and the little page, who held the horse's bridle, tossed up his cap, and turned two double somersaults on the pavement of the court-yard. Then the Duke leaped into his saddle, humming a song of how King Cophetua wooed a beggar maid; tootle-te-tootle went the huntsmen's bugles; clampety-clamp went the horse's hoofs on the stones, and out into the green forest galloped the royal hunt.

Now, in the farther border of the wood was a little hut which the hunting-train passed by daily. In this little cottage lived an old basket-maker named Janiculo, with his only daughter Griselda, the child of his old age. He had also a son Laureo, who was a poor scholar in Padua, studying hard to get money enough to make himself a priest. But Laureo was nearly always away, and Griselda took care of her father, kept the house, and wove baskets with her slender, nimble fingers, to sell in the town close by.

I cannot tell you in words of the loveliness of Griselda. She was as pure as the dew which gemmed the forest, as sweet-voiced as the birds, as light-footed and timid as the deer which started at the hunter's coming. Then her heart was so tender and good, she was so meek and gentle, that to love her was of itself a blessing; and to be in her presence, was like basking in the beams of the May sun.

This morning she and her father sat under the tree by their cottage door, as the hunting-train passed by. They were weaving baskets; and, as they worked, they sang together this glorious labor-song: —

"Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers?
O sweet content!
Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexed?
O punishment!
Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexed

To add to golden numbers, golden numbers?
O sweet content!
O sweet, O sweet content!
Chorus. — Work apace, apace, apace,
Honest labor bears a lovely face;
Then, hey nonny, nonny! hey nonny, nonny!

"Canst drink the waters of the crispéd spring?
O sweet content!
Swimm'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears?
O punishment!
Then he that patiently want's burden bears,
No burden bears, but is a king, a king!
O sweet content!
O sweet, O sweet content!
Chorus. — Work apace," etc.

As the hunting party swept by, Griselda looked up, and noted again, as had happened several mornings before, that the penetrating eyes of the handsome Duke were fixed on her.

"I fear he is angry that we sit so near his path," mused Griselda. "How his eyes look into one's soul. His gaze really makes me tremble. I will not sit here on his return, lest it be displeasing to him."

Before the hunt was fairly out of sight, a gossiping neighbor came to the hut of Janiculo, to tell the good news. Now, indeed, the Duke was really going to wed. He had promised to bring a wife with him when he came back from the hunt. People said he had ridden into the next province, to ask the hand of the Duke's beautiful daughter in marriage. And it might be depended

on, he would bring the bride home on the milk-white palfrey, which one of his squires had led by a silver bridle.

It was almost sunset when the trampling of hoofs told Griselda that the hunting party were coming back ; and remembering what the talkative neighbor had said, she thought she would like to take a peep at the young bride when they passed on their way to the palace. She had just been to the well for some water, and she stood in the doorway, with her bare, round arm poising the earthen pitcher on her head, and the rosy toes of her little bare feet peeping from beneath her brown gown, to watch the hunt go by.

Nearer and nearer came the train : louder and louder sounded the clatter, and full in sight came the Duke, with the white palfrey, led by its silver bridle, close beside him. But the saddle was empty, and no bride was among the huntsmen.

"Can it be possible the lady would refuse him, — so handsome and noble as he looks ?" thought Griselda.

How astonished she was when the Duke, riding up to the hut, asked for her father. She was pale with fright, lest their humble presence had in some way offended the prince ; and, all in a tremble, ran in to call old Janiculo. He came out, as much puzzled and frightened as his daughter.

"Look up, Janiculo," said the Duke, graciously. "You have heard, perhaps, that to-day is my wedding-day. With your good will, I propose to take to wife your daughter Griselda. Will you give her to me in marriage?"

If a thunder-bolt had struck the earth at old Janiculo's feet, he could not have been more stunned. He gazed at the earth, the sky, and into his lord's face, who had to repeat his question three times, before the old man could speak.

"I crave your lordship's pardon," he stammered, at length. "It is not for me to give anything to your lordship. All that is in your kingdom belongs to yourself. And my daughter is only a part of your kingdom." And when he had said this, he did not know whether he were dreaming or awake.

Griselda had modestly stayed in-doors; but now they called her out, and told her she was to be the Duke's bride. All amazed, she suffered them to mount her on the snow-white steed, and lead her beside the Duke, to the royal palace. All along the road the people had gathered, and shouts rent the air; and at the palace gates the horses' feet sank to the fetlocks in roses, which had been strewn in their pathway. Everywhere the people's joy burst bounds, that now their prince had taken a bride. As for Griselda, she rode along, still clad in her russet gown, her

large eyes looking downward, while slow tears, unseen by the crowd, ran over her cheeks, caused half by fear and half by wonder at what had happened. Not once did she look into her lord's face, till the moment when they reached the palace steps; and leaping lightly from his horse, Duke Walter took her from the palfrey in his own royal arms. Then he said, "How say'st thou, Griselda? Wilt be my true wife, subject to my will, as a dutiful wife should be?"

And looking in his face, she said solemnly, as if it were her marriage vow, "I will be my lord's faithful servant, obedient in all things."

Then they brought rich robes to put on Griselda, and the priest pronounced the wedding ceremony, and the bridal feast was eaten, and patient Griselda became a great Duchess.

For a time all went on happily in the country of Saluzzo, where Duke Walter held reign. The people loved the meek Duchess no less that she was lowly born; and when two beautiful twin babes were born to the Duke, a boy and girl, the joy was unbounded all over the kingdom. Walter, too, was very joyful; or, he would have been very happy, if a demon of distrust had not been growing up in his heart ever since he had married the beautiful Griselda. He saw how gentle she was, and how obedient to him in all things, and he was all the time uncertain

whether this yielding spirit was caused by love of him, or by gratitude at the high place to which he had lifted her, and the grandeur with which he had surrounded her. He remembered the vow she had taken when she looked into his eyes and said, "I will be my lord's faithful servant, obedient in all things," and thinking of it, day by day, there arose in his heart a desire to put her love and faith to the test.

The resolution to which he came was so cruel, that we can scarcely believe he could have loved Griselda, and had the heart to attempt to carry out his design. He took into his counsel only an old servant named Furio, and to him he gave the execution of his plan.

One day Griselda sat in her chamber, caressing and playing with her two babes. She had never intrusted their care and rearing to any but herself, and her chief delight had been to tend them, to note their pretty ways, to rock them asleep, and to watch their rosy slumbers. At this moment, tired out with play, her noble boy, the younger Walter, lay in his cradle at her foot; and the sweet girl, with her father's dark eyes, lay on the mother's bosom, while she sang softly this cradle song, to lull them to sleep: —

"Golden slumbers kiss your eyes,
Smiles awake when you do rise;
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby;
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

"Care is heavy, therefore sleep you,
You are care, and care must keep you;
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby;
Rock them, rock them, lullaby."

While the young Duchess sang the last notes of her song, Furio appeared on the threshold. Some remorse for what he was to do, made the water for an instant dim his eyes, as he watched the group. But he had sworn to do his lord's bidding, and he only hesitated for a moment. Looking up, Griselda saw him, and greeted him with a smile.

"Enter, good Furio," she said. "See, they are both asleep. When he sleeps, my boy is most like his father; but awake, my girl's dark eyes recall him most. Have you any message from my lord, Furio?"

"My lady," answered the old man, hesitatingly, "I have a message. It is somewhat hard to deliver, but the Duke must have his own will. My lord fears you are too much with the babes; that you are not quite a fitting nurse for them. Not that he fears your low birth will taint the manners of his children, but he fears the people might fancy it was so, and he must consult the wishes of his people."

"If my lord thinks so," answered Griselda, "he may find nurses for his babes. It seems as if no love could be so dear as mine. But per-

chance he is right. My ways are uncouth beside those of royal blood. I will give my babes a better teacher. Only I may see them often, and love them still as dear, can I not, Furio?"

"That is not my lord's wish, madam," said Furio, not daring to look full at the Duchess, and keeping his eyes fixed on the ground. "The Duke fears that even now the people murmur that an heir of base origin shall grow up to rule over them. And he is forced to study the will of his people. So he has sent me to take away the babes, and dispose of them according to his royal orders."

When he had said this, Griselda looked at him as one who did not understand the language which he spake. All the blood forsook her cheek, her strength gave way, and falling at the feet of the old servant, still holding her baby clasped to her breast, she looked up in his face imploringly, like the deer who lies under the knife of the hunter.

But when Furio began to take up the babes, the boy from his nest among his cradle pillows, the girl from her soft refuge in the mother's bosom, — then the sorrow of Griselda would have melted the tough flint to tears. She prayed with moving words, she shed such floods of tears, she gave such piteous cries of agony, that Furio, tearing the children away with one strong effort,

ran from the room with the screaming infants, his own face drenched with weeping. When the Duke heard of all this, though it did not move him from his obstinacy of purpose, he yet grieved in secret, and wondered if Griselda's love could outlast this trial.

The twin babes, torn so rudely from their mother, were sent to a noble sister of the Duke, who dwelt in Pavia; but no word was told to Griselda of their fate; and she, poor mother, submissive to her husband's will, because she believed it supreme, like God's, dared not ask after them, lest she should hear that they were slain.

When the Duke saw how Griselda had no reproaches, nothing but grief, to oppose to his will, even his jealousy was forced to confess that her faith had stood the test. Whenever he looked on her, her gentle patience moved his heart to pity, and many times he half repented his cruelty.

Month after month, and year after year went by, and again and again did this demon of suspicion stir the Duke to some trial of his wife's obedience and patience. He drove out the aged Janiculo from the comfortable lodgment in the palace in which Griselda had bestowed him, and forced him to return to the hut where he had lived before his daughter's greatness. And though Griselda's paling face and sad eyes told

her sorrow, she uttered no word of complaint or anger against the Duke.

"Is he not my liege lord," she said to her own heart, when it sometimes rose in bitter complainings, "and did I not swear to obey his will in all things?"

At last the day came when they had been wedded twelve years. Long ago had Griselda won the hearts of the people by her gentle manners, her sweet, sad face, her patient ways. If Walter's heart had not been made of senseless stone, he would now have been content. But in his scheming brain he had conceived one final test, one trial more, from which, if Griselda's patience came out unmoved, it would place her as the pearl of women, high above compare.

On this wedding morn, then, he came into her bower, and in cold speech, thus spoke to her, — "Griselda, thou must have guessed that for many years I have bewailed the caprice which led me to take thee, low-born, and rude in manners, as my wife. At last my people's discontent, and my own heart, have told me that I must take a bride who can share fitly my state, and bring me a noble heir. Even now from Pavia, my sister's court, my young bride, surpassing beautiful, is on her way hither. Canst thou be content to go back to thy father, and leave me free to marry her?"

"My dear lord," answered Griselda, meekly, "in all things I have kept my vow. I should have been most happy if love for me had brought thy heart to forget my low station. But in all things I am content. Only one last favor I ask of thee. Thy new wife will be young, high-bred, impatient of restraint, tender to rude sorrow. Do not put on her faith such trials as I have borne, lest her heart bend not under them, but break at once."

When she had done speaking, she turned to her closet, where all these years she had kept the simple russet gown which she had worn on the day Duke Walter wooed her, and laying aside her velvet robes, her laces, and jewels, she put it on, went before the Duke again, ready to depart from the palace forever. But he had one request to make of her. It was that she would stay to superintend the bride's coming, to see that the feast was prepared, the wedding chamber ready, and the guests made welcome, because none so well as she knew the management of the affairs in the palace.

Then Griselda went among the servants, and saw that the feast was made, and all things were in order, concealing her aching heart under a face which tried to smile. When at evening she heard the fickle people shouting in the streets, and saw the roses strewn as they had been on

her wedding day, then the tears began to fall, and her soul sank within her. But at that moment the Duke called, "Griselda, where is Griselda?"

On this, she came forth into the great feast chamber from whence he called. At the head of the room stood the Duke, still handsome and youthful; and on each side of him a noble youth and maiden, both fresh, blooming, and beautiful.

A sudden faintness overcame Griselda at the sight. She grew dizzy, and would have fallen, if Duke Walter had not quickly caught her in his arms.

"Look up, Griselda, dear wife," he cried, "for thou art my dear wife, and all I shall ever claim. I have tried enough thy faith and patience. Know, truly, that I love thee most dear; and these are thy children returned to thee, whom for so many years I have cruelly kept hid from thee."

When Griselda heard these words, as one who hears in a dream, she fell into a deep swoon, from which for a time neither the voice of her husband, nor the tears and kisses of her children, could rouse her. But when she was brought back to life, to find herself in the arms of her lord, and meet the loving looks of her children, she was speedily her calm and gentle self again.

Then they led her to her chamber, and put on her richest robes, and a crown of jewels on her head; and, radiant with happiness, all the beauty of her girlhood seemed to come back to her face. Nay, a greater beauty than that of girlhood; for, softened by heavenly patience, her face was sweet as an angel's. From that time forth the Duke strove, by every look and deed and tender word, to make amends for her hard trials. And to all ages will her story be known, and in all poetry will she be enshrined as the sweet image of wifely patience, the incomparable Griselda.

THE STORY OF CANDACE.

(FROM CHAUCER AND SPENSER.)

THE first part of this story is found in Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," where it is left in an unfinished state. Spenser afterward takes up the story of Candace in the second canto of the fourth book of "Faery Queen," which celebrates the life-long friendship of Cambello and Triamond. I have taken some liberties with the two stories in order to unite them gracefully, but thev are very slight and immaterial.

The famous old Emperor Cambuscan made a grand feast in his royal palace to celebrate his victory over the sovereign of the Russias. On his right hand was his son Cambello, bravest of knights, and on the other side sat his fair daughter Candace, who was of all princesses most learned and prudent.

While they sat amid the noise and rejoicing of the feast, word was brought to the Emperor that a messenger stayed without, bearing presents to the court. On this he was ordered

to be ushered into the royal presence. In a few moments, while all waited expectant, a swarthy figure, dressed in Oriental guise, came in.

With one hand he led by a silver bridle a horse of shining brass, which moved obedient to its keeper's bidding. In his other hand he held a small mirror; by his side hung a sword bare of its scabbard, and on the thumb of his right hand he wore a ring of dazzling brightness.

When he had approached the Emperor Cambuscan, this stranger knight bowed low and spoke thus: —

"Most potent sovereign of the West, the lord of Araby and Ind sends you these gifts with friendly greeting. This horse, of such magic power that he who knows its secret can ride through the air as if he were borne aloft on wings wheresoever he chooses; a mirror, in which he who looks can see who is his true friend or his sworn foe. In it any lady can see if her lover be true, or any prince can determine who among his subjects is a traitor. With these, he sends also this sword, which makes its owner invincible to enemies, and this ring, whose wonderful powers are unequaled in magic. He upon whose finger it is worn, can understand the language of animals, the proper-

ties of plants, and it shall also have power to stanch the blood from any wound, howsoever dangerous, which its wearer shall receive."

The Emperor thanked the ambassador from his brother of Araby, with many thanks, and made him welcome at his festivities. The gifts were received with great honor, and were divided between the monarch and his children. Cambuscan himself retained the magic horse and the mirror, Cambello took the sword, and to Candace, already noted for her learning, the ring was given, so that by its aid she became the wisest princess in all Europe.

Now upon each of these gifts there hangs a tale more wonderful than any of those with which the Persian Sultana beguiled her lord. But our fortunes go now with Candace and her ring, and the happy issue out of deadly battle which it brought to her brother Cambello.

Now this brother and sister loved each other with great affection, so that their friendship stood as a pattern of fraternal love. Although Candace had many suitors among the best born knights, yet she refused all, content in the society of her brother and her books, and caring naught for any wooers who appeared to sue for her.

But at length the people began to clamor for the marriage of the princess, desiring that she

should be united to some one worthy of her high deserts. When Cambello saw that this was the people's will, he announced that he would hold a grand tournament in the kingdom, at which all brave foreign princes and knights should be bidden. Each who entered the lists should engage in fight with Cambello, and he who was able to conquer him, should be the husband of Candace.

There were three lovers of Candace, who, on hearing this announcement, resolved at once to risk their lives for her. These three were the twin-born brothers, Priamond, Dyamond, and Triamond, who all bore charmed lives. It happened in this wise: — They were the children of a fay who dwelt deep in the heart of an enchanted forest. There in a secluded bower had the fay reared her brave sons. But alas! they were of mortal sire, and from their earliest youth the shadow of their death hung over their mother, who was a fairy of immortal birth and lineage.

When they were still babes, she went to the dread abode of the Fates, to entreat them to spare the lives of her three boys. Atropos, angry at the request, refused her such a boon; but Clotho, the youngest and most pitiful of the Parcæ, permitted her to look into the web of destiny and behold the threads of her sons' lives.

To her grief the fay beheld them clipped short in early manhood. Then the mother, with moving words, entreated the Fates to let each inherit the other's life, so that when the fatal shears of Atropos severed the thread of Priamond's life, his ghost should pass into Dyamond's frame, and when his life was ended, both together should be added to Triamond, that his life and strength might be pieced out with the warp of his brothers' lives. This boon was granted to her prayers, and with this the fay was forced to be content.

These three brothers came to the tournament of Cambello, in martial array, attended by a herald, who proclaimed loudly, before them, the high deeds in arms for which they were already famous.

Cambello entered into combat with his magic sword, sent by the Arabian monarch. On his finger also he wore the enchanted ring which had the power to stanch blood. Trebly armed with these and his own valor, he went forth to battle in his sister's cause.

The arena was spread thick with glittering white sand, so firm and hard that even the horses' hoofs scarce dented its level surface. About the inclosure were seats for hundreds of spectators, and aloft, in the stateliest place, sat Candace to view the conflict. Above the heads of the spec-

tators were draped rich canopies of crimson and gold, rarest products of the looms of Persia and of Ind. Everywhere the most splendid preparations were made for the tourney.

The first who met the weapon of Cambello was Priamond, who fought long and gallantly. At the last the sharp spear-head of Cambello found out a crevice in his thick armor, and gave him such a thrust in his side that from the wound his life gushed forth. Then his brave spirit, instead of seeking at once the grim shades of Hades, entered into the mortal shape of Dyamond, who from that moment was twice eager for the affray.

Inspired by double soul and valor Dyamond was hardly to be subdued, and for a long time the victory seemed doubtful, — till, with one gigantic blow, Cambello wielded his good sword, and struck from his body the head of his brave adversary.

Then as the united lives of his two brothers passed into the breast of Triamond, a great cry of defiance escaped his throat. Not one whit dismayed at the prowess of Cambello, he burned to engage with him hand to hand.

At the next morning's dawn, behold the two champions clad in glittering armor, with helmets closed, and arms newly put in order, met on the snowy field.

Like two clouds charged with black thunderbolts, they meet each other, and are merged in dire conflict. Blow rang on blow, blood stained the fair sand, weapons were broken and thrown aside, and yet without stay, the battle waged, and each combatant seemed untiring and incapable of defeat. Already the sun stood in the centre of the heavens, and Candace had begun to fear for her brother's safety, in spite of the charmed weapon which he bore, and begged that the fight might cease.

As the noontide waned, sounds of surprise and admiration were heard to arise from the assembled spectators, and the crowd shrank away to either side. Through the parting multitude drove a silver chariot, drawn by four tawny lions, who moved obedient to the reins. In the chariot stood a lady, dazzlingly beautiful, who bore in one hand a wand twined with an olive wreath, and in the other a cup filled with a rare liquid called nepenthe, which none but brave warriors are able to quaff.

This lady was in truth the fairy Cambina, the sister of Triamond, who, despairing of the issue of the fight, had come to make peace between them.

When she reached the side of the two combatants, Cambina waved her olive-clad wand, and at once their arms fell powerless, and their swords

seemed glued to the earth. As soon as this was wrought, Cambina offered them both a draught of the liquor which she bore, and they, thirsty with their hard fight, accepted it eagerly. In the contents of the cup, all enmity and cause of quarrel was forgotten, and by the help of Cambina, a friendship was that moment cemented between them which was never broken.

Cambello gave his sister Candace to Triamond, who gladly accepted her as his bride ; and the lovely fay was content to link herself with the mortal Cambello, so that with this exchange of sisters the two knights were still closer knit in bonds of affection.

And so famous did their friendship become, that among all the knights of Faery their names stood for a sign of brotherly union, in arms and in love.

SPENSER.

EDMUND SPENSER, the author of "The Faery Queen," was born somewhere in the shadow of the Tower of London, in the year 1553, when Queen Elizabeth was mistress of the English throne. Whether he was of "good blood," as the genealogists would call it, we do not know. His veins ran blood refined by pure poetic fires, and that is enough for us who love him.

Like most poets, he was poor. And he lived in days when his verses would not bring him an income. Then the poet was forced to seek some wealthy patron, who would keep him, as he kept a fine horse or a rare breed of dog, and throw him some crumbs of preferment, or a purse of gold, now and then, so that the poor verse-maker might not starve over his work.

Fortunately, when young Edmund Spenser came to court to seek its favor, he was introduced first to that rare gentleman, himself a poet, *Sir Philip Sidney*, the very sound of whose name is as music in the ears of those who honor chivalrous manhood.

Sidney aided him with money and influence, and brought him into the notice of his uncle, the Earl of Leicester, who was the favorite knight of the capricious Queen. But Leicester was not so fine a gentleman as Sidney, and I fancy that the change of patrons did not benefit our poet. He read some of his verses to the Queen, and he was long a hanger-on at the court. If his own lines may be trusted, he tasted to its bitter dregs the cup of servility and waiting for favors, and came to hate the very name of court and patron.

After a long time he went to Ireland as secretary to the lord-deputy, and soon after this he had a grant of land in Ireland made him by the Queen, and a castle given him for his dwelling-place. This land of which he had a share was part of a grant made by the crown to Sir Walter Raleigh, in his days of prosperity, and I always like to believe that Raleigh himself was interested in apportioning the poet with some of these broad acres. I remember Raleigh once visited him there on his estates, where he lived with his wife and children, and that there, by the little River Mulla, which flowed through his fields, these two rare spirits held sweet converse, and Spenser read aloud to his friend some extracts from "The Faery Queen."

These were his peaceful days. They were not long, for in one of the insurrections of the

ignorant and barbarous peasantry, who were constantly putting the English residents (whom they hated then, as now) to the fire and sword, they swept down upon the poet's castle, burnt and ravaged it, and drove out the inhabitants. In the haste and fear of the attack, a new-born baby was left in the castle, and perished in the flames.

This was too great unhappiness to be borne; and coming to his native city of London, the poet died, three months later, poor and broken-hearted, when hardly forty-eight years old.

His poem of poems is "The Faery Queen," written in a measure which has ever since been called "Spenserian." By those who do not know its charm, the poem is called "stiff, pedantic, and unreadable." But there are those who find in its pages a subtle and pervading atmosphere like that which encompasses the Bower of Bliss, or breathes from the enchanted gardens of Amida; which throws the same spell over the maturer imagination that the quaint yet unequaled allegory of old John Bunyan still hold over the brains of childhood.

To the tender judgment of those who know the poet, and, knowing, love him, the little story which follows is intrusted.

ADVENTURES OF THE FAIR FLORIMEL.

(FROM EDMUND SPENSER.)

I.

WHAT voice shall do justice to the deeds of the renowned warrior-maiden, Britomart? For love of the brave Sir Arthegall, whom Merlin had long since prophesied would be her wedded lord, she had covered her yellow tresses with a plumed helmet, and hid the beating of her woman's heart under a breast-plate of steel. So many conquests had she won in tourney and on the field, that her fame almost equaled that of the peerless Arthur, Prince of the Round Table, a knight whose friendship held her in proud esteem.

Now, as my tale opens, this warrior-maid rode briskly toward the sea, which washed an enchanted shore, where day after day the scornful Prince Marinell kept watch and ward that he might do battle with any one bold enough to venture upon its boundaries.

With him Britomart sought to measure lances in an encounter, because of all knights he was accounted one of the most difficult to overcome.

Marinell was the son of Cymoent (one of the daughters of Nereus) and an earth-born knight, who had loved the beautiful sea-nymph, and won her to be his bride. Hence the sea and land were equally the home of Marinell, and he could wander at will among the grottoes and fern forests in the depths of the ocean where his mother dwelt. Neptune had given him also, as his birthright, the whole control of the stretch of sandy shore toward which Britomart now set her horse's head, and all the spoils which the waves threw thereon. So that he possessed untold wealth of pearl and amber, and all sorts of sea-treasures, besides stores of gold and ivory, precious stones, and rare woods, which had been washed upon the sand from hundreds of wrecked vessels, which the waves had broken in pieces, before they could reach the enchanted coast.

This fortunate Marinell was passionately beloved by his mother, the sea-nymph, Cymoent. In his infancy she had prayed that he might be an immortal like herself, but the gods had denied her prayer. Then she went weeping to Proteus, the merlin of the sea, and besought him to reveal to her her son's destiny. Proteus, after much hesitation, bade Cymoent guard her son from all women. "For know, O Cymoent," said the enchanter, "from a woman shall come all his danger, and his death-blow."

On this, Cymoent had reared her boy in extremest hate of all womankind. She taught him to despise all their charms and to distrust all their words. So that hitherto he had hardly allowed himself speech with any woman or even looked twice into a female face.

Alas that all women were not as hard-hearted as the sea-prince! The lovely Florimel, sweetest and most innocent of maidens, the goddaughter of Venus, who had been reared by the Graces and Muses on Mount Helicon, had beheld the handsome Marinell from the windows of the castle not far distant from the sea, where she now had her dwelling-place. Often, with her attendant maidens, had she ridden near the beach, and often had dismounted to gather pebbles and sea-weed which the waves washed far in to shore. Again and again she had watched the scornful prince, who would not even glance at her, and like a tame white dove, which will fly as soon into the bosom of its enemy as into a hand ready to protect and cherish, so her heart had flown into the keeping of the black-browed prince. But when she had found that he would not notice or look on her, she was filled with shame and disappointment, and sought only to go away and hide herself from all eyes.

Angry at the indignity put upon all women

by the indifference of Marinell, Britomart rode onward to avenge the wrong done to beauty and chivalry by his scorn of the lovely Florimel.

As the warrior-maid approached, Marinell beheld her coming, and his eyes flashed with the desire of meeting some warrior worthy of his prowess. Her sex he could not guess at, through the thick armor and closed visor which she wore; else might the remembrance of the prophecy which he knew threatened his life have made him fear to engage in battle with a woman.

"Hold, rash knight!" cried the prince, as Britomart rode briskly up toward the watery line which the ebbing waves left upon the gray sand. "By what right dost thou venture here? Knowest thou that this is a way forbidden to mortal knights? Fly, then, or with thy life pay for thy daring."

"Let those fly who fear," called Britomart in tones like the notes of a bugle, "I am no babe to be frightened by idle threats. And either I pass these waves or die beside them."

With these bold words she ran at Marinell, who received her with so fierce a welcome that she reeled in her saddle for a second's space; but recovering, she dashed aside his shield and dealt him so hard a blow upon the breast, that her

lance's head broke short off in the crevices of his armor, and he fell, a gory, lifeless heap, upon the wet sand. Without waiting to inquire into his hurts, Britomart rode swiftly across the beach, and spurred her horse's feet in towards the main land.

Only for a little time did Marinell lie thus upon the beach. A courier of the sea, beholding him, carried the woful news to his mother, Cymoent. She heard the story with grief too great to be described. Calling her chariot, drawn by ten dolphins, which sported all the changing hues of the rainbow on their shining sides, she summoned a group of her sister-nymphs, and, gliding rapidly over the surface of the waters, came quickly to the sad shore.

Three times did Cymoent swoon over the body of her son. Thrice and thrice did she call on Neptune and Nereus, and all her sea-born kinsfolk, to revenge his death.

"False Proteus!" she cried, "no woman dealt this deep wound which his poor breast bears. You taught me to fear his death-blow from a woman, and I, credulous, feared love. But they that love do not always die. Better, a thousand times, love than death."

Amid her grief she fancied she detected a faint heart-beat; and wrapping him in soft mantles, all the sea-nymphs bore him gently to

the chariot, and conveyed him to the bower of Cymoent. Here in a cool chamber, arched overhead by billows through whose watery dome a soft green light suffused the place, they laid him upon a soft couch, spread on the pearly floor. Then they called Tryphon, the surgeon of the sea, to come and look upon the prince and see if any art of his could bring him back to life.

II.

On the day following the adventures we have just related, three knights of Faery were riding along over the plain which spread down to the sea. He whose plumed crest rose high above his companions, was Arthur, Prince of the Round Table. On his left rode the noble Red Cross knight, Sir Guyon, a pattern of spotless knighthood. On his right rode Britomart, her visor open and her yellow hair flowing from her loosened helmet.

As the trio rode on in peaceful converse, they were all at once startled by the clatter of hoofs and the shrill cry of a woman. Looking up, they beheld a beautiful maiden mounted on a white palfrey, which she urged to its utmost speed, flying across the plain not more than a lancer's throw in advance of them. Close upon her heels, in hot pursuit, came a hideous and grizzled old forester, who looked less like a man than a wolf.

When Arthur and Guyon beheld this sight, without waiting for debate or parley they each set spurs to their horses, and followed with all speed upon the forester's track.

The path which the pursuer and pursued had taken, led into a thick wood full of all dangerous winding paths and hidden recesses, and hither the knights followed quickly, hoping to overtake the lady before she was helplessly lost in the intricacies of the forest. While they thus spurred onward, Britomart, feeling sure that the cause of injured beauty would not suffer while intrusted to such worthy lances, turned her course in another direction, and sought a castle where dwelt in chains the unfortunate Lady Amoret.

In the mean time the lady entered the forest, followed close by her pursuers. It was not long before Sir Guyon, overtaking the forester, dealt with him according to his deserts. Prince Arthur still rode on, hoping yet to recover trace of the maiden, whose track he had lost among the branching ways of the forest. But it soon began to grow dark; he could not hear or see aught of her, and at last, following a path which appeared to him to be the right one, he presently found himself at the opening of the forest in nearly the spot where he had first entered it.

Just at the wood's verge he met a dwarf, fantastically dressed in rich garments, who was sob-

bing audibly and giving way to other loud expressions of grief.

"What aileth thee, pygmy?" asked the knight, drawing rein beside him.

"Has you lordship seen aught of a beautiful lady with streaming yellow hair, riding a milk-white palfrey, passing this way?" inquired the dwarf, earnestly addressing Prince Arthur.

"I have just followed such a lady into this forest, in the hope of lending her aid and succor," answered he. "But I could not find her track, after I had lost sight of her."

"It was my mistress, who is lost to me," cried the dwarf, still weeping. "Since yester eve we can find nothing of her."

"And who is your mistress?"

"None other than the Lady Florimel, foster sister to Cupid," answered the dwarf. "She has long been enamored of Prince Marinell, and hearing yesterday that he had fallen in duel, she fell into deep grief, and suddenly rode off on her palfrey and has not since been heard from."

Arthur gave him what comfort he might, and sent him back to his lady's castle. He himself departed at once to stir up all the flower of knighthood to form a league that they might recover and bring back the lost damsel.

In the mean time Florimel, (for it was indeed she) sped swifter and swifter through the in-

closing shadēs of the thick wood. Just as she emerged from its recesses into an open space which seemed to mark the limit of the forest, her horse, which had been so faithful in bearing her from her pursuers, sank down exhausted. Neither coaxing words, nor honeyed caresses, nor her severest threats could rouse him from his fatigue.

She looked around for shelter from the coming night, and found herself in a deep valley, sheltered between high hills. At a little distance the light of a curling smoke-wreath filled her with hope of a hospitable reception. Dragging toward the place her tired feet, she found a cottage, rudely made of sods and branches of trees. Timidly begging entrance here, a harsh voice bade her "come in."

Inside the cottage sat a frightful old witch with withered face and knotted hair, mumbling strange charms, while she warmed her lean hands over a caldron which hung over her fire. When this uncanny hag beheld the lovely vision standing in her doorway, her blue eyes filled with pearly tears, her hair streaming round her shoulders, and her face pale with fear and weariness, she fancied Florimel to be one of the spirits of the air to whom she owed forced allegiance.

But with the sad accents of an earth-born maid, Florimel told her sad story, and begged shelter

for the night beside the comfortable fire. Even the witch's withered heart was touched by her forlorn plight, and she bade her welcome, and gave her such coarse fare as her hut afforded.

While Florimel, a little refreshed by her rude meal and the warm fire, sat down to arrange her garments, torn by the rough branches and wet with the night dews, the door opened, and an uncouth clown appeared, whose face looked out from under a tangled covert of unkempt hair and matted beard, as a wild beast looks from his lair.

This was the witch's son, whom, in spite of his ill looks, she loved, as the tiger loves her young, as the bear the unlicked cubs which nature teaches her to fight for.

The uncouth monster glared on Florimel as one whose eyes had never before seen a piece of gentle womanhood. She, uneasy and frightened at his gaze, asked for a place where she might rest from the day's fatigues. Then the witch showed her a pile of soft skins, on which she sank exhausted, and in spite of fears and misgivings for her safety, she was soon fast shrouded in a dreamless sleep.

When day dawned she found the morning repast spread beside her. There were tender birds cooked in the hot embers, purple grapes, and luscious berries gathered in the forest. All these the churlish-looking youth had been out

before daybreak to seek for her. With the gentlest speech which his rude lips knew how to frame, he urged these dainties upon Florimel, while she, fearing as much his love as his hate, could scarce eat, and trembled in every limb at the sound of his voice.

When the sun was half way up the sky, the monster departed to the wood to find other dainties for their guest, and Florimel sought her steed where she had left him the night before. To her great joy, he answered her voice with a glad whinny, and rose to his feet refreshed by the cool dews and the sweet herbage which he had eaten. The maiden mounted him at once, and as quickly as she could, made her way from the place where the ancient Hecate abode.

When the witch's son found that the maiden had departed, his grief and rage were hideous to behold. He tore his matted hair, rent his flesh with his long nails, and howling like some savage beast, cast himself on the floor of the hut, refusing to rise or speak.

His mother, seeing him thus mad at the loss of Florimel, cast about for some means to overtake and bring her back to him. By her black arts she summoned to her aid a swift, horrible monster, with the keen scent of a blood-hound, whom she commanded to follow Florimel and bring her back, without delay.

Florimel had scarcely issued from the thick wood which clothed the valley, and entered upon the barren plain which led to the shore where Marinell had once reigned, than she heard the loud baying of the monster, and, looking back, beheld him issuing from the wood. With gigantic strides he came on, his long, hairy arm extended to clutch his prey, and his parted mouth showing a wide row of gleaming teeth. Her heart seemed glued to her side with fear, and she had hardly voice to cheer on her horse toward the shining beech.

On the edge of the sea, in a sheltered cove where the water lay still and smooth, she saw a little shallop, in which a fisher, old and poor, lay fast asleep upon a pile of his unmended nets. As soon as she reached the edge, she threw herself from her palfrey, and wading through the shallow water, climbed into the little boat. The fisher's slack grasp yielded her easily the slight oars, and in a moment she pushed herself out into the level sea.

Who can describe the howling rage of the vile monster when he found himself thus disappointed of his victim? With loud cries he threw himself upon the fair steed which had borne Florimel so bravely, and with his sharp claws tore him limb from limb, and set himself to feast upon his mangled sides.

While the creature thus gloated over his prey, it chanced that Sir Satyrane, one of the bravest of all the knights of Faery, at that moment rode along the shore. At one glance he saw the mangled steed of the maiden, and descried also her golden girdle lying coiled upon the sand.

As quickly as the red lightning rushes from the clouds on some hoary monarch of the forest, and rives its ancient trunk with its forked darts, so quickly did Sir Satyrane ride upon the horrid monster and fell him to the trembling earth.

But by the witch's magic arts no sword had power to end his unclean life; and after many blows which would have put an end to him, if it had not been for the charms by which he was protected, the knight sent him howling back to his mistress.

Then picking up the girdle which Florimel had dropped off in the haste with which she had dismounted, the knight bore it sadly away, as a proof that its sweet owner had been devoured by a huge monster whom he had encountered on the sea-shore.

III.

Now when the monster carried the news of Florimel's escape to his mistress, the witch's rage knew no bounds. At once she summoned to her counsel all the malicious imps and sprites

who were wont to do her bidding, and sought their aid to frame something which should deceive her son, who still lay prone upon the earth, refusing to be consoled for the loss of Florimel.

By their advice and her own wicked devices, the witch formed a creature so like to Florimel, that no one looking on the false semblance could doubt it to be the true reality. This image was moulded of virgin wax, tinged with vermilion, to the color of soft flesh. Her hair was woven of fine threads of yellow gold; her eyes of sapphire, set to move in her head like twin stars; and in this lovely body she placed a wicked sprite of the air, who was skilled in all deceit, and knew how to chain the hearts of men in subtle bonds which could not be easily unriven.

To her ungainly son the witch presented this sprite as the lady to whom he had lost his heart. He was rapt with joy at seeing her, and more than filled with delight that she no longer shrank from his rude presence. Soon persuading her to walk abroad with him, he led her into the cool paths of the green wood which surrounded their dwelling.

Now it happened that when Sir Satyrane spread abroad the manner in which he had found the girdle of Florimel upon the sand, there was

much grief among all the knights of Maidenhood, whom Prince Arthur had stirred up in league to find and rescue the lost maiden. And since Satyrane could lay no claim to her girdle, as he had not won it in any decisive combat, it was deemed fair that it should be put up as the prize, at a tournament, at which all knights, far and wide, should gather, to take part in the contest.

Thereupon, many gallant gentlemen, from all parts, were making haste to the place appointed, and numberless fair ladies rode with them to see the brave deeds which would be sure to appear. Through the very wood in which the witch's son roamed with his fair semblance of a woman, rode a boastful knight, called Braggadochio, who was on his way to swell the lists at Sir Satyrane's tourney. He came upon the clown, walking with his Florimel; and believing her the lady whom all the knights of Faery supposed dead, Braggadochio stopped his horse to challenge her rude guard as to his right to her.

The poor clown, half frightened from his wits by the knight's manner, gave her up, without daring a remonstrance, and so soon lost the image which had cost him so much grief to possess. Then Braggadochio rode on, swelling with pride and vainglory, that he bore, as his prize to the tourney, the fair lady who was the cause of all these preparations.

Hardly had this mock-valiant gone a single stage of his journey when he met Sir Blandamour, who was also on his way to join the knights. Without delay he challenged Braggadochio's right to the lady whom he bore with him. The boasting knight at once accepted the challenge. But before they rode at each other in the encounter, he proposed to his opponent that they should turn their horse's heads, and ride back a few yards in order that they might return, and ride at each other with greater force. To this Blandamour agreed, and when they had turned back to back, to ride a little apart, Braggadochio, sticking his spurs deep into his horse's sides, rode away swifter than ever he had ridden before, leaving Sir Blandamour in possession of the fair cause of the dispute.

As Blandamour rode away with his prize, he was joined by a party of knights, all on their way to the meeting-place. Then, by her wicked arts, the sprite who inhabited the semblance of Florimel was able to stir up evil rancor, and breed all sorts of dissensions among them; so that all the time of their journey to the tournament, they were full of quarrelings, and hard words more bitter than blows, and many friendships were uprooted which had stood the buffetings of long years.

When they came to the place which Sir Sa-

tyrane had appointed, they found many brave knights and dainty dames already assembled. The eye was dazzled with the many-hued silken streamers, the glitter of freshly polished armor, the gay trappings of the horses, and the bright-colored canopies which were draped over the seats where the ladies would sit to witness the affray. On a carved and glittering pole, reared aloft in the centre of the vast field where they were to strive for victory, hung the peerless girdle which was to be the prize.

This was a girdle of rare virtue, forged for Venus by her cyclops husband, out of the purest gold, inlaid with rare stones, and ornamented with fret-work, the like of which could be equaled by no earthly artificer. But its virtue lay in the fact that none but a woman of rarest goodness and most spotless heart could wear the ornament. If she who fastened it about her waist, hid in her soul aught that could sully its whiteness, or concealed a thought which was not manifestly noble and good, then the strange cestus unclasped and stole to her feet; and no fastening or clasping could ever force it to hold its place upon the person.

This very girdle Venus had given to Florimel when she was cradled on Mount Helicon, and the innocent girl had always worn it until the fatal day of its loss.

Now the first day of the tourney arrived, and the terms of the combat were declared. It was announced that he who was victorious on the third day, should be allowed to claim the fairest of all the dames as his lady, and that to her should belong the golden girdle which her knight's valor had won.

Then all the hearts of the ladies fluttered with the hope of possessing so rich a prize, and the good right arm of every knight waxed stronger at the thought of laying the girdle at the feet of the lady whom he most admired.

The first day's heralds sounded the charge. All day long the air was full of the din and dust of conflict; and when at evening the signal was given to close the fight, the stout Sir Satyrane sat alone in the field as victor over all the others. On the second day also Sir Satyrane fought gallantly, till at length Triamond, the sworn knight of Candace, won fortune to his lance's side, and remained at last the conqueror of all the field.

The third and last day came. Again victory rested for a while upon Sir Satyrane's spear, till near the very close, the peerless Britomart, breathless with haste, rode into the lists, and with her enchanted weapon, which none could overcome, bore off the glory of the day, and was declared of all the victor.

Then each knight led forth his lady, and un-

veiled her face to view, that it might be chosen which was fairest of all the fair. Triamond led Candace, daughter of an Indian king; Britomart revealed the pure, sweet face of Lady Amoret, her beauty shining like an unclouded star, in spite of her long languishing in the dire prison from which she had just been released; Paridell displayed the wicked Duessa, whose false beauty was able to dazzle many eyes; and after scores of other lovely faces had been seen, Sir Blandamour unveiled the semblance of Florimel, whose deceit no one was yet able to detect. Indeed, so often does the vulgar mind prefer the false seeming to the simple truth, and permits itself to be deceived with glittering pretense, that even here the multitude cried out in admiration, and declared that Florimel was never before so radiantly fair.

But those who were not so easily beguiled, said that to their eyes no lady there was so lovely as the sad-eyed Amoret.

Then the umpires offered Florimel to Britomart, whom they supposed a valiant stranger knight. But she rather preferred to hold Amoret as her lady, and openly esteemed her the most beautiful of all. Then they proffered Florimel to Triamond, the second day's victor. But he had long since chosen the wise Candace to be his lady, and would have no other. Last came

the umpires to Sir Satyrane, who eagerly accepted the maiden, and called himself most happy to be her liege and protector.

Then was the girdle brought out, and each lady essayed to try on the precious ornament. The base Duessa, the witty Candace, the fairy Cambina, charming Lucida, and many others, attempted to put on the magic cestus. But alas, what shame and confusion ensued, when it was found that from every waist it slipped away, and refused to clasp itself! At length came Amoret's turn, and she binding the golden zone about her slender waist it fitted as if she had been its rightful mistress. Unclasping it, she handed it, last of all, to the false Florimel, whom each believed its real owner. How amazed were all the lookers-on to behold that as fast as Florimel could clasp it on, it coiled away and slid from her grasp, so that no force could fix it on her person.

At last, red with rage and shame, the false maiden dashed it under her feet, and declared the girdle had lost its charm, and was no longer true. Then so eager were many knights to believe that none but holy thoughts could dwell in so fair a temple, that they began to doubt the virtue of the divine cestus, and disbelieved in the charm which it was said to possess.

As the knights made ready to depart, a contest arose among some of the baser sort about the

false Florimel. Already by her subtle arts she had begun to sow discord among them; and although Sir Satyrane had won her love in honorable combat, many of these disputed his right to her. Among these were Paridell, Blandamour, and Braggadochio, who urged his prior claim.

At length Satyrane agreed to leave it to the lady's choice; and moved by her own spritish fancy, she chose the braggart knight, whose temper was of the sort that pleased her best. So, leaving Sir Satyrane alone in his disappointment, she rode away with her chosen knight, and the whole party dispersed far and wide.

IV.

It becomes us now to return to the true Florimel, whom all this time we have left in the little boat with the fisherman, afloat upon the bosom of the sea. Several miles had the waves, assisted by the slight oars which the maiden wielded skillfully, borne them from the shore before the aged fisherman awakened. When at first he saw the vision in his boat, with holy face and golden hair, her zone unbound and her garment flowing loosely from her white throat, he believed her a creature of gentler mould than earth, and cowered in his side of the boat, fearing to address her, lest she proved some powerful spirit of the air. But soon, with tearful accents,

Florimel told him her story, and how, pursued by such dire peril, she had sought shelter in his little shallop.

She told him of her royal birth, and promised him a dear reward in the future if he would set her on some safe shore. Then the old man, seeing the gleam of jewels on her round arms, and the rings on her fingers and in her dainty ears, and many signs of wealth about her, began to plot within himself to rob her, and afterwards to cast her body into the deep. When the black spirit of Avarice thus stirred within his breast, he seized the maiden with rude grasp and tried to tear off her jewels. She shrieked aloud with fear, and struggling in his grasp, called aloud on the spirits that guard injured innocence to succor her.

At her cry a strange sight appeared. On the crest of the waves was seen a pearly chariot, lined with pale amber, drawn by six finny creatures, whose scaly sides shed forth a translucent glow, like pale moonlight. Within was seated the enchanter Proteus, his white hair and beard flowing to his waist. He hastened on his finny steeds to the maiden's rescue ; and no sooner had he reached the boat than he drew Florimel into his chariot, and with one blow sank the frail shallop. Then seizing the ancient fisher, he belabored him lustily with his forked trident, and lashing him to the back of one of the scaly mon-

sters who spouted about him, he sent him to be cast upon the shore, more dead than alive from fear and punishment.

Florimel had fallen into a deep swoon, and Proteus bore her unconscious to his palace underneath the waves. There he gave her in charge to the aged sea-nymph, Panope, who bore her to a secluded chamber and attended her with gentle kindness.

When Florimel recovered, she found herself in a huge vaulted hall lined with opal and pearl. Corals, red and white, bore upon their branching arms cushioned couches, on one of which the weary maiden found herself reclining. A lamp hung from the arched ceiling, swaying with the motion of the sea-waves, and the gentle rocking of her couch invited soft slumbers to the eyes of Florimel when she should like to refresh herself with sleep.

Here many days did Florimel abide, waited on by Panope, who saw in the maiden's beauty, as in a glass, the reflex of her own loveliness in those days of her youth when she had sported with the sea-nymphs, her sisters, before the time that Proteus had brought her hither to attend in his rock-built mansion.

Not now were all the troubles of Florimel at at an end. Proteus beheld how fair the maiden was, and forgetful of her mortal birth, he sought

her for his bride. But she, fearing such a suitor, and remembering her love for Marinell, which she still cherished in despite of the story of his cruel death, told Proteus she could wed none but an earthly knight.

Proteus, who can take as many shapes as there are fancies, took at once the image of a mortal gentleman; and finding the maiden still averse, he tried in turn all different shapes, striving in each to win her heart.

At length, finding her always unwilling, he grew angry and threw her into a dreadful black and noisome dungeon underneath the bellowing waves.

This dungeon was built beneath a jagged rock, and was inclosed by no walls. But all about it swam fearful monsters whose wide mouths gaped to swallow whosoever should venture outside the limits of the rock. Here Florimel languished many weary days and nights, praying for death, and filling the waves with sound of her cries and groans.

In the mean time, by the great skill of Tryphon, Marinell had been restored to life and health. All the daughters of Nereus held great rejoicing, and Cymoent attended a great feast under the waters, where all the sea-gods were present at the festivities. Of this feast Marinell could not partake, because, being a son of

earth, he could not eat at the table of the immortals. So while they sat at the feast, he wandered away and seated himself beside an overhanging rock near the dwelling of Proteus. While he thus sat musing, he heard a voice complaining thus: —

"Gods of the sea, if ye have any pity for a maid who suffers without cause, deliver me from this sad abode, where I lie nearing my death. Or if you have no power to help me hence, at least let me die, who living am naught but unhappy. Is this the punishment of my too great love for Marinell, who loved me not at all? If it be so, carry my last sigh to him, where he dwells among the immortals, and tell him that for love of him Florimel was glad to die."

When Marinell heard these lamentings, his heart, before so hard, was touched with tender pity; and as he listened to her sobs and moans, which would have moved a heart of flinty stone, he began to devise how he might set free the maiden who languished in such a vile prison.

Straightway he went to his mother, Cymoent, and told her what captive was held by Proteus in his watery dungeon. With moving pity he besought her aid for Florimel. Cymoent, who could refuse him nothing, went at once to Nep-

tune, to pray for the maiden's release, and the sea-king forced Proteus to give her up.

Then Cymoent bore Florimel to her own bower under the waves, and nursed her with tenderest care, and each day Marinell drank in from her sweet eyes whole draughts of that fateful passion from which formerly the careful Cymoent had guarded him. The sea-nymph no longer feared the prophecy of Proteus, because Neptune had given his protection to the happy pair.

When she was recovered from her imprisonment, Marinell brought his lovely bride to Faery-land, and the day was fixed when the nuptials should be celebrated. All the court of Faery was bidden to attend, and great preparations were made for feast and tournament.

When the guests were well-nigh assembled, Braggadochio rode in with a veiled lady, and dismounting led her with him to the guest-hall. This lady was no less than the false Florimel whom before he had borne away from Sir Satyrane's tourney. When she had taken off her veil, and all present had beheld her, there was much whispering and confusion among the guests. For all who looked on her, were ready to declare that this was their fair hostess, whom they had seen only a little time before, moving

among the knights and dames as the bride of Prince Marinell. Even Marinell himself, suddenly entering, started back in amaze at beholding the false Florimel, knowing well he had just left his lovely wife in an inner hall.

But Athegall, the knight of Britomart, who was present to grace the tourney with brave deeds, cried out that this was no true lady, and no mate for Florimel.

"In proof of which," he cried, "I challenge that Florimel herself be brought forth and set beside this other."

Upon this they brought forth the true Florimel adorned with all modest graces, the roses interlacing with lilies in her fair face. Her they placed beside the waxen figure "like a true saint beside an image set," and all at once the enchanted damsel vanished, as a snow-wreath melteth into air, leaving nothing behind but the magic girdle of Florimel, which she had always borne about with her.

Then once more the charmed zone was fitted about its mistress' waist, where it clung as if it would never part from it more.

And thus, as glorious day succeeds thick and gloomy night, did the troubled fortunes of Florimel give way to an unclouded wedded life, whose happiness was unsurpassed in song or story.

CAMPASPE AND THE PAINTER.

(PARAPHRASED FROM JOHN LYLY.)

THE great Alexander of Macedon had come home from Thebes rich in triumphs and laden with spoils. At his chariot wheels groaned hosts of captives taken in battle and in siege; and through the openings of the pavilions, hung close with silken tapestry, and borne aloft on the shoulders of swarthy slaves, one might catch glimpses of women's faces, their fairness veiled in clouds of sorrow that their native city had been made desolate, and they themselves torn away captive to swell the train of the conqueror.

One pavilion, more carefully guarded than any of the others, was set down at the doors of the palace, and its two lovely inmates, clinging to each other in fear and anticipation too dread for cries and tears, entered the royal halls.

These were the two Greek girls, Timoclea and Campaspe, whose homes had been laid in ashes when the siege was raised in Thebes. Timoclea was the daughter of a noble Theban, and Campaspe a simple Grecian maiden, far

more fair in face, though less fair in lineage, than her older companion.

As the two girls held fast to each other in the audience chamber, covering their faces with their mantles, that their beauty might not tempt the gaze of the courtiers in waiting, there was a stir and then a hush among the dark-hued attendants who had been buzzing about the doorways, that boded the coming of the monarch. Close by one of the marble columns which flanked the further entrance, the dignified Aristotle awaited the royal presence, and behind him another figure also stood expectant. Even Campaspe, veiled as she was in her shrouding mantle, could not keep back some furtive glances that rested on this latter figure as he leaned with careless grace against the column. The beauty of his attitude, the full white throat which his silken tunic left half bare, the short curling rings of hair on his well-poised head, the eyes that shone with the light of genius, all made him more resemble the god Apollo, to the eyes of the simple maiden, than any earth-born man with whom she could compare him.

"Timoclea," she whispered softly, "is yonder man the great Alexander?"

"No, silly child," answered the older. "In Alexander's eyes you will see war's lightnings. Yonder man is more like a poet, or perhaps some

cutter in marble, who is come to take orders of his royal master."

At this moment the sound of music broke the whispered silence; the attendants ranged on either side the chamber; the door-curtains were swung apart; and leaning on his friend and favorite, the wise Hephæstion, the royal Alexander entered.

The king's eyes shone with the pride of conquest, and although his cheek was not yet bronzed with battle-smoke, and his slender supple figure still showed traces of his youthfulness, he bore himself as proudly as if years of triumph and kingly rule had taught him that the globe held no warrior fit to mate with Alexander of Macedon.

He began a whispered talk with Hephæstion, and the attendants fell reverently away, leaving the two standing alone in the centre of the chamber.

"Yonder she stands, Hephæstion," said the monarch in a subdued voice, "the fairest of all the women mine eyes have ever looked upon."

"I would that her fairness went no deeper than thine eyes," returned the favorite. "When a woman's beauty touches the heart, it waxeth dangerous."

"And why dangerous, sweet Hephæstion? If Alexander is a man, he may love. If he be indeed the son of a god, even then he may not

disdain a passion which caused Mars to linger at the feet of Aphrodite."

"Kings should love nothing but virtue."

"And is not love a virtue, my Hephæstion?"

"In my sense it is rather a weakness. Conquerors should entertain no passions which they cannot rule; and love, time out of mind, has led conquerors captive. Theseus won his triumphs worthily, but he gave all up when he laid his heart under the feet of his Amazon princess. So wouldst thou be made slave by thy captive? Let me not see so mad an issue out of so great a triumph as thou hast won in Thebes."

"But look at her even now as she stands there, Hephæstion, trembling like a coy dove that fears the fowler. Is not thy heart moved by her charms? Look on her, and judge if it be a weakness to yield."

"I behold her, and I see no such matter as thou dost," answered Hephæstion. "It is simply a graceful figure, a little foot, a tapering hand, a soft alluring eye, some tresses of curling hair; perhaps — as we have heard — a gracious voice and a witty tongue may be added thereto. What is all this to the nations that wait for thy foot to be set upon their necks? But I will not counsel thee. Counsel availeth nothing when a man will be in love, and I pray thou mayst

have this new disease as lightly as thou passed through the ills of thy infancy. I will say no more."

"A good resolution, sweet friend. Now I will approach the maiden, and seek to comfort her for her hard fate in being my captive. Alas! if she be my prisoner of war, I am hers by love. Thou art sure to say my case is the worse of the two."

As the king approached Campaspe, she trembled more and more. For what fate the monarch designed her, the frightened girl knew nor guessed not. When he asked her graciously to throw aside the mantle which shrouded her head and face, she blamed the shield of glittering metal on the wall beside her, which showed her that in spite of tears and sorrow she was never more radiantly fair.

With courteous interest the monarch asked how she and her companion had fared during their journey; if all her wishes had been obeyed by the slaves whom he had set to attend her; and as she faltered out her answers to his questioning, he gazed on her blushing face with an interest which, she could not disguise from herself, was not less flattering than the mirror of steel which had revealed to her her beauty.

"I have prepared apartments near our own palace for thee, where everything shall be pro-

vided for thy comfort, sweet Campaspe," said the monarch. "It is a fancy of mine to furnish a hall with paintings from the pencil of the gifted Apelles. To this end have I bade him wait here to-day that I may ask that thou wilt grant him the favor to paint thy fair self. He lodges in the palace; and if thou consent that he shall put thy shadow on his canvas, he will be prouder than when Aphrodite appeared to his vision, that he might make a picture worthy to represent the goddess to her worshippers."

To these words Campaspe listened in amazement, mingled with irresistible pleasure, when Alexander beckoned to the elegant youth who still leaned negligently against the column near the entrance. At the monarch's gesture, he came forward, and bowed low at the sight of Campaspe's beauty.

"It is our pleasure that thou shouldst paint the lady we present to thee, Campaspe of Thebes," said Alexander. "Thinkest thou that thy pencil can represent her worthily?"

"Not worthily, my lord king," answered the artist. "We cannot paint virtues. Our colors can neither speak nor think. But what I can do, I will. When will it please the maiden to visit my poor work-shop?"

"If I may ask that I have a little time to refresh myself after my journey," said Campaspe,

still clinging to Timoclea, with the pretty air of timidity which so well became her. "I shall be more fit to have my face transferred to thy canvas, and it may then be better worth so great an honor."

. . . . . .

Weeks had grown into months in the palace of Alexander, and yet his wooing of the lovely Grecian progressed but slowly. The king treated Campaspe with the consideration due to a princess, and spared no pains to make her sensible of the favor with which he regarded her. He had resolved not to urge his suit in words, until her picture, which still graced the easel of Apelles, was completed, and ready to decorate the walls of his palace. As for Apelles, although day after day saw him before his easel, and day after day Campaspe sat patiently in whatever light he chose to place her, no picture ever was so long in the making as this promised to be.

It was a soft morning in October, and the balmy air lifted gently the rich curtains which draped the windows of the artist's studio. Everywhere in unnoted profusion lay scattered rich tokens of the painter's art. In the midst of all Apelles stood alone before the portrait of Campaspe, ever and anon giving a touch to a face which already seemed beyond the painter's art to add to or improve. As he worked, he sang to

himself a little sonnet, with words and music of his own making. It ran thus:—

"Cupid and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses, — Cupid paid;
He stakes his quiver, bow and arrows,
His mother's doves, and teams of sparrows,
Loses them too; then down he throws
The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on's cheek (but none knows how),
With these the crystal of his brow,
And then the dimple of his chin, —
All these did my Campaspe win.
At last he set her both his eyes,
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.
O Love! has she done this to thee?
What shall, alas! become of me?"

As his song ended, the painter stood with rapt eyes gazing on the picture.

"O Goddess of Beauty, and mother of Love," he murmured, "on whose shrine hitherto I have laid the best works my hand has wrought, grant me that boon which thou gavest before to Pygmalion. As thou transformed his marble into flesh inspired by soul, so turn my picture into the living and breathing woman. Or if Alexander will have my canvas, let him yield me Campaspe in its stead. For no less a price will I ever part with it. Ah, Campaspe! beautiful Campaspe! would that thou knewest how dear thou hast become to me! So dear that to part with thy picture were worse than death, unless I could have thyself in exchange."

While Apelles spoke, the entrance curtains moved, and Campaspe entered the apartment. She walked to the low couch, placed on a small dais, made for her to occupy when she would sit for her picture.

Startled by her sudden entrance, Apelles turned to look upon her. The sight of the maiden almost dazzled his sight and took away his breath. The color in her cheeks was deepened into a richer carnation than he had ever seen them wear. Her eyes overflowed with a look at once so tender and appealing, that the glance sunk deep into his heart. Her soul shone so through her face, that for a moment she seemed more like spirit than mortal, and the painter, gazing on her, threw down his brush despairingly and approached her.

"It is in vain, Campaspe," he said sadly. "These months past have I tried to fix thy shadow on my canvas. It is beyond art. No painter can paint that which is divine."

"What treason in the painter of goddesses to speak thus!" said the girl playfully. "Didst not the very brush which thou threwest down just now so disdainfully, paint Aphrodite in such perfection that she has forever blessed thee with her favor?"

"Ah yes," returned Apelles, "I painted the goddess from my imagination, but thou art too dear a reality."

"Perchance thou art tired of endeavoring my portrait," said Campaspe, "and would fain give up the task."

"Campaspe, how much you wrong me in such a thought! To paint Aphrodite was a pleasure, but to paint thee is heaven."

As the painter said this, he half reclined upon the dais on which her couch was placed, and looked up into her face so ardently, that the color there deepened and deepened under his gaze.

"In truth, Apelles," she said half reproachfully, "you forget your art. I thought you were to paint with your hand, and not to gloze my poor face with flattering tongue."

What he would have answered cannot be known, for again the entrance curtains opened, and Alexander entered, with Hephæstion. The monarch's keen eye took in at a glance the maiden's blushes, the attitude of Apelles, the brush thrown down, and the neglected portrait. His eye flashed lightnings, and he towered to his full height above the offending pair. Apelles rose to his feet, and met his anger with a steady glance.

"I have been but a foolish wooer, Apelles," said the monarch, gravely, "and you a false friend. You knew well that I loved this maiden, when I intrusted her to thee to be put on thy canvas."

"I knew it, King Alexander, and knowing it, I have guarded my lips from any word of love to her," answered the painter.

"You cannot deny that you do love her," said the monarch fiercely.

"No, I do not wish to deny that. Who could see her daily as I have, and not love her with all his heart? He would either be less than a man, or more than a god."

"And you, Campaspe," asked Alexander, turning to where she sat tremblingly watching the interview, "do you love Apelles?"

The maiden turned pale and red by turns. But looking at Apelles, who stood gazing at her as if his soul's fate hung on her answer, she said in a clear voice, "I love Apelles."

Alexander's face grew darker. He raised his arm as if he would strike the two lovers to the earth. His eye met the appealing glance of Campaspe, who waited as if breathlessly expecting her death-blow. A sudden revulsion of feeling overcame him. He took Campaspe's little cold hand, and placed it in that of Apelles.

"Here, Apelles," he said firmly, "I give her to thee frankly. I see I cannot conquer hearts, though I may subdue nations. She is thine, love her as dearly as thou wilt."

The two lovers, overcome with joy and gratitude, sank together at the king's feet.

"Now, Alexander, thou art indeed a king," exclaimed Hephæstion.

"Thanks, good Hephæstion. It were shameful in me to seek to be a conqueror, if I could not command myself. Now, then, sweet friend, when the world is all mine, find me new planets to subdue; else I will punish thee, by again falling in love."

FRIAR BACON'S BRASS HEAD.

(FROM ROBERT GREEN.)

IN a vast and ancient room, whose appliances denoted the abode of the scholar and philosopher, sat the learned and famous friar, Roger Bacon. Beside him, a dusty table was thickly strewn with scrolls of parchment, rich with age and erudition, while a large chest, heavily barred and bolted, was filled with other treasures in manuscript, each worth more than its weight in virgin gold.

At the farther end of the room a vast chimney, with smoky furnaces and crucibles, containing crude and half smelted ores, and all the various properties of the alchemist, occupied one side of the apartment. In one corner, a huge iron mortar, shielded by screens of metal from contact with any spark which might fly from the furnaces, was filled with an inodorous mixture of brimstone and saltpetre, and a black dust which looked like powdered charcoal. Everywhere, on floor and table, stood such rude instruments to aid in chemistry and

astronomy as the time afforded, while all about were such evidences of work and study as made the place seem as much like the workshop of the artisan as the library of the scholar.

Stretched across the upper end of the apartment, a heavy green curtain fell in broken folds over some object which it was intended to conceal. Before this curtain sat the great necromancer, of whose art all England spoke in whispered wonder, and with bated breath, "the learned Friar Bacon of Oxford."

No longer an inmate of the college from whose walls his suspected magic had caused him to be driven forth, he dwelt solitary among the surrounding rustics who feared and shunned him, and in secret wrought those mysterious works which made him dreaded among men.

He was now only a little past middle life, a man of commanding figure and noble head, which seemed heavy with the weight of knowledge it carried, and now dropped wearily upon his hands as he sat steeped in thought.

His reverie was broken by the entrance of his servant Miles, the only retainer he could keep about him, a half-witted, faithful fellow, who clung gratefully to the hand which fed him.

"I cry you mercy, good master," said Miles, hastily entering, "but I could not stay upon ceremony. A lord is without the door, asking

entrance to you. It is a fellow in a scarlet coat, and wonderful fine otherwise. He declares that he is from Oxford, and will have speech with you. And although I said nobody could enter, he will come in, whether I will or no. At which I, fearing he might be the Evil One himself, took to my heels to tell thee about him."

"Let him come in," answered the friar, roused by the servant's long speech from his deep abstraction. "It is Clement, the cardinal, the Pope's legate to England. Stay, Miles, throw a cloth over the pile of manuscripts yonder. Pull out that curtain straight. Now give me the book of the Gospels. It is enough. Show the cardinal hither."

A moment later, and the Cardinal Clement, himself the next successor to the papal throne, entered the apartment.

"Well, friar, at last we have found your secret hiding-place. It is no easy journey hither, and the road is as hard and narrow as that which leads to Paradise."

"I am sorry for the trouble your lordship took in coming, and should have been happy if it might have been spared you."

"Which means, so I take it, good friar, that you are not glad at my coming. But, believe me, I come with no evil intent, nor for any-

thing except friendship. I know how they have treated thee at Oxford, and in good earnest I have been always sorry for it. Learning is not so plenty, that it should be put down; and from what I know of thy wonderful inventions, they are not those that the devil teaches his followers, but always of good service to the cause of Truth and the true Church. I pray thee do not distrust my motive. I come in friendly guise, unattended as thou seest, and with no desire but to be instructed in some of thy magic discoveries, and see what they may avail to science."

"My discoveries are naught," answered the friar, still keeping up the reserved manner he had worn since the entrance of his visitor. "Thou hast heard of the magic powder which has so frighted the learned magnates of the college that they drove me outside their walls. It is but a composition of simple substances, which, without any magic art, when touched with a spark, will give forth a semblance of lightning and thunder. If thou wishest, I can, in a few minutes, show thee the secret of it."

"No, no, good friar," returned the cardinal, shrinking away a little uneasily from the mortar in the corner, which Bacon approached. "I trust thy word, and I am no fool to believe stories of any wizard's-craft. But there is an-

other matter of which I come to inquire of thee. Thou hast a huge head, they tell me, of which thou makest a familiar, that tells thee strange secrets, and foretells events that can affect the fate of nations. Tell me of this. On the faith of a priest and a gentleman, I ask but for love of science. And" (here the priest's voice sank lower) "thou hast heard that Pope Urban grows feeble. It is in all men's mouths in Rome, that the cardinal-legate of England will be the next high pontiff of the Church. I trust thy honor in telling this, and tell thee also, that if Clement of Narbonne be made the Holy Father of the Church, it will be his first mission to do away with the narrow bigotry regarding science, and with his own royal hand confer honors on those who make Learning their mistress. Now do you trust my friendship, good Friar Bacon?"

"My lord Cardinal, I do trust you," answered Bacon, whose keen eye had closely scanned the features of the priest while he had spoken. "But it becometh us men of letters to be mistrustful. We remember that many who were not heretics, have been invited into the presence of the Inquisition, and have not returned from thence. But I trust your word, and I will betray to you my mystery."

Rising hastily, the friar drew aside the green

curtain which had hitherto concealed some object from the view. The cardinal turned to face it, and then stepped back, awe-struck at the sight which the withdrawing of the drapery revealed. Placed on a rude pedestal which stood several feet above the floor, stood a massive brazen head, with grand impassive face, and an expression of such dignified grandeur, such commanding repose, that it was as if the haughty features of some Grecian god had been revealed to the awe-struck gaze of the cardinal.

As he gazed, from the deep-set but luminous eyes, true Jovine lightning seemed to issue, and a deep rumbling sound like distant thunder shook the floor on which they stood.

The legate involuntarily crossed himself, and then looking at Bacon, who slowly dropped the curtain which concealed the head, he asked in a half whisper, —

"Is this thy work?"

"Mine, and one other cherished brother in science, Master Bungay of Oxford," answered the monk. "This is the slow work of seven years, my lord cardinal, and, as thou mayst guess, wrought for no common purpose. This head is formed with utmost care and skill by direction which I found writ out in parchments more ancient than the Church we worship. If my work have no

flaw, when all is done, this head will speak, and tell me how I may encircle my England with a wall of brass, which now and hereafter will hold her invulnerable to the assaults of all enemies. Think of such a feat," said Bacon, his face glowing with enthusiasm. "Is it not worth my work to leave my name on such a monument to my country's greatness?"

"Truly, good friar," answered Clement, a little coldly, "I doubt whether it be for the good of our Mother Church, and her power over the nations which are gathered under her wings, to have one of her children so walled about. But for thy good intentions, I do not doubt them, and for thy learning I have nothing but respect. No doubt, thy brazen-head, if perchance it should ever speak, will tell thee other wondrous things. Thou shalt not repent if thou lettest me have such advantage as may come of its teachings. But I confess, I should not like to see this little island so girt with brass. Suppose she might then take it into her head to defy papal authority, as, armed with such power, she might."

"You reckon impossibilities, my lord," exclaimed Bacon. "In so impious a case, the wall which should guard England from enemies, would topple down to crush her."

"I pray thee, put such a charm as that into thy conjurations, good friar," said Clement, ris-

ing to depart. "But whatever betide, count on me as thy patron, and remember that in telling thee of my ambition, I have left my secret in thy keeping, as thine lies in my hands. Fare thee well, my son; peace remain with thee;" and with a gesture of blessing, the cardinal left the apartment.

It was night, and in Friar Bacon's study the faint gleam of one solitary rush-light made the deep shadows which lurked in every corner more apparent and more awful. The curtains which screened the head were withdrawn, and it loomed up in the dimness to a gigantic size. Bending over the table on which the little candle burned, with a manuscript spread out before him, sat Friar Bacon, his face worn and pinched as of one who suffers for want of repose and proper nourishment.

The marks upon the hour-glass beside him showed that it had been turned six times since sunset, and the sands of the last hour before midnight were swiftly slipping through the glass. Ever and anon the friar took up the little time-keeper, and shook it gently, as if to hasten the passage of the slow hours, and often, amid his watching and study, his head sank lower and lower towards the table, as if tired nature would assert her rights, and steep him in the sweet oblivion of sleep, against his own powerful will.

All at once he started up, and striking a cymbal with a little silver hammer, he waited till the summons was answered by his servant Miles, who came in sleepily rubbing his eyes, that he might be sufficiently awake to answer his master.

The friar sat earnestly regarding Miles, till he had rubbed and stretched himself awake.

"Are you ready to do me a great service, Miles?" he asked at length, when the servingman's attention had been riveted by his own fixed gaze.

"Anything which thou canst ask, good master," returned Miles. "Except it be to go on errands to the Evil One. That I would rather excuse myself from."

"Such service as I require has no such conditions. Listen, Miles. Thou seest the head yonder?"

Miles looked cautiously over his shoulder at the awful presence, and nodded assent.

"Thou knowest that for nine and thirty nights Friar Bungay and I have watched, by day and night, waiting to hear that which soon or late its lips are sure to utter. If it should speak, and its speech be unheeded, woe betide the makers, and woe betide our hopes of encircling our fair country with a wall which will make her forever invincible. To-night I have waited for Friar

Bungay, till my eyelids are heavy, and I would fain take a brief rest. But I dare not leave the head unguarded, lest in my sleep it should utter that which I must heed. Can I trust you to wait here in my sleep, and if the head gives signs of speech, to wake me suddenly, that I may follow its magical instruction? It is but for an hour or two, and then I will again resume my watch."

"I will watch here as bravely as if I never knew what fear meant, good master," answered Miles. "I warrant the head will do me no harm, and I will repeat so many Aves and Paters that not a foul fiend will venture to come near me. So good-night and to sleep. Let me but get my trusty stave, which sets without, that I may arm myself, if any one enter to do me any hurt; and in a trice I will be here to guard thy wondrous handiwork."

So saying, Miles brought in a huge bludgeon, which he carried on his shoulder in true soldierly fashion. The friar rose, and pouring a small glass of strong liquor from a flask, he handed it to Miles, saying, — "Drink that. It will keep thee from growing timorous in thy watch. Remember that on thy wakefulness rests all my hopes, and that a moment's slumber may wreck them. Good-night and Benedicite." Thus saying, the friar, who could hardly speak from

weariness, passed through the door which led into a small inner chamber, where he slept.

Miles was doubly brave from the effect of the potent liquor the friar had given him, which now seemed to course through his veins like a swift serpent of flame. He glanced defiantly at the head, which hitherto he had only regarded with profound awe. Withdrawing himself as far as possible from the mortar in which he knew his master was wont to mix the terrible powder, whose production had branded him as one in league with Satan, he sat down near the brazen image to wait for any event which would break up the tedium of his watch.

The minutes before midnight moved slowly on, and the last sands were dropping through the glass. Already, in the adjoining chamber, the heavy breathing of the friar told how quickly sleep had seized upon his weary senses.

"Sleep away, good master," said Miles approvingly. "I will take as good care of matters here as if thou wert broad awake. For my own part, I see little sense in so much watching of a head, which for aught we know was made out of an old kettle or a pair of battered helmets. As for my master, wise as he is, he must have a crack in his head-piece; else, instead of starving me and himself on bread-crusts and spring-water, he would call to his aid some of the brave spirits his

art can command, and order good smoking-hot meats, and wine as good as the king uses, and have rich raiment and soft beds, instead of such poor accommodation as he keeps now. If thou canst tell him anything to better his conditions, good Master Brazen-pate," went on Miles, looking up at the gloomy features, which in the dim light seemed to frown upon him, "do so, and I'll set thee up for an oracle."

As he spoke these last words, a low sound of thunder muttered through the room, and shook gently the pedestal on which the Head rested. A single flash of light lit up the immovable features for one brief instant, and from the lips, a voice scarcely louder than a whisper, yet distinctly audible, uttered the words, —

"TIME IS!"

"Is that the beginning of your speech, old Brazen-nose," said Miles, coolly regarding the Head as if it were the most natural thing in the world for it to speak thus. "Go on, I pray thee, and let me hear if thou intendest to say anything worth noting. I will not wake my master for so slight a matter as that thou hast just announced. '*Time is*,' forsooth! as if that would be news to any such scholar as Friar Bacon. Thou hadst best speak sense if thou wouldst have him listen to thee."

Again the thunder muttered, but louder than

at first; again the lightning gleamed over the impassive features, and the voice murmured, —

"TIME WAS!"

"On my life," said Miles, scornfully, "to think that my master and his friend should spend seven good years in making a head which says no more wonderful thing than any fishmonger could tell us. '*Time was!*' I am but a fool, and I hope I know as much as that. Why not say something in Greek or Latin, or any of the learned tongues that Master Bacon knows as well as he knows his breviary? Or, if thou canst speak nothing but common English, tell us something more strange than this. Dost think I shall wake up my master to no better entertainment of conversation than thou hast offered him? Out upon thee for a braggart, that promisest by thy looks more than thy tongue can ever perform for thee."

While he was speaking, a sudden light lit up the Head with a brightness like that of day. The terrible features wore a frown so dreadful that the glance struck dismay to the heart of the swaggering Miles. As he stood motionless, with awful accent and in a voice of thunder, the Head cried out, "TIME IS PAST!" Then came a lightning flash so vivid that the serving-man fell prone to earth, and with a fearful crash the grand Head fell, a shattered mass of fragments, without shape or semblance.

Amidst the dire noise Friar Bacon started up and rushed to his doorway. At his feet was the work of seven years a blasted ruin. Groveling among the fragments lay the wretched Miles, uttering loud screams of fear.

"Peace, fool!" commanded the friar, raising him to his feet. "Silence! and tell me how this happened. Did the Head speak?"

"Aye, sir, he spake," answered Miles, blubbering loudly. "But he said naught worth noting. Didst thou not say it would utter strange words of learning? Yet it said at first only two words."

"What words?"

"Why, at first it said, 'Time is,' and I, knowing that was no news of consequence, waited for something better before I woke thee. Again it said, 'Time was,' and then with a loud cry it said, 'Time is past,' and toppled over, giving my head many a hard bump with the fragments."

"Wretch! idiot, villain!" cried the friar, seizing the frightened man, as if he would have strangled him. "Thy foolishness has cost me the work of years, the hopes of a life-time. No words can reveal what thy idiocy has lost me. But go, leave my sight, miserable vagabond! I could kill myself in shame for having trusted thee," and, releasing his hold of Miles, the friar sank into a chair and buried his face in his hands.

"It is the last," he murmured. "Henceforth I bid farewell to magic. From this moment I will close my study and burn my books. Hereafter only to religion will I devote myself, and dying I shall leave not even my poor name to add to my country's glory."

MARGARET, THE FAIR MAID OF FRESINGFIELD.

(FROM ROBERT GREENE.)

KING HENRY III. was holding court in London and treating with ambassadors from Spain for the marriage of his son and heir with the Castilian Princess Elinor. In the mean time the Prince of Wales was playing truant in Suffolkshire, and with a troop of lords and courtiers, young and giddy as himself, all dressed in Lincoln green, was chasing the deer through the merry wood of Framlingham, and holding revels among the country rustics as if he had forgot that the blood of royalty ran in his veins.

In the little hamlet of Fresingfield stood the keeper's cottage, just on the verge of the grand greenwood, where only the king and his followers held the right to hunt. Here dwelt the royal keeper of the game, with his only daughter Margaret, who far and wide was famed as the "fair daisy," the "peerless pearl," of Fresingfield.

One summer morn, not far from this same cottage, in a dewy lane, walled high with hedge of odorous hawthorn, two gallants reclined upon the grass while they held close converse. The one was Prince Edward, heir to the English crown; the other, his friend and confidant, Edward Lacy, Earl of Lincoln.

"I tell thee, Ned," said the prince, "she is the most peerless piece of loveliness that ever tangled my thoughts in the web of her golden hair."

"Still harping on the rustic Margaret, my lord?" rejoined Lacy. "Do you forget your sire is even now looking out for the ship which bears from Spain the dark-eyed Elinor?"

"I care not for her, nor all Spain beside. My thoughts are set on Margaret only. If thou hadst seen her but even now, as I did, Ned, working among her cream-bowls, her white arms bared, plunging in among the yellow curds, her soft hair dropping over her rosy cheeks, the smile that parted her cherry lips, — I tell thee, Lacy, thou, like me, would be ready to hazard crown and head with it, to win this lovely maiden of Fresingfield."

"Not I, my lord," laughed Lacy. "No woman's glance has ever wounded my heart. I' faith, though, I am sorry for thee, and I much fear what the king would say to thy rustic love."

"Have I not said I care not for my father. It is the maid whose coyness baffles me. Hardly a word or look will she yield to my entreaties. But I have a plot, Lacy, if thou wilt but aid me in it."

"As your father's subject I ought not, but as your friend, I know not how to deny you," answered Lacy.

"Do not forget, my good Ned, that one of these days I shall myself be king. Let me whisper this wise aphorism in thine ear: If thy hair is not beginning to turn gray, it is better to win the prince's friendship than to sue for the king's favor. Now let me unfold. I have told thee that the maiden herself will not regard me. In her coldness lies the secret of my slow suit. I will ride straight to Friar Bacon, who lives close by at Oxford. He is a necromancer of wondrous power. Him will I solicit to give me a love charm, or throw over Mistress Margaret a spell, which shall cause her to doat on me. Then farewell to court and courtly wedding, and here among the shades of Suffolk I will woo and wed an English bride, such as all Castile cannot match."

"But what part have I in this, my lord?" asked Lacy.

"Ah, I forget not that. To-morrow they hold a fair here in Suffolk, which all the coun-

try-folk attend. Thou must go hither, attired as a rich farmer's son, and for my sake keep away all other suitors from sweet Margaret's side, while you woo her in my behalf. Buy her rich fairings, give her the choicest gifts, and tell her that the gallant dressed in Lincoln-green, who in her milk-rooms helped her run her cheese, sends all these tokens, and his heart with them. How sayest thou to this, Lacy?"

"That if thou wilt promise to stand betwixt me and thy father's wrath in this, I will woo the maid for you as if I were in love with her myself."

"Thanks! thanks! sweet Ned. And now I will to horse and ride to Oxford. Adieu. Forget not your promise, and by Friar Bacon's arts and your wooing, I shall yet have the fairest bride in all England."

Fair little Margaret was not unconscious of the admiration written in all faces that looked on her; and when she had attired herself for the day's pleasure at Suffolk fair, it was with no careless disregard of her prettiness. Among the booths and in the fields, her track was followed by a train of admirers; and even the keeper's portly presence could not fright away the bolder swains, who pressed close enough to offer her their gifts and whisper their most delicate flatteries into her ear. But all compliments

were coarse, and all gifts waxed poor, beside the speeches and the offerings of one gentleman who followed all day, like a shadow, the steps of the father and daughter. Once or twice, indeed, when the keeper was well-nigh lost in the huge pots of good ale in which he strove to quench the thirst and heat of the tiresome day, this bold gallant would walk aside with the maiden, plying an eager suit, at which she blushed, and to which she listened.

But alas, Margaret's heart sank, her cheek flushed and paled, her little foot tapped impatiently the ground on which she stayed to listen to his words, when the suitor explained that not for himself was the suit he urged, nor the gifts he proffered, but that a lover richer than himself, sent her the love these tokens denoted.

Then she listened less willingly than at first, and when the gallant begged one brief meeting next day among the hedgerows of Fresingfield, out of safe hearing of her watchful sire, the maiden only half consented, and parted from him almost in doubt if she should keep her vague promise.

Still the days waxed and waned, and the prince lingered in Oxford. Day after day in the lanes and groves of Fresingfield, the maiden met the gallant Lacy, and listened while he urged his friend's suit.

Such was the state of affairs with both, when one June morning Margaret walked forth alone on the skirts of the forest. As she moved slowly along to a tryst with Lacy, which was to be held under the shadow of an old oak spreading its branches across a grassy slope, she met one of the friars of the monastery, whose gray towers she could see in the distance rising out of the thick greenery which encircled it. Margaret knew the reverend father, and had often sought his advice and counsel in her girlish troubles. Now she saw his face clouded and stern, as he met her gaze.

"Benedicite, my daughter," he said, stopping in her footsteps. "Yet before I give thee my benediction, let me see if thou wilt accept of counsel, or deservest my blessing. How hast thou been busy of late? I fear other places have seen more of thy presence than church or confessional."

Margaret blushed, and as she began to answer, stopped, frightened at the friar's stern glance.

"Do you know who is this gallant who has been so much with thee of late?" inquired the friar.

"Yes, father. He is a rich farmer's son, from Beccles, who comes here with honorable suit from another wealthier farmer in his own town. But indeed, father, I care not for the suit he brings, and I have often told him so."

"Silly child, are you so deceived? Know you not what all the town rings with? That the farmer's son is no other than Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, and that his friend, for whom he sues, is Edward, Prince of Wales, and heir of England?"

"By all a maiden's faith, I did not know it," cried Margaret in dismay. And sinking at the friar's feet, she burst into such tears that even his cold heart was touched at her grief.

"Has he won you to love the prince?" he asked, bending to raise her from her knees, and seat her upon the knoll under the oak where Lacy was approaching to meet her.

"No, no," said Margaret sadly, "not him, — not the friend of the false earl. It was Lacy — (if it be indeed Lacy, as thou sayest) — that I have suffered myself to look on with such thoughts as now I must not think again."

"Hush thy sighs," returned the friar, under his breath. "Even now the recreant earl comes hither. Dismiss him at once. His suit, whether for himself or his friend, can only bring dishonor to a simple maiden such as thee. Send him away, and forget that thou hast ever seen him;" and so saying, the priest hastily departed, leaving Lacy to draw near the maid.

"What ill news has found thee out, sweet girl?" asked Lacy anxiously, as he marked the traces of tears on her cheeks.

"No ill news, good sir," she answered coldly. "Nor aught that will be news to your ears. I have just learned that the Earl of Lincoln was here in the forest, doing injustice to his high rank, by hiding it under a peasant's garb."

Lacy flushed, and stammered a reply.

"Do not deny yourself, my lord," said Margaret. "I thought you were of my own rank, or I should never have changed so many words with you. And now farewell."

"Stay, Margaret. Leave me not so suddenly. I confess I have hidden my rank from you. But my wooing was all in good earnest."

"It was jest with you, my lord, but earnest with me. O! how these gentlemen who call themselves noble, will flatter and feign, to wrong a trusting woman's heart!"

"On my life, on my knightly honor, Margaret, I mean no jest. I love you. At first, indeed, I laughed at the charms of woman's face and voice. But since I saw you, everywhere, at the fair, in all our walks and meetings, I have loved you more and more. And if thou wilt, I will make thee the Lincoln Countess and my true and honorable wife."

"Alas! Lord Lacy, I fear much that pride will never let thee stoop so low as from thee to me."

"Margaret, I swear by the holy rood, I am

in dear earnest. Here, at your feet, I take my oath. Will you be Lincoln's Countess, and Edward Lacy's wife?"

"It seemeth me, Lord Lacy, you are not the trustiest of wooers. Pray tell me, sir, do you speak for yourself, or woo you still for the courtier clad in green. I marvel much that he speaks not for himself." *

"A truce to thy jesting, sweet one. The prince may henceforth do his own wooing. From this time Ned Lacy has flatteries but for one woman, and eyes but for his bride."

Thus it turned out that while Prince Edward tarried in Oxford, Margaret was won by his untrusty friend. The prince's delay was not wholly his own fault. When he reached the colleges, he found the court already there, and amid the royal party was "La Belle Elinor," the Spanish princess, whom the king had chosen for his son's bride.

Daily the prince had met the lovely Castilian, and it must be confessed her glances had somewhat troubled his thoughts. But he prided himself on his constancy, and resolved Lacy should have no cause to laugh at him. When at length the court left the college for the London palace, Edward sought to meet with Friar Bacon, before

* These lines are almost verbatim, the words in Greene's comedy, "Honorable History of Friar Bacon." They will recall to modern readers the "Wooing of Miles Standish."

posting back to Fresingfield to see the fair maiden.

It was on the very morn in June that Lacy's rank and love were revealed to Margaret that Edward gained admission to the abode of the learned friar. In his darkened room not a ray of sunlight made its way into the deep gloom. As the prince entered, he could hardly distinguish the stately figure of the monk as he rose and came forward to greet him.

"Welcome, my lord," said the deep voice of Bacon, "what errand has your highness, that he thus honors my humble cell?"

"Know you my rank, good friar?" asked Edward, surprised at the salutation.

"Not only your rank, my prince, but also your errand. You are come to ask my aid in your suit with Margaret."

"By heaven, this is magic indeed," said Edward, aghast to have his thoughts thus read before he could tell them. "You speak the truth. And since you know so much, tell me now how I can win the lady?"

"You have dallied too long in Oxford, my lord," answered Bacon, shaking his head with a grave smile. "I might have aided you at first, but now it is beyond my art. Already your friend has won her for himself."

"What mean you?" cried Edward, turning

pale with rage. "Not Lacy? I would have staked my life on his trustiness."

"Even Lacy, my lord. The witch Beauty has charms more potent than men's friendship can hold out against. Do you wish to be made sure of the truth of what I have said?"

"I do desire it with all my heart," answered the prince.

No sooner had he spoken than the friar produced from a closet in his study an oval mirror of polished steel resting on a standard of carved wood. Putting the mirror on the table he placed before it a silver chafing dish, containing lighted coals. Upon these he threw a handful of gray powder. At once an aromatic smoke arose from the dish, and wreathed itself about the mirror.

"Now look, and see what you may see," said Bacon, motioning the prince to stand before the mirror.

As Edward looked, he beheld the green forest of Framlingham appear in the polished surface. The scene grew more and more distinct, till at length he could see the spreading oak where Margaret and Lacy were wont to hold tryst; then the fair maiden, and finally Lacy himself, were clearly visible. With angry eyes he saw the lovers meet, and heard, as one hears in a dream, the words with which they plighted troth, and Lacy promised to make Margaret his wife.

Inflamed with rage, Edward was hardly restrained from thrusting his sword through the steel surface of the mirror, and as soon as he could leave the cell of Bacon, posted hastily back to Fresingfield.

It is needless to relate how the prince confronted the happy lovers, and how he raved, while Margaret wept and pleaded, and Lacy nobly defended himself from the charge of treachery. At last, touched by the maiden's tears, and moved perhaps by the remembrance of the dark eyes of Elinor, which, in the brief space he had seen her, had turned on him more tender glances than he had ever been able to win from Margaret's blue orbs, Edward forgave his friend and blessed the lovers in true princely style.

And now Margaret is the betrothed bride of Lincoln's earl, and happier in such happiness than if Edward had made her queen. The two gentlemen agree to ride together to London, where Edward has resolved to signify to his father his readiness to marry the princess. Lacy will seek the king's consent to his marriage with Margaret, which, in the king's good humor at Edward's nuptials, he doubts not will be given. As for loving Margaret, she stays in sunny Fresingfield, shaping rich stuffs into fair garments, and with apt fingers weaving dainty

broideries in fine linen, all of which shall be fit wearing for the Countess of Lincoln.

Her hand was sought by many of her own rank, when Lacy's absence left the field clear to suitors. Her father pressed a little some of these suits, fearing wisely that Lord Lacy's fancy may be brief. But Margaret's heart rested in perfect faith in her lover; and she has no ear for any other suit.

One day, walking near the wood, she beheld a page, wearing the green livery of Lincoln, posting hastily to her father's cottage. Margaret hastened to meet him in the path, and craved to know what news he bore from Lacy.

"If you are the fair maid of Fresingfield," answered the youth, "I have a letter for thee, and a purse beside."

Margaret seized the letter, and breaking the seal, read these words which stained the fair paper: —

"Margaret, the blossoms of the almond tree grow in a night and vanish in a morn; the butterfly's wings shine in the sun, and are broken in the first dew. So my love for thee would not outlive our parting. Know that I have chosen a Spanish lady for my wife, a waiting woman to Princess Elinor; a lady fair, and no less fair than thyself, rich and of noble blood.

I leave thee to thy liking, and have sent thee this purse of gold to thy dowry. Farewell. Neither thine or his own, EDWARD LACY."

Cruel, cruel words for trusting Margaret to read from the letter whose seal was still warm with her kisses. Proudly she crushed the traitorous paper under her foot, and pushing back the purse of gold he proffered, she turned to the page.

"Take back the gold thou hast brought, good youth, and tell Lord Lacy that no one can rejoice more than I do that his wavering fancy is at rest, and that I wish him all happiness. For myself, I have done with false vows and falser lovers, and to-morrow's sun will see me safe in the walls of Framlingham Convent, where I will be sworn at once a holy nun."

Margaret's resolve once taken, neither the grief nor the entreaties of her father could move her from it. On such a summer's day as the one when, under the greenwood shades, Lacy had confessed his rank and asked her to be his wife, she set out for the Nunnery of Framlingham. The mossy towers of the convent, rising through the trees, and the dewy shades of the forest, made a picture no less fair than before. But to Margaret's eyes a shadow was over all the day, and there was no beauty for her even in the

fairest things of earth. Henceforth her thoughts shall only be fixed on death and objects of solemn interest.

As she muses thus, slowly treading the little path where she had often strayed with her recreant lover, the tramp of horse's feet broke on the wood's stillness. Their clatter reached even her abstracted ears. Looking up with a start, she beheld standing in her path, with steed smoking with the haste with which they rode, Lord Lacy, and his friend Lord Ernsby, a blunt old soldier, whose face Margaret has once before seen.

In a trice Lacy leaps from his horse, and kneeling at her feet, he seizes the hand which she endeavors to withhold from his grasp.

"Am I too late, Margaret?" he cries. "I have ridden with all speed to stop thy purpose. The letter was but a jest to try thy constancy. No word of it was true. Speak to me, sweet one: thou wilt not be a nun?"

"My lord, I am even now on my way to Framlingham. There shall I shortly take the sacred vows. Your letter has killed my heart. It is forever dead to love. Let me go, my lord. Seek not to trouble my thoughts, which now are fixed on things above the earth."

"Forgive me, Margaret, and take back your vows. You will not for a jest (I confess a cruel

jest) take your favor from me. You cannot, for a jest, give up my love and me. Even now the prince delays his nuptials with Elinor, that thou and I may grace them together."

"Too late, Lord Lacy. Better heaven's glories than earth's fading joys. Leave me, I beseech you, and trouble my repose no more."

Lacy, fearful of her long denial, turned an imploring look to Ernsby.

"Come, come," said that bluff old soldier. "Think well of it, maiden. The time is but short, and we soldiers are not patient. You can not mean your words. Exchange the pleasures of the court for a grave nunnery? Choose now. Heaven or Lord Lacy, which contents you best? To be a nun, or be Lord Lacy's wife?"

Margaret's resolution wavered, and seeing her hesitation, Lacy again threw himself at her feet.

"You will forgive the cruel trial of your faith," he pleaded.

"The heart is weak, my lord," said Margaret, "and when you come with your beguiling voice, you know well I cannot say you nay."

So ends our story amid the rapture of wedding bells, which chime all over London. Our last glimpse of our rustic daisy is in the splendor of the court, beside the lovely Princess Elinor, who thanks the Earl of Lincoln, that he has given her as chief attendant, his new-made Countess, the "fair star of Fresingfield."

SKETCH OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

IN the year 1564, a little more than three hundred years ago, an infant was born in the town of Stratford, in England, who grew to be one of the most wonderful men who has ever lived. Stratford was a quiet little town on the banks of the river Avon, and none of the people there were very rich or grand. The child of whom we write was called Will Shakespeare; and though his father was a very respectable man and in thriving business, it does not appear that he was rich, and, what seems hard to believe nowadays, he did not know how to write even his own name.

It is not very likely that John Shakespeare, Will's father, thought very much of learning, since he had got along so well himself with so little, and it does not seem that Will had much encouragement to study. But no doubt he was one of those boys to whom everything in Nature is a teacher. He could find —

> "Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

He went to the parish school for a short time and learned English, some scraps of Greek and Latin, and a little mathematics. He read everything, too, which came within his eager grasp.

Of course there were not as many books made in many years then as are printed now every year in New York; but there were places in London where were published little pamphlets in paper covers, which were sold quite cheaply for the times. These tracts, or pamphlets, were generally translations from French and Italian tales, or legends, chronicles extracted from old English history, and sometimes translations from Greek or Latin poetry. These books, which look very coarse and rude in their paper and printing, if we see them to-day and compare them with our beautiful books, were the popular reading of the people of that age. They were called chap-books (*cheap*-books), and the men who sold them were *chap-men*, which is the same, very likely, as our word *shop-man*.

It is very probable that some of these books found their way to Stratford, and that little Will Shakespeare occasionally got one to read. Perhaps some travelling peddler, who came there to sell his wares, had a few such stray copies in his pack, or the parish schoolmaster may have owned a few odd volumes. What a delight it

must have been to Will to get such prizes into his possession, and to go off to read by himself. When by chance he may have have obtained the wonderful poem of "Romeus and Juliet," * how glad he must have been to carry it off with him to the shade of some clustering trees, through which the lovely river Avon flowed, and there to read it aloud till he wept at the cruel fate of the two lovers.

All these things, however, must be partly guessed at, for no one dreamed that this boy would become so great a poet, and no one of that day has taken the trouble to tell us anything about him when he was a child. He lived in Stratford till he was about eighteen, and then he married a farmer's daughter in the neighborhood, named Anne Hathaway. She was a young woman much older than himself, and no doubt it was a foolish act of his to marry so young. It is to be feared he found it hard work to take care of his family, for in two or three years after his marriage he set out for the great city of London, like a boy in a fairy tale, to seek his fortune. And a wonderful fortune it was, — greater than Dick Whittington's, or that of any other unfriended youth who ever came, solitary and unknown, to a great busy city.

When he got to London he found that nearly

* Written by Arthur Brooke, printed in 1662.

everybody in the town was interested in the theatre. The Queen and her court often went to see the plays. Some of the rich noblemen kept a large company of players for their private amusement; and many of the most elegant and accomplished men of that time wrote plays which were performed in the theatres.

Of course Shakespeare heard of all these things, and so he haunted the doors to the playhouse, hoping to get a peep at the wonders inside. It has been said that he even held horses outside the building for some of the gallant gentlemen and courtiers who went in to see the play, and that he did his work so well, and had at last so many horses to hold, that he hired other youths to help him, and shared with them the pennies and sixpences which he received. This could not have lasted long, for he soon joined a company of players, and commenced in a very humble way to be an actor. One of the comic actors, in the company which he joined, was a fellow-townsman of his, and he may have been instrumental in getting Will a place among the players. It was not long after he had become an actor that he commenced writing plays.

These plays of Shakespeare are the most wonderful of anything in the English language. They were so great that the people of that age

hardly understood their value, and it was only after a century had passed that they began to be appreciated. Out of some of the old tales and legends which he had heard, the lowly bred country youth wove the most exquisite tissues of poetry and romance that the world has ever read. The forgotten creatures of some Italian story became like living, real people by the magic of his pen.

He stayed in the theatre a good many years. During that time he wrote about forty plays, and as he seems to have been more prudent and saving than most poets have been, he became quite prosperous and well off in worldly matters. He bought a share of the play-house, and for some years was manager of it. When he was a little past middle age he retired to a comfortable estate in his native town of Stratford, and there he died when he was just fifty-two years old.

The first of the stories from Shakespeare which I have to tell you has its principal scenes laid in fairy-land, and is called —

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

The king and queen of the fairies had quarreled, and all fairy-land was in the dumps. Queen Titania sat pouting all day in her most retired bower, and would hardly stir abroad for

fear of meeting King Oberon; while he, attended by the mischief-loving Puck, spent his time in devising plots to tease his dainty consort.

Thus it was that the dew forgot to fall; the fairy circles, no longer used for moonlight revels, had overgrown with rank weeds; the thick air breathed pestilent vapors; the moon shone with watery light; and all the months, missing their guardian fairies, were out of humor, so that stately August wept like changeful April, and merry May was as rude and boisterous as March.

The cause of the quarrel was trifling enough. Titania had a changeling, — one of those charming earth children whom the elves sometimes steal from their cradles, leaving in their stead some sprite from fairy-land, to tease the human parents with its goblin ways. Only Titania had not stolen this earth child, who was her charge. It was the offspring of an Indian princess who had died; and dying, preferred to give her boy to the fairy queen, rather than leave it to the mercies of the cold world. So Titania kept him tenderly, and loved him as dearly as if he were a fairy. But Oberon, who was both jealous and exacting, — as much so as an earth-born lord, — saw the boy, and coveted him to be his cup-bearer, to bring him dew in flower-cups, or to gather

him sweets from the heavy loaded cups of the wild honeysuckle. In truth, he was envious of the caresses Titania lavished on the dimpled, frolicsome little fellow, and wanted to take him from her. And as she steadily refused, they got to so grave a pass, that they had not been on speaking terms for months.

To make it more unfortunate, some splendid wedding festivities were preparing, which needed all the combined good taste of the king and queen of fairy-land, to be celebrated properly.

Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, — she who wore on her round, supple arm, a shield worthy of the stoutest warrior; who, with bared shoulder, white as dazzling snow, went out to war against the mighty Theseus, Duke of Athens; and, being conquered by him, conquered in her turn, so that the warrior yielded, and laid all his arms under her buskined foot, — Hippolyta was to be married to this very Theseus.

Already were the nuptial train come to Athens, to the grand palace of the Duke. Among them were Demetrius and Lysander, two Grecian knights, who had borne arms with Duke Theseus. Demetrius, a fickle gallant, who had, before this, wooed the blue-eyed Helena, now had turned his ready flatteries to the unwilling ear of nut-brown Hermia, the only daughter of the old Egeus. But Hermia scorned

with all her might his suit, and loved instead the young Lysander, tall and fair-haired. Alas for these two lovers! old Egeus did not like his daughter's choice, but favored the suit of Demetrius, and would not let Hermia marry where she wished.

In these happy days of fairies and Amazons, it faired ill with lovers whose fathers were not of their minds, for the maiden who loved so unwisely, had but three alternatives, — either to wed a man of her father's choice, or to be put to death, or to retire into the order of Diana's priestesses, and forever adjure marriage. In her desperation, Hermia appealed to Theseus, who could do nothing but quote the law, and Egeus bore her home in triumph, swearing she should wed Demetrius; — not till she had spoken a few secret words to Lysander, though, and in these brief words, Hermia agreed to run away that night to a wood near Athens, and there, meeting with Lysander, they were to fly to some happier clime for lovers.

Helena, the neglected love of Demetrius, was the dearest friend of Hermia, and to her did she confide her intended flight. And Helena, who was glad to gain a minute's speech with her renegade lover, even though he unblushingly scorned her, and praised Hermia in her presence, went very perfidiously and told Demetrius of the plot

of the two lovers, and the wood where they were to meet.

In one of the fairy circles of this wood, near Athens, Oberon met, at eventide, his ready follower, the goblin Puck, whose merry pranks had set all the country round in an uproar. He it was who had stolen the thick cream from flowing pans; had plaited elf-locks in the tresses of the maids; had charmed the churn so that it would not yield its stores of yellow butter to the vexed housewife, and was the eager furtherer of all sorts of mischief. Now he waited to do the bidding of the angry Oberon.

The fairy king told him of a magic flower, purple in hue, which grew in rare places, known to none but himself, of which the juice, squeezed upon the sleeping eyes of lovers, should compel them to doat upon whomever their first waking glance should fall on. He would squeeze some of this fateful juice on the drowsy lids of Titania when she slept in her bower close by, and place before her some hideous monster whom her waking eyes should fix upon, and, so enchanted, should love. Then the scheming Oberon would obtain Titania's changeling while she was engrossed with this new passion, and, after that, release her from this injurious spell. Instructed how to find it, Puck sped on fleet wings after the flower.

While Oberon stood awaiting his return, Demetrius entered the wood in pursuit of the lovers, of whose flight Helena had told him. Close following him, struggling, with her delicate feet, to keep up with his striding pace, came the silly Helena. In vain she implored him to look back and see how her tired feet were bleeding from the rude thorn bushes. He answered her with anger, and flouted her for loving him. Then she reminded him how once he thought her blue eyes the sweetest ever seen, as now he praised the sparkling glances of Hermia.

So they passed by the listening Oberon into the deepening shadows of the forest.

When Puck returned, bearing the purple flower, Oberon divided it, and bade him seek two lovers in Athenian garb, and weave them in a magic web of slumber, and then, anointing with its juice the eyelids of the scornful lover, make him doat upon the maid who followed him. Then the king hid himself to witness Titania's hour of retiring.

As twilight deepened, the fairy train came in. Titania rode in high state. "Her chariot was an empty hazel-nut; the cover, of the wings of grasshoppers; the traces, of the smallest spider's web; her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film;" and her coachman was a small gnat, in gray livery slashed with gold lace, who sat erect and

dignified on his tiny box, as proud as any coachman could be of his gay turn-out. When her footman had helped the queen to alight, and she was ready to seek her couch, all respectfully retired, except only a few attendants who were to lull her to rest. Her bed was a hammock of web-lace, woven by a spider of great repute, who furnished all the royal laces. It was hung on the thorns of a sweet-brier, and swayed to and fro in the soft breezes, as she lay dreamily within. Then, daintily tucked up in rose leaves, her eyes shut together to the music of this fairy lullaby, —

> "You spotted snakes, with double tongue,
> Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
> Newts and blind worms, do no wrong;
> Come not near our fairy queen.
>
> *Chorus.* — Philomel, with melody
> Sing in our sweet lullaby;
> Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby;
> Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,
> Come our lovely lady nigh;
> So good-night, with lullaby."

When her rosy lids had lightly closed, all the attending fairies went to their beds in flower-cups, and Oberon, with stealthy step, approached, and dropped some of the baleful juice upon her eyes.

Just at twilight, at the hour agreed on, Lysander met Hermia on the borders of the forest. He had planned to take his lady-love to the pro-

tection of an aunt of his, who lived in a place not subject to the laws of Athens, and who would not refuse her aid to their unhappy love. But unfortunately, night overtook them wandering in the mazes of the forest; and, tired with their flight, they lay down at the foot of some old trees, at a little distance from each other, to sleep. Thus Puck, skirting the forest in search of the Athenians his master had described, came upon them, and stopped to gaze. The rosy cheek of Hermia pressed the moss-covered earth which was her pillow, and her breast rose and fell with the deep breath of slumber. Near by lay Lysander, with his drawn sword by his side, ready to protect his love from any danger. He also slept a deep, unconscious sleep.

The obedient Puck fancied this was the unhappy lady whose love was scorned by the Athenian knight, and squeezed the purple flower upon Lysander's eyelids. This would have wrought no harm if, a moment after, Helena had not happened to pass that way, still in search of Demetrius; and awaking at her footstep, Lysander first fixed his eyes on her. Under the influence of the fatal charm, he forgot his loyalty, forgot the sleeping Hermia, and poured forth protestations of love to Helena. She, imagining Lysander did but mock her, ran away, and he pursued, leaving Hermia forgotten on the damp ground.

That self-same evening, in another part of this same wood, a party of mechanics, some of the hard-handed men of Athens, had met to rehearse a play which they hoped to perform at the Duke's nuptial festivities.

There was Flute, the bellows-mender; Starveling, the tailor; Snout, the tinker; Quince, the carpenter; and among the rest, stout old Bottom, the weaver, — Bully Bottom, as his comrades called him. He was, in his own conceit, the best actor of them all; the best for tragedy, comedy, or tragical comical. "Seneca was not too heavy, nor Plautus too light," for old Bottom, and he would have taken all parts in the play at once, with great cheerfulness.

These jolly fellows had rehearsed their play, and Bottom, in his character of lover, had spoken all the tender speeches to Flute, the bellows-mender, who was to play the lady of the piece, when Puck entered. His love for sport was never quiet; so, when he saw poor Bottom a little separated from his companions, he fixed on his shoulders an ass's head, with long ears. This odd head-dress fitted the self-satisfied weaver so well, that he wore it without dreaming he had anything unusual on his head. But his amazed companions ran away at the strange sight, crying out that Bottom was certainly enchanted. Alas for Titania! This noise awoke her; and,

rising from her bed, she beheld the stout figure of Bottom thus frightfully crowned. To see was only to love, because her lids were heavy with the charmed flower-juice, and she alighted from her swaying couch, and ran quickly to the weaver.

Then, with sweet words and delicate caresses, the tiny queen led the huge monster to her bower, and summoned her attendant fairies to do him reverence. The astonished weaver yielded himself up to the strange enchantment, and the elves, hovering about him, prepared to do his bidding, as their gracious mistress had desired.

When Hermia awoke from her deep slumber, and missed Lysander, she was seized with the greatest affright. Starting up, she ran wildly through the forest, till she encountered Demetrius, and accused him of slaying her lost lover, that he might have no rival to her love. When Demetrius denied this, she ran on, calling, in agonizing tones, upon her lost Lysander. Oberon saw their meeting, heard his tender words to Hermia, and remembering how Demetrius had scorned sweet Helena, he saw that Puck had not yet anointed his eyes with the flower. So, throwing the knight into an enchanted sleep, he sprinkled some drops from the flowers upon his eyelids, and went off to lead

in Helena. Soon she came to the tree under which Demetrius lay sleeping. Close after her came the recreant Lysander, besieging her with vows of love. Then Demetrius, awaking, saw before him the lady he had scorned, and falling at her feet, he begged forgiveness. Lysander opposed his passion, and offered to relinquish Hermia to him. But now Demetrius refused her, and declared only Helena had had, and should have, his heart and his allegiance. The puzzled Helena knew not what to believe. Could they be playing on her foolish fondness? So she stood incredulous, longing, yet fearing to believe in the protestations of Demetrius, when Hermia approached. She, poor little one, seeing Lysander again, was flying to him, all tears and smiles, when he repulsed her with fury, called her harsh names, and bade her leave him, since he no longer cared for her. Then the unhappy maiden saw both her former lovers at Helena's feet, contending for Helena's smiles, as, one little hour ago, they had quarreled for her favor.

She could not restrain the rage which she felt against Helena at this sight. That this pale-faced, dove-eyed girl, who had been her friend, — her sister almost, — who had shared her childish games and girlish confidences, should now become her rival in Lysander's love, should have

beguiled him with her tall figure, her grace, and her sweet, pleading manners, was too much. She would gladly have resigned Demetrius to her, but that she should come, like a thief, to steal her loved Lysander, was too bitter to be borne. So she upbraids her fiercely; and Helena, seeing her jealousy, can no longer doubt the sincerity of her two lovers.

Fortunately, Oberon, invisible, heard this dispute, and angrily summoning Puck, he accused him of making all this mischief. He bade him lead the two knights, who have already drawn their swords to combat for the possession of Helena, through bogs and tangled pathways, by his magic arts, till, wearied by such tiresome travel, they should sink to sleep again. Then, by putting a new love-charm on Lysander's eyes, he should be made to return to his loyalty and Hermia's love.

Obeying Oberon's commands, the nimble Puck flitted through bush and brake, now calling Demetrius in one direction with the voice of Lysander, and anon summoning Lysander an opposite way with the tongue of Demetrius, so that the two gentlemen, pursuing the sounds, floundered in bogs, and tore through briers, till it was near morning. Then, one after the other, Puck led all the four lovers through the thick darkness of the wood, to the group of gnarled trees, where

Lysander and Hermia first reclined to rest. There each lay down to sleep, unconscious that the others were so near. Whilst they slept, Puck bedewed the eyes of Lysander with a new charm that Oberon had given him, which should heal his sick fancy, and turn him again to Hermia.

So, at early morning, when Duke Theseus and Hippolyta sallied out with their hounds and horns to hunt in this forest, they came upon the four, sleeping thus upon the ground. So steeped in slumber were they, that a full blast of horns could scarcely rouse them. But in waking, Lysander's eyes seek Hermia first, and all the memory of this sudden gust of fancy for Helena is as a troubled and uncertain dream. While Demetrius, professing penitence for his inconstancy to Helena, claimed her as his first and dearest love, and begged Theseus that their nuptials might be celebrated at the same time with his.

The old Egeus consenting, Lysander takes Hermia, and Demetrius his gentle Helena, and all the lovers return to the palace.

'Twas now the day of the nuptial festivities, and Oberon began to repent himself of his cruelty to Titania. In the shadiest nook of the dewy forest, the tiny queen had had a bower woven for Bottom, and sat there beside him,

crowning his misshapen head with the rarest and most fragrant flowers. All around him, at her command, were her most delicate attendants, — the white-robed Moth, the graceful Peaseblossom, the aërial Cobweb, and the pert little Mustard-seed, all fairies of noble birth and royal manners. These brought him dews from violets' eyes, the overflowing sacs of the honey-bee, and the sweetest nut-kernels from the squirrels' hoard. Even Oberon could not look on such a sight without relenting; and when he asked for and obtained the changeling boy from Titania, he awaited eagerly the time for her noontide nap. As soon as she was asleep, he applied to her eyes the charmed herb which would cure her of her unnatural passion. Then he bade Puck remove the monstrous head from Bottom's shoulders, who, being released from this enchantment, went quickly home to join his companions, and study over his part in the play, which must be performed that night before the Duke.

When evening came, the Amazon Queen and the two Grecian maidens were led as brides to Hymen's altar, gayly decorated with offerings of flowers. Neither mortals nor fairies were then lacking in respect to the joyous occasion. While the clumsy but well-meaning artisans made the wedding-train laugh at their tragedy

in the great hall of the palace, the fairies trooped it overhead in the bridal chambers, scattering sweet perfumes and invoking blessings on the houses of the newly wedded pairs.

THE STORY OF PERDITA.

A WINTER NIGHT'S TALE.

(FROM SHAKESPEARE.)

THERE had been much feasting and merry-making in the palace at Sicily for several months, while the king of Bohemia had been a guest there. Leontes, the king of the Sicilian dominions, and Polixenes of Bohemia, had for many years been fast friends, and loved each other very dearly. When they were young princes, unused to the cares that wait upon a crown, they had been reared together in the same palace; had hunted and fished and played games together like any school-boys of ignoble blood; and when years passed away, and each became ruler over distant kingdoms, they had not forgotten their boyish love, but kept a place in their hearts still fresh and green with the memory of the old friendship.

Only a few years before, Leontes had visited his friend in Bohemia; and now Polixenes had come to be entertained in Sicily. Polixenes had left behind him in his palace his wife, and his

young prince Florizel, whom report spoke of as a promising boy. Leontes had for wife the most refined and beautiful princess of all Europe, and she had borne him one child, Mamillius, a precocious boy, to whom the hearts of both parents clung in doting fondness.

Leontes was a man of hasty temper and strong passions, quick in his judgments, and prone to make mistakes, for which he was bitterly accused by his conscience. He loved his queen with all the strength of his uneven and fitful nature. And Hermione — this was the queen — was so gentle and so yielding, that the sway of imperious Leontes seemed light and easy to her, and she loved him with her whole tender heart. She shared her husband's interest in the coming of his royal friend, and had striven, since his arrival, to entertain him by her sweetness and grace of conversation; by the beauty of her singing, which was reputed marvelous; and by all the sweet womanly charms she could use as hostess and queen. So Polixenes found the time pass most pleasantly in the Sicilian palace.

But there were also affairs in Bohemia to be looked after. Merry-making is delightful, but even kings are slaves to their business, and Polixenes began to feel uneasy at tarrying, and announced to Leontes the day of his intended leave-taking. But with even more than wonted

vehemence he pressed his guest to stay longer. Polixenes refused firmly. He must indeed, within a day or two, set out for Bohemia.

Now, in the ill-balanced brain of Leontes, a fearful thought had been growing up, — a thought at first rejected, with contempt for himself in imagining so base a thing, but which, having once come into his mind, would constantly come creeping back again. He had feared that his wife — his good and true Hermione — was too fond of Polixenes, and that he also had begun to return her feeling. So he urged Polixenes thus ardently to prolong his visit, that he might see if he had any ground for his suspicions. When he found that the Bohemian king would not be persuaded to stay, he called in Hermione to second his entreaties, and bade her ask his friend to remain. The queen came, and ready to give her husband pleasure, since she thought he had no motive but the gratification of his friendship, she urged Polixenes so prettily to stay, she plead so volubly when he tried to make excuses for his departure, that all his farewells were drowned in her persuasions, and at last he was forced to be silent from sheer breathlessness, and in default of words, to stay another week at Sicily.

But Leontes, — miserable Leontes! In his wife's innocent desire to please him, he had imagined he saw a reluctance to let Polixenes go

away from her; and cherishing those suspicions, all that was good in him was turned to gall and bitterness, and his heart was torn by jealousy and rage.

In this state of feeling he left the company of his friend and Hermione, and sought out Camillo, — one of his nobles, — whom he had appointed chief cup-bearer to Polixenes while he was his guest. Camillo was a man of probity and honor, very discreet and wise in judgment, — the very antipodes of the easily moved and tumultuous Leontes. To him the king unfolded his suspicions, and while he listened, dumb with grief and wonder, he desired him to poison the wine of Polixenes, that he might die of his first draught.

Camillo knew the king well enough to know that it was useless to stem the current of his madness, and he contented himself with asking him to dissemble his feelings for a short time, and promised him to undertake the murder of the king of Bohemia. Then Leontes left him, a little calmed and satisfied.

Camillo felt a momentary struggle between his loyalty to the king his master and his sense of honor and humanity. On the one side was his personal safety, his ambition, all the motives that selfishness could urge; on the other hand, if he yielded to humanity, and spared Polixenes,

he knew not but the anger of Leontes might fall on him to such an extent as to strip him of his possessions, his title, or even take his life. But the hesitation of Camillo was brief, and he hastened to Polixenes to warn him of the king's intention against him.

The king of Bohemia was horrified that Leontes could suspect him of such baseness as to endeavor to win the affections of his wife, and wounded to the heart when he heard how Camillo had been instructed by his friend to have him foully poisoned. Flight seemed to him the only possible escape from the anger of the king, who he knew was unreasonable in his passions. Besides, in his absence he thought the wrath of Leontes would cool, and he would soon be convinced of the folly of his suspicions. The good Camillo offered to go back with him to Bohemia, since he did not care to stay and breast the king's wrath ; and Polixenes, in gratitude, gladly accepted his attendance, and promised to reward him for his fidelity.

They set out immediately as secretly as possible. Polixenes had almost as much influence in the city as the king himself, and all the gates were opened for him without any demur, so that he got out with all his attendants, embarked in his ships, and was out at sea before Leontes discovered it. When he did hear of his friend's

departure, and seeking out Camillo, found he also had gone, the fury of Leontes burst all bounds. For he thought he saw, in their hurried departure, proof that Polixenes had been guilty, and that Camillo had been all the time in his confidence.

He instantly went, all inflamed with rage, to the apartment of queen Hermione, tore her child, the prince Mamillius, from her embrace, and ordered her to be cast into prison. The poor lady could hardly speak a word of defense, she was so overcome with sorrow and astonishment, but what she did say was full of dignity and mild reproach.

Every one in the whole court was in sympathy with Hermione. The lords and ladies all believed in her goodness and virtue, and some of them did not scruple to tell Leontes he had done wrong. The king never heard so much plain speaking in all his life as in the first two or three days after her imprisonment.

After Hermione had been a few days in prison, a beautiful little daughter was born to her, — a sweet babe, which filled the dull old prison where she lay with light and beauty. Poor Hermione could only weep over the dear little creature, and did not feel much consolation from its angelic presence, since her husband had taken his favor from her.

One of the ladies of Hermione — her name was Paulina — who was very fearless and outspoken, declared she would take the babe to Leontes to see if the sight of it would not move his heart to pity. So, with the infant in her arms, she pushed her way through the attendants who surrounded the king, and knelt at his feet, holding up the child. Leontes looked wonder-struck at her audacity, and told Antigonus, the husband of Paulina, who was among the lookers-on, to take his wife away. But Antigonus, though a brave man and a soldier, dared not oppose his wife when she was doing what she thought right, and he did not move even at the king's orders. Paulina, having the king at her mercy, rated him with a sharp tongue, and told him to take up his innocent child and let his wronged wife be set free. All this time the baby lay smiling up in its father's face, while the lords around listened to Paulina, secretly glad of the way in which she talked to the king.

Leontes only grew more angry, and said the child should die. When every one plead for its life, however, he changed his purpose, and said, since Antigonus was so interested in the child, he should take it away from his dominions, to some remote or desert place, and leave it there, exposed to chance or the mercy of the elements. So Antigonus bade farewell to Paulina, and tak-

ing the infant, which was furnished with a purse of gold, some jewels of her mother's, and a supply of rich clothing, he took a ship and set sail from Sicily.

Leontes then resolved to send a messenger to the oracle at Delphi, to ask about Hermione, and if Polixenes had loved her, and promised he would abide by the decision of the oracle. Some messengers were accordingly dispatched for Delphi. All this while Hermione was languishing in prison. When the day arrived on which the answer was expected, Leontes had a court assembled, over which he sat in judgment in his regal robes. Poor Hermione, weak and pale from recent illness, was brought before him in the state of a prisoner. She never showed to better advantage than in her patient endurance of her wrongs, and the hearts of all the spectators went out to her. Then the messengers, who had travelled with great speed, came into court with the sealed answer of Apollo. The officer of the court opened it, and read these words : —

"*Hermione is chaste ; Polixenes blameless ; Camillo a true subject ; Leontes a jealous tyrant ; the innocent babe truly begotten, and the king shall live without an heir, if that which is lost is not found.*"

At this every one was overjoyed. Never had an oracle spoken more plainly or more to the

purpose. But mad Leontes, angry even with the gods for baffling him, rose, declaring that the oracle was false. At this moment a servant rushed into the court with the news of the death of Mamillius. The young prince had been pining ever since his mother's imprisonment, and had suddenly died. When Hermione heard this, the woman overpowered the queen. Her fortitude gave way, and uttering one cry, she fell prostrate in the midst of her guards. Thus, in an hour, the madness of Leontes had deprived himself of wife and children. Then too late his eyes were opened; he saw his gross injustice; he recognized the truth of the oracle; he believed the curse of Apollo had fallen on him forever. His remorse was as violent as his unjust jealousy, and he tore his robes and his hair in a frenzy of passionate sorrow. Paulina only could console him, and as she was a woman of tender heart as well as of strong mind, she was a genuine comforter. With her own hands, too, she prepared the body of Hermione for the grave; watched with it while it lay in state before the funeral, and superintended all the obsequies of her dear queen and mistress.

In all this time Antigonus was sailing rapidly away from the kingdom of Leontes with the innocent babe, on whom the king's wrath had fallen. After a tempestuous voyage, his ship

touched land at a coast in Bohemia. The night before they reached this shore, Antigonus had seen in his sleep a vision, which warned him of his approaching death, and instructed him to call the child Perdita (meaning *lost*), and leave her on the nearest shore. Accordingly, he placed the infant in a box with the rich clothing, the gold, and the jewels he had brought with him, and writing on a slip, which he pinned to her garments, the name by which she was to be called, and some of the circumstances of her birth, he landed, and placed her on the shore, which was a very lonely and desolate one.

As soon as he had done this, a terrible storm arose, which obscured all the day. And as Antigonus went over the beach towards his ship, he was seized by a ferocious wild beast, which tore him in pieces. After the storm had abated, an old peasant passing that way found the child in its casket, unharmed by the beasts or the elements, and his son, a simple country youth, also saw the wretched Antigonus, who was just uttering his dying groans. These two took up the child, and carrying her to their cottage, agreed to call her Perdita, and rear her as a shepherdess.

Sixteen years passed on after the death of Hermione, and Leontes, chastened by grief, had become a grave and somewhat melancholy man,

a little past middle age, a just ruler, and much more beloved by his people than in the days of his youthful reign. He had never ceased to mourn for his beloved Hermione; and Paulina, who also mourned the loss of her husband, remained his trusted friend and confidant.

In the kingdom of Polixenes strange events were shaping themselves. Perdita had grown up under the roof of the rude peasants who had fostered her, a beautiful maiden, fair and pure as a lily, with a delicate refinement in all her looks and words, a grace in all her motions, which made the peasants look upon her with admiration, and regard her almost as a queen. She ruled them with a gentle sway, and at all their rustic festivals her wish was law. So it happened that the fame of her loveliness and goodness spread through all the country round.

Prince Florizel, who was the heir and only son of Polixenes, was a romantic youth of twenty, who spent much of his time in wandering about the woods and fields of his father's kingdom. It was not strange that he should hear of the radiant beauty of this peasant maid, who was called Perdita, and whose birth was so enveloped in mystery. It was not strange that the youth should seek to see her, to prove for himself if report had spoken truly. Having once seen her, it was the most natural thing in the world that

Florizel should lose his heart at once to the beautiful girl who walked the fields like the goddess Flora, who was as modest as Diana, and as fair as Cytherea. To all these goddesses he compared her in his thoughts.

It was not long before the prince gained admission to her foster-father's cottage, and became at home among the shepherd youths. He joined them in their games, and was present at all the feast-days and merry-makings. He kept his rank secret from all but Perdita. To her he avowed his noble parentage, and told her of the love he bore her. Perdita could not withhold her heart from this royal wooer, who was so superior to all the rustic swains, who only dared worship her at a distance; but the lovers dreaded the displeasure of Polixenes, and neither could divine what would be the end of their love. So they gave themselves up to the happiness of the present, and made no plan for the future. Florizel daily sought the cottage and the society of Perdita. His studies were neglected, he was rarely seen at court, and all the royal attendants wondered at his distraught manner, and his frequent absences.

Of course Polixenes could not help noticing all these things, and at length, by the help of some spies whom he set to watch Florizel's habits, he got very near the truth. And he deter-

mined to see for himself what peasant girl it was of whom they declared Florizel to be enamored. So one day he set out with Camillo (who was still loved and honored by him before any one in his whole kingdom) for the place where Perdita dwelt.

It happened that there was a rustic feast on the day Polixenes had chosen for his visit. He attended the feast with Camillo, both of them disguised as merchants. They could scarcely have seen Perdita to better advantage. She shone like a queen among the coarse-featured rustics in the midst of whom she lived. At her side, following her constantly with his eyes — whispering in her attentive ear — calling blushes to her cheek with his tender flatteries — Polixenes beheld his recreant son, — the heir to his proud kingdom.

The beauty of the maid almost disarmed the king himself at first. He joined their revels for a while. The pretty hands of Perdita dealt to Camillo and himself a part of the flowers, of which she gave appropriate nosegays to each guest. Her bright lips and shifting blushes bade the strangers welcome to their simple pastimes. But Polixenes could not long endure with patience the spectacle of his son at the feet of a peasant girl, and throwing off his disguise before them all, he bitterly reproached Florizel, and

threatened to have both Perdita and her father punished for the share they had had in leading his son from his duty. After this the king marched off in great rage, leaving the poor young lovers quite overwhelmed with astonish ment and fear. Camillo lingered behind, and to him Florizel told his immediate resolve, which was to take Perdita and fly with her from the shores of Bohemia, to some far-off land, where love was not treason.

Camillo heard him attentively, and seeing he was resolved on flight, he debated within his mind how he might best serve the king, the prince, and his own wishes, all at once. He hit on this plan. He would advise Florizel to go to Sicily to visit the court of Leontes, who was now so repentant for his conduct to Polixenes, that he would gladly welcome his son. Then Camillo thought, after the departure of Florizel, he would tell Polixenes of his son's whereabouts, and the king, whose anger would have cooled by this time, could go after Florizel, bring him back, and they would be reconciled: while he, Camillo, could accompany the monarch in his journey to Sicily, and thus behold again his native country, for which he had always secretly pined. It must be confessed that Camillo did not think much about Perdita in the affair, and did not much care whether Polixenes was reconciled to

her or not. But he furnished the young couple with money, and helped them to get on board a vessel bound for Sicily. They set sail, taking with them the foster-father and brother of Perdita, and with favoring winds were soon in the dominions of Leontes.

As soon as they landed, they went straight to the court of that sovereign, who received them with much favor. Florizel represented Perdita to be the daughter of a Libyan king, his new-made princess, and invented some plausible excuse for the scarcity of their attendants. While Leontes was making welcome the prince and his beautiful bride, news was brought to the palace that Polixenes had landed, with the old courtier, Camillo, in search of his lost son. The first persons the king of Bohemia encountered on the shores of Sicily were the old shepherd and his son; these he instantly seized, and took with him to the court.

His appearance turned everything into confusion. Florizel was pale but resolute; the maiden wept; Leontes was divided between pity for the prince and his beautiful bride, and sympathy with the parental woes of his old friend Polixenes, when suddenly the frightened old shepherd found a tongue, and piteously implored them not to punish him for the misdeeds of a girl who was not of his blood, and declaring

he was only the adopted father of Perdita, he produced the proofs of her birth. He pulled out, from their concealment in his garments, the mantle in which the infant had been wrapped, the jewels she wore, and the slip of paper on which Antigonus had left directions for her name, and instructions that she was of noble birth, and should be tenderly reared. In an instant all was changed: Leontes clasped Perdita in his arms, crying out that she was his lost daughter; Paulina listened to the account of her husband's death with tears of grief, which were softened by her joy in seeing the oracle fulfilled; Camillo was dumb with amazement, and Florizel scarcely knew whether he waked or dreamed. There were laughter and tears, and explanations and rejoicings, till the whole court of Sicily seemed to have gone quite mad.

Of course there was now no bar to the marriage of Florizel and Perdita, and their hands were plighted and the wedding-day fixed. Now the court gave themselves up to merry-making and rejoicings, which were only marred to Leontes by the memory of his lost Hermione. When Paulina saw that his face often wore a shadow, and that many a sigh escaped him which only her quick ear heard, she could no longer keep secret a surprise she had been re-

serving for him. This was a life-sized statue of Hermione, so wonderfully done by a very famous artist, that it looked like the living, breathing image of the dead queen. Indeed, Paulina declared the painter had done his work so well, that he had not reproduced the Hermione, of sixteen years ago, but the queen as she would have looked on the day her daughter was found.

After hearing of this wonderful piece of art, all were impatient to see it. Paulina invited all the royal party to one of her houses, a little removed from the royal palace, where she had been in the habit of spending much of her time. Here, in one of the largest apartments, they all beheld a raised platform, in front of which a curtain fell in concealing folds. Presently, to the sound of music, the curtain was withdrawn, and on a low pedestal, clad in sweeping draperies of white, stood the statue of the queen. It was indeed as Paulina had said. The face and figure was not that of the girlish queen who had sunk under the unjust anger of Leontes. It was that of a noble, dignified woman, adding to the loveliness of youth the serene and chastened beauty of ripened womanhood. All present cried out with amazement, and Leontes would have rushed forward to clasp the image in his arms, if Paulina had not restrained him. She

told him he would mar the statue; that the color was not yet dry; the material, that which would not endure rude touch. But Leontes, almost beside himself, besought her to make the statue live. It seemed, in its life-like aspect, to move and breathe: might it not also *speak* to him? The miracle was wrought when the statue was formed; it would be adding nothing to the wonder of it, to give it voice and utterance.

With a sudden gesture of command, Paulina made them all draw back a little. Since Leontes wished it, the clay *should* live. She bade the music sound, and while a choir of concealed musicians sang in soft accord, she invoked Hermione to come down from her pedestal. Then the white bosom of the statue heaved; the clasped hands stretched eagerly forward; in another moment the image became a woman, and Hermione was weeping on the bosom of her husband and in the arms of her daughter.

When Paulina's voice could be heard, she was ready to explain the mystery. It was no miracle that she had wrought. She had discovered, on the night before the burial of the queen, that she was only in a trance, — *not dead*, — and by much nursing had brought back her life. Hermione had refused, however, to let

her recovery be made known, till her child that was lost could be found. The faithful Paulina had been her only attendant, and for sixteen years she had awaited this happy moment which she believed the oracle predicted.

All this being told, between happy tears, the nuptials of Florizel and Perdita were celebrated, and all the trials of Leontes ended in wondrous happiness.

THE STORY OF KING LEAR AND HIS THREE DAUGHTERS.

(FROM SHAKESPEARE.)

A LONG time ago, when the island of Great Britain was not so large and prosperous a country as now, but was a wild and thinly settled island, divided into several kingdoms, there reigned over one of these dominions an old monarch called Lear. He was one of the mightiest of the British kings, and though he had a kind and generous heart, he was so passionate that when one of his fits of rage possessed him, his bravest and wisest counselors could not dissuade him from any wild or frantic purpose which seized him.

Lear had three children, all of them daughters, and all very beautiful. The eldest was named Goneril; the second, Regan; and the youngest, Cordelia. Goneril and Regan were proud and haughty beauties. They trod the halls of their father's palace as if they were already queens. When any story of suffering or complaint of wrong arose from the people, they always took

the part of the oppressor. Their radiant black eyes glistened with hatred or sparkled with anger, but they never softened with pity or tenderness.

But Cordelia, blue-eyed, golden-haired little Cordelia, had a heart full of tenderness and goodness. Her sisters disliked her because she was so meek and gentle, just as ugly spirits always dislike that which is pure and beautiful; so she kept out of their way as much as possible, and sat in her chamber, with her maidens, little heeded and little known by the court or people.

She had heard so many loud, false speeches from the tongues of her sisters, that she had learned to distrust noisy vows and protestations, and had grown very reserved and modest in her speech. Sometimes, when she tried to tell the emotions which lay warm and deep in her heart, an impulse, half of shame, would check her, — a feeling as if these things were too sacred to be talked about.

Thus these three sisters lived in the court until Lear became an old, old man. Then he began to imagine he was weary of all the trouble of his state affairs, and resolved he would divide his kingdom into three parts, and give to each of his daughters an equal portion of his realm to govern. For this purpose he assembled one day all the principal officers of his kingdom, all his

priests and nobles, and sitting in the midst of them in grand state upon his throne, overhung by canopies of brilliant cloth, he sent for his three daughters to appear before him.

They came at his bidding. First the proud Goneril, with her husband, the Duke of Albany; then the haughty Regan, with her cruel-looking lord, the Duke of Cornwall; last of all came Cordelia, blushing and half afraid at appearing before so many people. Cordelia had two lovers visiting her father's court, both Frenchmen; for although she had lived so quietly in the palace, the neighboring princes did not forget that Lear had a daughter yet unmarried, and all foreign nations were eager to form an alliance with so mighty a prince.

When they were all arranged in state, Lear told the court of his purpose to divide the kingdom among his three daughters, and declared that he should spend the rest of his days in turn with each of them. His wisest lords shook their heads doubtfully when he said this; but all knew his temper so well that not one dared object.

Lear called on Goneril first to declare how much she loved him, that he might requite her love by a portion of his kingdom. To this Goneril answered that she loved him beyond her eye-sight, her freedom, her life itself. She as-

sured him no child had ever loved a father as she loved him, and that words were too weak to tell the greatness of her love.

When she stopped speaking, Lear showed her the limits of the kingdom he had deeded to her and the Duke of Albany, a most generous gift; and then he turned to Regan, who stood by, eager to speak, and asked her which *she* thought loved him best. Regan told him she was of the same blood as Goneril, her sister, and she loved him not a whit less; that even her sister's declarations of affection did not come up to the measure of her feelings; and that her only earthly happiness was in her father's love.

Lear then gave her an ample portion for her dowry, and called forth his youngest daughter, whom in his heart he loved best of the three. Now Cordelia had listened with amazement at the ease with which her sisters had declared the most sacred feelings of the heart so loudly, and at the extraordinary affection they professed. "What love have they left to give their husbands," she thought within herself, "if they love their father all?" While she was thus thinking, Lear asked this youngest and best-loved child what she had to say. She looked at him with her clear, truthful eyes, and answered, "Nothing."

Lear looked at her in wonder, and repeated "Nothing?"

Cordelia then told him simply that she loved him as she ought to love a father who had bred and reared her; that she should always honor and obey him above all others; but if she had a husband, she should think it her duty to give *him* half her love and care, and not, like her sisters, give her father all.

On this Lear went into one of his terrible fits of rage. He was so sorely disappointed at Cordelia's answer that he could not wait to let his reason see how wise it was. He stamped and raved, and without delay divided the large portion he had reserved for Cordelia between her sisters. He bade her instantly leave the court, and never see his face again. One of his oldest nobles, the Earl of Kent, interceded for her so boldly, that the king's rage turned on him also, and he banished him, on pain of death, from his kingdom. Then he called forth Cordelia's lovers, the Duke of Burgundy and the King of France, and told them if either of them wished Cordelia, stripped of rank and wealth, they might take her where she stood; from *him* she should have nothing. Burgundy said that since she had no fortune, he could scarcely afford to marry her; but the French King said nobly, that he could see virtues in the maiden worth more than lands or gold, and if she would, she should be his bride and the *Queen of France.*

Cordelia looked into his handsome, earnest face and gave him her hand without a word. Even if she had not thought of him before, his noble offer was enough to make her love him as much as a prince of so rare qualities deserved to be loved. And hand in hand, without a single attendant, she went out with her royal lover, in the footsteps of poor Kent, whom Leon had so madly banished.

Immediately Goneril, with her husband, the Duke of Albany, took command of their new kingdom, and the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall went to occupy their palace. Lear only reserved for himself a hundred knights and warriors for his train of followers, and trusted the keeping of them all to the generosity of the two daughters to whom he had given everything.

He resolved to live one month with Goneril, and spend the next with Regan, and so changing from month to month, spend equal time with each daughter. For a few days Goneril disguised her wicked temper, — but only for a few days. She waited for the first slight pretext to complain of her father and take away some of his pleasures. One day when his men, who were nearly all soldiers and rough fellows, used to being at battle in the field, had been a little noisy in one of the court-yards of her palace, she sent for her father, and told him he kept too many

followers; that she could no longer permit it. She asked what necessity there was for him, who would always be well taken care of by his daughters, if he behaved properly, to have so many as a hundred followers. Would not fifty, or even twenty-five, do quite as well?

Imagine how Lear felt at being talked to thus. An old king who had given up to this daughter half his kingdom, the command of his great armies, and his right to rule; he to whom thousands had been a small retinue, to be now denied a mere handful of attendants. The passionate old man was so choked with rage and grief, he could scarcely speak. When he tried to reply, his tears almost stopped him. Goneril stood gazing unmoved on her aged father's wounded feeling, and at length he told her that he would leave her inhospitable roof, for he had yet another daughter who would not treat him thus. Surely Nature could not produce another monster such as she. When she answered this with more bitter insults, he cursed her with a curse so terrible, that one can hardly imagine how she could have heard it and not fallen on her knees and called on God for mercy.

Lear then left her castle gates with all his train, and set out for Regan's palace. Just before this happened, the Earl of Kent, whom Lear had banished, fearing his old master would

need some trusty friend, had returned in disguise to Britain. He offered himself to Lear as his servant, and Lear, who did not recognize him, had accepted him. He now called Kent, and sent him as his messenger to Regan, to inform her of her sister's wicked conduct, and bid her prepare to receive him.

Kent hurried off without delay, but the end proved that Goneril outwitted him. This wicked woman, the moment Lear left her palace, sent a messenger post-haste to Regan, counseling her to oppose all Lear's wishes, and deprive him of all state, lest with his hundred men he should prove dangerous to their power. The Duke of Albany, who was a kind-hearted man, but incapable of controlling so bad a wife, tried in vain to soften her heart. All his sympathy for Lear seemed but to strengthen her purpose.

Regan received her sister's messenger, and immediately followed her advice. When Kent arrived at her court, he was punished for some slight offense by being placed with his feet in the stocks. Very soon Lear arrived, to find his messenger thus insulted, his message unheeded, and himself received with pointed coldness by the daughter on whom all his hopes were laid.

The poor king placed much constraint upon himself at first, and tried to reason mildly with

Regan against taking her sister's part; but when he found his words did not move her, and that she was even more harsh and unyielding than Goneril, he burst out into ravings of despair. To add to his misery, Goneril came then to Regan's court, attended by a train more numerous and grand than had attended Lear in the days of his magnificence; and he saw Regan, who had refused him welcome, embrace and kiss this wicked daughter. At this sight he was convinced that they were leagued against him, and that he should find no pity there. He declared that he would quit them both; that the elements would be more kind than such vipers as these; and so rushed madly from the chamber, through the court, outside the court-yard gates.

When Lear thus fled from the luxurious palace-hall in which he had held this last meeting with his daughters, it was beginning to grow dark, and a terrible storm was coming on. Already they heard the loud roll of thunder and saw the sharp flashes of lightning. But though some nobles in Regan's court, more tender-hearted than these stony women, pleaded for the king, and besought them not to let him go out into a night when even beasts ought to be sheltered, they alone were pitiless. They helped to drive their poor old father forth, and locked after

him their heavy castle gates. There, outside in the rude storm, with no attendants but his faithful Kent and a poor jester, who had been his sport when he was king, stood the once mighty Lear. The hail fell in large stones upon his head, stripped of its royal crown, and the wild wind blew his long white hairs about his face. The whole country was a barren heath, without a house to give them shelter; and thus buffeted by storms and wounded in his heart's core, is it to be wondered at that he lost his reason and became insane?

Before the night was over, a kind lord, named Gloster, came to seek them, and took them to a farm-house where Lear could be warmed and fed. But it could not restore his reason, and he knew no more the faces of his friends, but raved madly of his daughters.

In the mean time the Earl of Kent, who had been so faithful to his old master, had been busy at work for him. He had been sending messengers to France, where Cordelia and her husband dwelt, telling of the manner in which the cruel sisters treated Lear; and the French king had already begun to march an army toward Britain. On the very night that Lear was driven out, he landed his troops at Dover, the nearest English seaport from France.

As soon as the storm cleared, Gloster told

Kent that he thought the sisters had formed a plot to have their old father murdered, and Kent resolved to hurry on with his helpless charge to the French camp. When he reached there, he found the King of France had gone back into his own country on some sudden business, but he saw Cordelia, who was left in charge of the the army, and told her the sad story of her father's wrongs. Lear could not be persuaded to enter the camp; but escaped from Kent, and went roving up and down the open country, crowning himself with weeds, and imagining himself again a king. Cordelia sent her trustiest guards to find him; and when at length he was weary and footsore, they found him, and brought him to the queen's tent, where he fell into a deep slumber.

While he slept Cordelia watched his breathing as if he were a sick child, and wept over his poor white head, so beaten by the storm. By and by he waked. With the deep slumber his madness had gone away, and he recognized his youngest and dearest daughter weeping by his couch. How happy he was to find he had one child who loved him, and how grieved that he had not understood her sooner!

While they were in the first joy of meeting, news came that the good old Gloster had been most cruelly treated for being kind to Lear, and

that while the wicked sisters and Regan's husband were practicing horrible tortures on the old man, one of Gloster's servants had interfered; and, trying to protect his lord, was killed, but not until he had partly avenged Gloster's wrongs, by giving the Duke of Cornwall his death-stab. Regan, thus left a widow, had put her soldiers under command of a crafty Lord Edmund, with whom she was in love and meant to marry, and had joined her army to that of her sister Goneril, to march against the French at Dover.

Cordelia did the best so young a bride could do without her husband, and marched her army out to meet them. But she was too much taken at disadvantage. The French troops were put to flight, and Lear and Cordelia were taken prisoners, and sent to a dungeon. They were consigned to prison by the orders of the miserable Edmund, who was commander of Regan's forces; and when the Duke of Albany, who was the rightful general of the whole army, demanded the royal prisoners, Edmund refused to give them up.

And here it came out that both these bad sisters loved this base Edmund, who was a low-born fellow, and that Regan had intended to marry him since her husband had died, while Goneril was plotting to murder the kind-hearted

Duke of Albany, her husband, that she might be free to unite herself to Edmund. Albany openly accused Goneril of her crime, and showed her the letter in which she had plotted against his life. Then Goneril went out from Albany's presence maddened to frenzy, and first giving Regan a draught of deadly poison, she stabbed herself, and news was brought to the camp of the miserable end of both these unnatural women.

As soon as he could, while all these horrors were happening, the Duke sent to Lear's prison to have him liberated; but alas! he sent too late. Edmund had before given orders that the prisoners should be secretly murdered, and when they arrived at the prison, they met Lear bearing out Cordelia in his arms, quite dead.

It was pitiful to see how the old wronged king wept this last dear daughter, whose love had proved the only real love of all. He laid his ear upon her heart, to see if there were not the faintest beat, and watched eagerly for one little sign of breath; and when he found that she lay cold and still, his poor heart, that had borne so many sorrows, gave way at last, and with one bursting sigh, quite broke, and he fell dead beside her.

Such was the tragic end of King Lear and his three daughters.

THE WITTY PORTIA; OR, THE THREE CASKETS.

(FROM SHAKESPEARE.)

SEVERAL hundred years ago, when the kingdom of Italy contained many proud and prosperous commercial states, only a few days' sail from the city of Venice there lived a very famous and wealthy heiress. She dwelt in a magnificent palace, built on a strongly fortified island, and kept there the state and grandeur of a queen. This heiress, who was named Portia, was very beautiful, and one of the most intellectual women of the age. She was not only skilled in the working of tapestry and all sorts of exquisite embroidery, with which women ordinarily filled up their time, but she was a rare musician, an accomplished scholar, learned in the arts and sciences, and well read in Venetian laws and history.

Portia was of that rare type of Venetian beauty which Titian has made famous in his pictures. Fair as the fairest of Northern women, her fleecy golden hair fell in wavy masses

about her lovely neck and shoulders. Tall and elegant in figure, she bore herself like a princess who owed her birth to a race of kings. Her origin was indeed almost royal, for her father was the last of a long line of Venetian merchants, who ruled the commerce of the world, and whose countless ships furled their sails in every civilized port upon the globe.

Not long before this story opens, her father had died, leaving his only daughter heiress to such vast possessions on sea and land, of palaces and ships, treasures of gold, silver, and precious stones, — storehouses of rich stuffs, silks and velvets, perfumes and spicery, that her wealth challenged belief, and was almost beyond account. Yet Portia, already in the full bloom of beauty, rich, and princely in her virtues, was still unwedded and kept her state in maiden loneliness. For such a strange fact there is a strange explanation, which forms the subject of this tale.

Portia's father was a virtuous man, of excellent wisdom and judgment. He was very fond of his only child, and he chiefly feared lest, on his death, she might be wooed for her great wealth, and marry some one who would not love her for her goodness and beauty, but for her riches alone. Therefore he devised, shortly before his death, a scheme to get her a worthy husband.

He caused to be made three caskets, after the Venetian style of treasure-caskets; the first of these was of gold, the second of silver, — both richly chased and ornamented; and the third was a plain, unadorned box of that meagre and uncostly metal, — lead.

The golden casket bore this inscription, "*Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.*" The second had for its motto, "*Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;*" while the leaden box said threateningly, "*Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.*"

Then in his will the old merchant left his wealth to Portia with these conditions: First, that whoever sought her hand in marriage should choose one of these three caskets; and if, on opening it, he found the answer it contained unfavorable to his suit, he should instantly quit the palace, first taking a solemn oath never to reveal which casket he had chosen, and never after to seek any woman in marriage, but to remain single all his life. Secondly, that Portia should never, even to a favored lover, give any hint of the contents of the caskets, but should abide by their decree, and remain unmarried till the right casket was chosen. It is easy then to see why Portia remained unmarried. Suitors thronged her gates from year to year, and the piers of her harbor were crowded with the ships of gallant

gentlemen who came to see this wonderful heiress. But many, nay, a greater part, turned back before risking the hard conditions of the choice. Others when they saw her did not desire to marry a woman so superior to themselves in intellect, for she sent the keen arrows of her shrewd wit right and left; and some of the weak-minded cavaliers, who came prepared to venture much to gain such wealth, retired quickly from the presence of a woman who saw their defects with eyes so quick. Portia used her wit often in self-protection, and with no want of womanly delicacy, for in her heart she wished defeat to every wooer who had approached her. In the depths of her heart, unconfessed even to her dearest confidante, her companion and waiting-woman Nerissa, she held the memory of one gentleman, before whom all others seemed but poor creatures, unworthy a woman's regard. This gentleman, whose name she scarcely breathed even to her own most secret thoughts, was Bassanio, a native of Venice, most courteous in his manners, and in acquirements a very pattern of the time. He had once before her father's death visited their palace at Belmont, in company with a young nobleman of Italy, and although no word of love had ever passed between them, their eyes had delivered fair speechless messages to each other, whose import still lingered in her memory.

Nerissa, indeed, who loved Portia dearly, and was the partner of her plans and wishes, suspected, with the cunning of her sex, that Bassanio's image lay nearest her mistress's heart; but even she dared not hint this, and rarely mentioned his name to Portia when they were most alone.

In the mean time Bassanio lived in the city of Venice. Although of good birth, he was impoverished in his fortunes, and had been from early youth an orphan. He was from childhood much endeared to a wealthy merchant named Antonio, many years his senior, who seemed to him to unite the double relations of friend and parent. To Bassanio, Antonio's purse was always open, and with such lavish generosity had he given to him that his means had been somewhat shaken by his young friend's extravagance.

Bassanio did not realize this, and truly loved Antonio with no less love than he was worthy of, but he accepted all his friend's favors with the graceful carelessness of a son, who finds the same joy in receiving that the indulgent parent finds in giving. Latterly, however, Bassanio had begun to brood a little over his obligations. He saw that Antonio wore a clouded brow which betokened business troubles, and he heard it whispered on the Rialto, which was the business exchange of Venice, that Antonio's fortunes

would fail if they were not propped up by some unexpected prosperity.

In the midst of these rumors, the memory of the heiress of Belmont returned to Bassanio's mind. He recollected well the Lady Portia; and he recalled her beauty and charms of conversation as far above those of any woman he had ever known. Then he thought of her fortune, which, united to the rare qualities she possessed, seemed to make her a prize beyond any man's deserts. Thinking of these things, he heard of the strange manner in which her father had decreed her hand should be won, and the news inspired a strong hope in his breast.

He thought if he could but go to Belmont and make choice of the caskets, he might perchance win Portia for a wife. He wished he might go thither as a guest, recall himself to her remembrance, and if by any token he could discover that she might like him for a husband, he would risk the fatal choice. But he resolved if he saw no sign of preference, to come away without tempting the verdict of the caskets, since even at their bidding he would not accept a wife who took him on compulsion.

Here his dreams stopped, and he commenced to think on what means he had to visit Belmont. He could not go without a handsome ship, rich clothes, and a train of attendants; for though

Portia's father, very wisely, had not stipulated that her suitors should be wealthy, yet Bassanio's pride forbade he should appear before her like a beggar. How should he get the money to furnish him for Belmont? His credit was exhausted in Venice. He was indeed much in debt there. To no one could he apply but to his dear Antonio, that friend who had already periled his fortunes for him. Bassanio went to him straightway. He told him of the latent love he had borne Portia ever since he had first looked on her; of her accomplishments, beauty, and her great riches. He assured Antonio that if fortune should be favorable and give her to him, his first use of wealth should be to build up his friend's fortunes, till he was once more the most prosperous merchant in Venice.

Antonio heard him through, and without a word of hesitation commenced to devise means to raise the money, never questioning the success of Bassanio's plans, or hinting at the many suitors who had already failed at Belmont. His ships were all at sea, engaged in different ventures, and he had no ready money to advance to his friend. At length he bethought himself of a Jew in Venice, very rich, who loaned money out for a considerable usury, — a practice thought dishonorable by the Christian merchants, who were accustomed to lend their money freely and without interest.

The Jews were then, as ever since in Europe, a most despised and oppressed race. In all countries they were strangers and foreigners. All Christian nations united in persecuting them, and most cruel laws were passed against them everywhere. Their only protection against such social injustice was in making themselves as powerful as possible to resist it; and their means had been in all countries to heap up vast wealth, so that in their homes and synagogues they could feel themselves partly secure from their oppressors, or sometimes even purchase by the power of their money those rights which society otherwise denied them.

One of these Jews Antonio thought of, a man of clear, subtle intellect, born to have been a statesman if the state had not refused to father him, and now, although an outlaw, a man of influence and power among the scattered remnant of his tribe. Feeling his own power and his superiority over the Christians who spit upon and spurned him, his whole soul was filled with bitterest hatred of his persecutors. Those qualities, which in him would have been great and noble if it had not been for his unfortunate birth, were turned to craft to outwit the Christians, and to form schemes of revenge upon his enemies. Too cunning to let them read his nature or his designs, he carried smiles on his lips to conceal

the mockery he felt, and hid under a bland, almost servile, demeanor, the gnawing hate which he bore within his breast. Of all the merchants of Venice he hated Antonio most, for by his learning and courtesy Antonio held a rank among his brethren similar to that which Shylock held among his tribe; and the Jew felt that if he could gain advantage over this one man, he dealt the Christians a blow, and revenged himself upon his equal.

To Shylock, then, Antonio repaired for money with his friend Bassanio. The Jew received them with much suavity, and although he disclaimed to have in his possession so large a sum as three thousand ducats, which was the amount they asked, he agreed to obtain it from some of his friends, and professing great kindness for Antonio, who he declared had wronged him in thinking he was unfriendly to him, he proffered Antonio the money without interest, according to the Christian manner.

When Antonio refused this offer, and wished to comply with the Jewish custom, Shylock said since this was to cement a new friendship between them who had been enemies, Antonio should, in jest merely, sign a bond by which no interest should be paid for the three thousand ducats; but if they were not paid at the end of three months, the Jew should receive instead a

pound of flesh, cut from whatever part of his body Shylock chose.

Bassanio, with the jealous eye of friendship, half detected the Jew's treachery under the mask of generosity he wore, and endeavored to dissuade his friend; but Antonio caught at the offer, assured Bassanio he was sure to be able to raise the money long before three months, by the prosperous return of some of his ships, and they went all together to a notary, where this merry bond of Shylock's was drawn up and signed.

Immediately Bassanio made his preparations to depart. He took with him for company one of his friends named Gratiano, a gentleman of Venice, a fellow full of wit and sprightliness, handsome and brave, but a most prodigious talker. With this friend, a fine ship, rich attire, and a train of attendants, Bassanio set sail for Belmont.

Just as they reached Portia's dominions, two suitors of importance had made their choice and been dismissed. The first of these was a prince of Morocco, a Moor, whose dark complexion formed a strong contrast to the dazzling fairness of Portia. He had been admitted to the room where the caskets lay, and after reading the inscriptions, had chosen the golden casket, declaring that no less costly metal was worthy to

hold enshrined the image of his love. He opened and found a skull whose empty eye-socket contained a paper with these verses: —

"All that glistens is not gold;
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold:
Gilded tombs do worms infold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgment old,
Your answer had not been inscrolled:
Fare you well; your suit is cold."

The second suitor was a prince of Arragon, a pompous Spaniard. He read aloud the inscription, "*Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;*" and vainly imagining that his deserts were no less than the hand of Portia, he had chosen the silver casket. Within he found the picture of a blinking idiot, and these lines: —

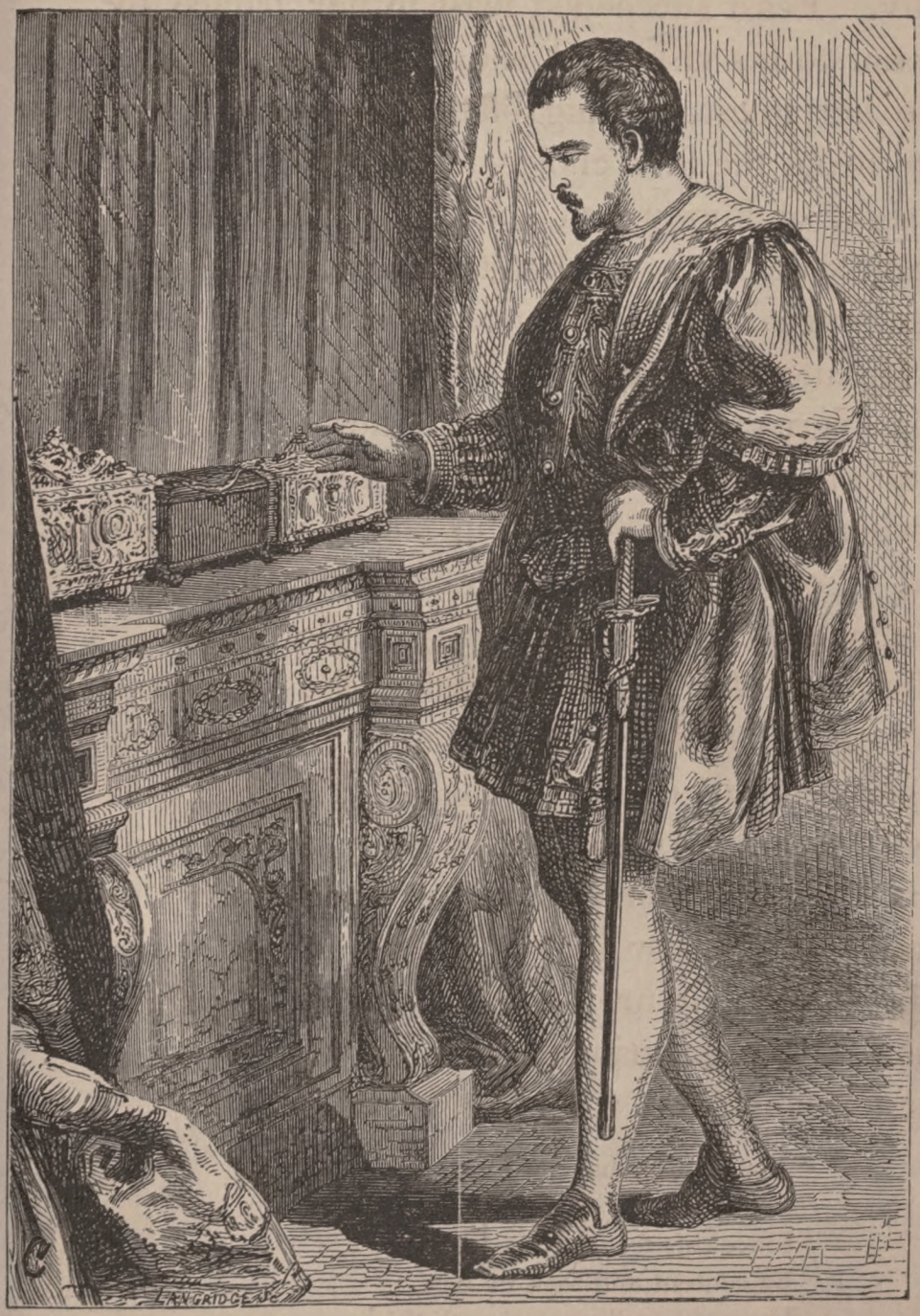
"The fire seven times tried this:
Seven times tried that judgment is,
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss:
There be fools alive, I wis,
Silvered o'er, and so was this.
Take what wife you will to bed,
I will ever be your head;
So begone, sir: you are sped."

These disappointed suitors, with their retinues, Bassanio met issuing from the palace gates as he applied for entrance. He gained fair Por-

tia's presence, and was received by her right royally. Feast succeeded feast in her palace to do honor to his visit, and she spared no pains to please her guest, putting off day by day his desire to make the fatal choice, lest by it she should lose sight of him whom she felt was becoming constantly dearer. At length Bassanio could no longer conceal his impatience to know his fate, and obtained her consent to make his choice. Portia, Nerissa, Gratiano, and a host of attendants accompanied him to the mysterious chamber where the caskets lay in state, and to the sound of sweet, half-melancholy music, the curtains that concealed them were withdrawn.

The heart of Portia beat fast as Bassanio approached the caskets. He looked from one to the other, read carefully the inscriptions, and guided perhaps by the inspiration of the real love he felt for Portia, laid his hand upon the box of lead. It flew open at the touch, and within fair Portia's picture, elegantly set in gold and diamonds, lay enshrined, while beside it was a paper on which was written this stanza: —

> "You that choose not by the view,
> Chance as fair and choose as true!
> Since this fortune falls to you,
> Be content and seek no new.
> If you be well pleased with this,
> And hold your fortune for your bliss,
> Turn you where your lady is,
> And claim her with a loving kiss."



THE THREE CASKETS. Page 200.

We can imagine the happiness of such a choice to the lovers who were but a moment before on the rack of doubt as to their fate.

Meanwhile in Venice, Antonio's affairs looked dark and uncertain. His ships had as yet failed to come to port, and there were rumors of their shipwreck and loss. The Jew began openly to boast of his power over the merchant, and was more than ever inflamed against the Christians by a new sorrow which one of their hated race had brought on him.

Shylock had an only daughter, young Jessica, on whom all the affection of his suppressed nature was lavished. She was handsome and coquettish, and in her the Jew saw the image of his dead wife, her mother, whom he had in his youth ardently loved. Jessica was frivolous and unfeeling. Her dark eyes had long noted a handsome young cavalier, who played love-ditties under her lattice on summer eves, when her father was abroad, and to this gallant, Lorenzo by name, she had given the whole of her shallow little heart. He wooed her to elope with him, and one night when Shylock had gone to sup with some of the Christians, Jessica left her home, in the disguise of a page, to follow her lover.

Shylock had trusted her with the keys which locked his treasures, and the careless dark-eyed

beauty, not content with the stab her marriage with an enemy would give her poor old father's heart, broke her filial trust, rifled him of his rarest treasures, some of her dead mother's jewels, all the gold she could find, and loaded her lover with the booty. They set out hastily from Venice to escape her father's wrath, and were next heard from at Genoa. This event had terribly embittered the Jew, and made him more than ever long to wreak his vengeance on the Christian race. Therefore, the instant the three months expired, he caused Antonio to be arrested, and demanded from the court a pound of his flesh as the bond had specified.

The Venetians, who were more proud of the unchangeableness than of the justice of their laws, were much moved by this claim of Shylock. By an ancient decree, no Venetian law could ever be repealed, and as Shylock's demand seemed legal to the court, they knew not how to deny it. The Duke of Venice, however, put off the judgment until word could be sent to Belmont of Antonio's danger.

Salario, a friend and boon-companion, set out hastily from Venice with letters to Bassanio from the Duke and Antonio. On his way he met the runaway pair, Lorenzo and Jessica, who, at his request, accompanied him to Belmont. The party arrived there in the midst of the rejoicing

which followed Bassanio's choice, and much chilled the ardor of his happiness by the sad tidings they brought him of his friend.

As soon as Portia heard the story of Antonio's devotion to her lover, and of the danger he was in from the Jew's vengeance, she begged Bassanio only to tarry long enough for a hasty marriage ceremony, and then to set off for Venice without delay. They went to church, and there Portia and Bassanio were married, and after them, Gratiano and Nerissa (who had agreed to make a match if Bassanio's choice proved favorable) were also made man and wife. Immediately Portia loaded her husband with ducats to pay Antonio's debt several times over, and the newly married gentlemen set sail for Venice.

As soon as they were fairly off, Portia called Lorenzo and Jessica, who had remained as her guests during Bassanio's absence, and giving them the keys of her household, and the control of her palace, she asked them to act as master and mistress there, while she and Nerissa went to a convent near by to offer prayers for the safe and speedy return of their husbands. The pretty Jessica accepted the trust, and Portia and her maid left the palace of Belmont.

But instead of setting out for the convent, she went directly to the chief port of her island, and there awaited the return of a messenger whom

she had sent post-haste to Padua. She had in Padua a kinsman, Bellario by name, who was a very learned Doctor of Laws, and from him Portia had in her youth received instructions in the Venetian law. Assisted by the knowledge thus gained from Bellario, Portia's ready wit had, on the instant she heard Antonio's case, given her a hope of his safety. She had therefore sent to Bellario her opinion, asking him to confirm it, if it were correct, and asking him also to send her two disguises for herself and Nerissa. Her messenger travelled quickly to Padua, and returned to the port where she awaited him, with most hopeful letters from Bellario, and the garments for which she had sent, and the enterprising ladies with all imaginable speed set out in Bassanio's wake for Venice. As soon as her ship arrived there, Portia dressed herself as a Doctor of Laws, and with Nerissa attired as her clerk, went straight to the Duke's council hall, where the court was at that moment convened.

Bellario had furnished her with letters to the Duke, in which he spoke of her as a talented young doctor, wise beyond his years, and these letters she sent in to the Duke by the faithful Nerissa, who looked to perfection the part of a youthful student of the law. The Duke received the letters with great joy, and the disguised lady was ushered immediately into his presence. A

principal seat was given her near the Duke, who sat upon his throne in great state in the midst of the assembly. On one hand stood Antonio, calm and unmoved at the near approach of death, and endeavoring to comfort, by his gentle persuasions, his afflicted friend Bassanio, who was much more deeply plunged in grief than the noble victim of the Jew's hate. On the other side was Shylock, his cloak of civility and blandness thrown boldly aside, his eager eyes thirsting for the sight of his victim's blood, and in his hand the sharp, glittering knife with which to exact the penalty.

Portia looked at him for one moment as she rose to examine the case, and then in a voice of tenderest compassion she urged on him the Christian law of mercy. But the Jew was deaf to her appeal. His religion had taught him that to exact eye for eye and tooth for tooth was the proper rule of dealing with his fellow-man, and he would have no better teaching than that of his own synagogues. When Portia found his heart thus obdurate, she made no further appeal, but asked if he had been offered more than the sum which Antonio had owed him. Upon this Bassanio again offered the Jew several times the amount of the debt, which Shylock scornfully refused, declaring that for countless ducats he would not exchange his right to the pound of his enemy's flesh.

When he had answered thus, Portia plainly told the court that since the laws of Venice were immutable, and Antonio had given the bond freely, the forfeit of a pound of flesh was lawfully to be exacted, and must be awarded by the court.

At this a shudder ran through the listening court, which had sat breathless while Portia spoke. Antonio pressed to his heart his weeping friend Bassanio, who was utterly overwhelmed at the terrible calamity of which he had been the cause. The impetuous Gratiano could no longer keep silent, but vented curses and reproaches upon the triumphant Shylock. The Jew's figure seemed to dilate with the near approach of his vengeance, and he advanced eagerly to Antonio with his bared steel uplifted. Just as he clutched the merchant's breast, Portia bade him stay his hand a moment. Shylock turned, impatient at this new interruption, but quailed before the majesty of the gesture with which she waved him from the merchant's side.

She bade him cut the flesh, since by law it belonged to him, but to mark that in cutting it he shed no drop of Christian *blood*. That the words of the bond were simply a pound of *flesh*, and if one drop of *blood* were wrongly shed, the Jew's lands and goods were confiscated. Shylock stood quivering with disappointment and

baffled rage, and Portia went on to say that if in cutting from Antonio's breast he took more or less than one just pound, if the scale should turn but a hair's weight more than the just due of flesh, Shylock's own life was forfeit. No words can describe the joy of Antonio's friends, or paint the rage of the baffled Shylock. He cried out that he would take then his three thousand ducats, and Bassanio was about to restore them when Portia interposed. She declared since they had been already refused, the Jew should not have the money, — he should have nothing but the bond. She then read the court an ancient law of Venice, which decreed that an alien, who directly or indirectly sought the life of a citizen, should as a punishment lose all his goods and estate, half of which should be given to the person against whom he had conspired, and the rest go to the coffers of the state. This would have been enforced on Shylock, had not Antonio begged the Duke's mercy for the Jew, on condition that Shylock would sign a paper, giving to Lorenzo and Jessica all the wealth of which he might die possessed, and also that he would promise to receive baptism, and become a Christian. Both these things Shylock was forced to promise, but it was easy to see as he tottered from the council-hall that the broken-spirited old man would never outlive his baptism.

The court broke up with great rejoicing over Antonio, and in the midst of it Bassanio advanced to thank the young Doctor of Laws for the great service he had rendered him in this judgment of the case. He pressed upon him money for his legal aid, but the doctor graciously refused all reward. Bassanio then urged him to accept some remembrance in token of his great gratitude, on which the doctor fixed upon a certain ring Bassanio wore upon his hand. Now this ring was one which Portia had herself placed on Bassanio's finger, on the day he had chosen the leaden casket, adjuring him never to part with it, and telling him if he lost or gave it away she should accept it as a presage of misfortune to their love. Bassanio, in much confusion, denied him this ring, and was grieved to see the doctor depart, much offended at being refused such a trifle. When he and the young clerk were fairly out of sight, therefore, Bassanio felt unable to appear so ungrateful in the eyes of the doctor, and sent Gratiano after them with the ring, preferring rather to test his wife's faith in him, than to offend the savior of Antonio's life. Gratiano overtook the pretended doctor and delivered up the ring, whereupon the lawyer's clerk contrived to tease from him a ring which Nerissa, who copied well all her mistress's doings, had placed upon her husband's hand with similar injunctions.

This done, they set sail for Belmont; Bassanio and Gratiano in one ship, and Portia and Nerissa in another. The latter pair managed, however, to reach Belmont first, and arrived shortly after nightfall, some hours before their husbands. They found Lorenzo and Jessica awaiting them in the moonlit gardens at Belmont, where they sat listening to the music from the palace which floated in softened strains in and out among the trees and fountains in the court-yard.

A few hours later the travel-worn husbands arrived, accompanied by Antonio, and were tenderly welcomed by their ladies and fully questioned as to the results of the trial. In the midst of the conversation the mischievous Nerissa discerned the loss of the ring from Gratiano's finger, and commenced to accuse him of some inconstancy in parting with it. Portia overheard them disputing on the matter, and when Gratiano commenced to make confession, she blamed him much for parting with his wife's keepsake, and declared that Bassanio would not so lightly have parted with her love-token. At this Bassanio, unable to conceal his embarrassment, commenced to explain, as eloquently as he could, how both Gratiano and himself had been induced to part so with these rings which had been so stuck with oaths upon their fingers. Portia pretended to be deaf to his excuses, and joining with

Nerissa, both the roguish ladies rated their husbands unmercifully, pretending to believe that they had parted with their rings to some women as love-tokens.

Amid the protestations of the husbands, and the pretended anger of the wives, Portia and Nerissa suddenly produced the rings, and while Bassanio and Gratiano were struck dumb with wonder at seeing the jewels which they supposed graced the fingers of the doctor and his clerk in Padua, Portia related to the puzzled gentlemen and the astonished Antonio how his cause had been gained by a woman's wit.

So the troubles of Antonio ended merrily. His ships, which were supposed lost, came safe to port with a rich burden, and all was happiness at Belmont. Bassanio and Portia lived to the end of their days in such complete peace and happiness, as proved the wisdom of the old Merchant of Venice in trusting to the inspiration of true love to find out its idol, even though hidden closely in a *leaden casket*.

THE STORY OF ROSALIND; OR, AS YOU LIKE IT.

(FROM SHAKESPEARE.)

A LONG time ago a party of outlaws made their home under the spreading trees of a grand old forest. There they lived as free and as happy as Robin Hood and his merry men. These outlaws never attacked and plundered any one, however, not even the rich and powerful, as Robin Hood sometimes did. They were all brave and noble gentlemen, and their leader was rightfully a famous Duke. But he had a perfidious and selfish brother, who had usurped his power, and driven him from his dominions. So he came with a part of his followers, to dwell in the forest.

It was no mean palace in which to keep the state of a duke, — this glorious old forest of Arden. The sunlight floated in through spacious arches formed by intertwining boughs; the soft grass carpeted it everywhere; old moss-covered rocks served for couches, on which the courtiers lounged while they talked of art, of science, and

of all things about which the outside world was busy.

When they wished for food, the wood was full of birds, and game of all kinds; the antlered deer ran freely in its thick recesses; close by the forest, a small river flowed among clustering trees, in whose depths sported abundance of fish; the shepherds, whose cottages were built on the outskirts of the forest, furnished them with milk, and fruits, and vegetables, so that they lacked for nothing which could please or tempt the appetite. When it was cold or stormy, they made tents of thick boughs, to protect them from the weather; and at night their beds of leaves yielded them sweetest slumbers. The forest was indeed a delightful dwelling-place, better than any royal abode, for they lived there a happy and natural life, free from care; while in the palace, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

The outlawed Duke had a daughter left in the court of his usurping brother, after whom his heart constantly yearned; so that, more than all his other misfortunes, this remembrance of her cast a shadow over his life. Most men would have been morose and bitter under all his wrongs, but the Duke was so sweet and gentle of spirit, so in harmony with the nature amid which he lived, that he could hear teachings of

peace and beauty and consolation in the murmur of the river, or the rustle of the leaves, and could draw wholesome lessons from his bitterest adversity. All his language was rich with a genial philosophy, and the golden autumn of his life was bathed in a mellow sunlight, which seemed to reflect back upon, and shed itself over, his whole past.

In wonderful contrast to the Duke was one of his noblemen, Jacques, a man about his own age, who mocked at all the world, and found no good in life. He had travelled over all the earth, and seen the fashions and manners of all countries, and had been so selfish, very likely, in the pursuit of his own pleasure, that he had done no good to any one; so now, in growing old, he saw no good in other people.

They had a great many occupations and amusements in the forest. Sometimes they reclined under the spreading shade, and talked together. Jacques vented his bitterness against the world, and the Duke restrained him with his serene and happy temper. When they tired of talk and discussion, the pensive Amiens, who was a sweet singer, sang them songs. Here is something he sang as he lay under the greenwood-tree: —

"Under the greenwood-tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,

Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

"Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i' th' sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather."

Meanwhile, in the palace of Duke Frederick, the beautiful Rosalind had grown to be a tall and graceful maiden. She lived with her cousin Celia, and was beloved by those in the palace, and idolized by the people, who sympathized with her father's wrongs. She could not have been consoled for the banishment of her dear father, if it had not been for her cousin Celia, whose love for her "was dearer than the natural bond of sisters." Rosalind was the lovelier and more gifted of the two girls, but Celia felt no jealousy on that account. To hear her lovely cousin praised, to know that all loved her, was to Celia the greatest delight in the world. Indeed, her goodness to Rosalind was so great, that to all beholders it covered her father's vices with a mantle of sweet charity, so that many forbore to censure him, for the sake of his gentle daughter.

It happened that one of the largest estates in

the duchy had belonged to a noble lord, Sir Rowland de Bois by name, who had died shortly after the banishment of the old Duke, whose faithful friend and ally he had been till death ended their friendship. Sir Rowland had three sons; the eldest Oliver, the second Jacques, the third and youngest, Orlando. He left to his oldest son, as is still the custom, the whole of his estate, and bequeathed to him the care and rearing of both his brothers. As soon as his father died, Jacques, the second son, who was a recluse and scholar in his tastes, went to Paris, to spend his life in scholarly pursuits, leaving only Orlando to the care of Oliver.

Now, Oliver, who was not naturally a vicious person, had become soured and morose that nature had not treated him more kindly. He was neither handsome nor intellectual. Both his brothers excelled him in good gifts. He was forced to see their better qualities, and contrast them with his own, and so there arose in him a spirit of envy, which, by constant secret nourishing, had become very bitter and powerful. So much did this feeling increase as he saw how handsome and elegant in person his brother Orlando was growing under his roof; how all his servants followed him with pleased looks, and proffers of a more ready service than they yielded to himself, their rightful master, that he

began to bitterly hate this younger brother, and to have hidden wishes for his ruin or death.

Orlando, for his part, was a youth of fire and spirit, who could not easily brook the neglect and and unconcealed disdain with which his brother treated him. He had, in spite of many rebuffs and discouragements, managed to acquire some learning and manly accomplishments. He talked well, rode well, was a little of a poet, and a tolerable musician, for which acquirements Oliver hated and envied him the more. So, when a public wrestling match and trial of skill was appointed, in which any one could take part against a famous wrestler of the Duke's, Oliver was glad to hear that Orlando had offered himself in the contest, secretly hoping he might be injured, and perhaps die of his hurts.

The day for the wrestling-match came; and after many had received their death-throw from the arms of Charles, the Duke's wrestler, Orlando appeared, to show his skill. So handsome was the youth, that all hearts were interested in his safety; and even the hard Duke sent his daughter and Rosalind to entreat that he would not enter the lists. Orlando would not withdraw, but made stronger by the sweet words of sympathy which he had heard from the royal ladies, wrestled with Charles, and gained an easy victory. But, just as he was about to receive

some mark of royal favor, his announcement that he was the son of Sir Rowland de Bois, the friend of his injured brother, checked Duke Frederick's praises, who refused to honor him, and went out in anger.

Rosalind was not so ungracious. Lingering behind with her cousin Celia, she could not help glancing at the youth, whose only crime was that he was son of her father's friend. Having glanced, she could not fail to discover that he was handsome, and of noble manners. Half blushing at her boldness, — with the graciousness of the princess, blended with the coyness of the maiden, — she approached the hero, and speaking a few encouraging words, threw over his bowed head a chain which she took from her neck, and, as if frightened at her boldness, quickly followed her cousin from the place.

Orlando stood for a moment in a tumult of feeling. The rude repulse he had received from the Duke had humiliated him, but the sweet voice of Rosalind rung in his ears, and quickened all the beating of his pulses. While he stood irresolute, an old servant, named Adam, who had been in his father's service three-score years, came to speak with him. With many tears, the old man told him that his brother Oliver was plotting against his life, and urged him to fly from his malice. Then he placed in his young

master's hands his wages, the hoarded savings of many years, and begged that he might follow him into any exile.

Orlando resolved instantly to seek the forest of Arden, where he had heard that the Duke still kept some kind of state, and to join the band of exiles. So he departed, with the faithful Adam, on the journey.

When Celia and Rosalind met Duke Frederick after the wrestling-match, they found him in evil humor. He had been reminded of his baseness by the name of Sir Rowland de Bois, and the sight of Rosalind always kept in mind his banished brother. Besides, he noted how her superior beauty won all eyes, while his daughter and heiress moved with her like a humble satellite. At this moment his anger broke out. Accusing Rosalind, with brutal rage, of treasonable intents, he ordered her to depart from the court, bade her be forever exiled, like her father, and forbade Celia longer to harbor her. Then he swept away in a terrible fury, without glancing back at the half-frightened, half-stupefied maidens.

But when Rosalind declared that she would seek out her father's dwelling-place, Celia instantly protested she would not let her go alone, but would go with her to the world's end. And when Rosalind had faintly combated with this

resolve, and did not overcome it, the two girls made their plot, which was a clever one, and prompted by Rosalind's wit. They resolved that Celia should dress as a shepherdess, — one who was not poor in lands or flocks, — and because the name had reference to her state, she should be called Aliena; while Rosalind, who was more than common tall, and had, when her spirits were not crushed by sadness, a saucy air and ready tongue, should be her brother Ganymede, dressed in a boy's guise. They arranged to carry away all the gold they could secrete, and all their jewels. Then taking with them, half for protection and half for company, the court jester, Touchstone, they set out at night, very privately, on their journey to the forest of Arden.

They were not long in reaching the edge of the forest; and buying a cottage there, together with some land and flocks of sheep, they lived as brother and sister to all who knew them. They dared not yet disclose themselves to the Duke, fearing lest their disguise might become known to others, and they resolved to wait for a favorable time to make themselves known to him. But often in the forest aisles Rosalind got a glimpse of her noble father, and, seeing him, longed to throw herself into his arms, or at his feet, to crave his blessing.

Before the coming thither of the disguised maidens, the young Orlando, with his old servitor, had joined the train of the Duke, and now lived as one of them, in Arden. And in this forest-life which was so in harmony with the sweet thoughts that run to music in the brain of youth, Orlando had grown to cherish the remembrance of the sparkling eyes that had shone on him, and the tender voice that had praised him, when the chain he wore was first placed about his neck. And from dwelling constantly on them, he found he could not get those thoughts out of his head; and so, perhaps, to be rid of them, he put them on paper in rhyming lines, which he called poetry. In plain words, he began to be so much in love with Rosalind that he carved her name on the trees of the forest, and writing all sorts of sonnets and odes to her beauty, let the sheets on which they were written fly all about the wood, as if to tease the wood-nymphs and the Dryads with the knowledge that there was one more lovely than they. After a while Celia came upon this moon-struck lover, stretched at his length along the ground under a tree, talking to himself of the lady of his thoughts. She picked up, not far distant, one of the sonnets he had written on the same subject. This she took to her cousin, who looked a pretty beardless boy in her disguise of

Ganymede, and bade her read it. Then it turned out that Rosalind was not a whit more sensible than Orlando, except that being a woman, she could dissemble better, but loved the handsome youth after the same fashion that he loved her. What should she do next but set out in the forest to meet Orlando, still in her disguise, and having met him, engaged him for a talk, in which she played the saucy stripling to perfection. She accused him of being in love, and he confessed it. On which she promised to cure him of so ridiculous a complaint. Orlando, all the while believing her a shepherd youth, but in spite of himself drawn to her by an interest which was, very likely, a subtle instinct of recognition, asked her how she would cure love. Then she told him he might woo her as if she were indeed his Rosalind, and she, affecting all the caprices and humors of a girl, would so disgust him with the sex, that he would never wish to see a woman again. Thus began a friendship, and constant meetings between them, in which Orlando sighed the more for his true Rosalind, and the masquerading maiden grew more and more deep in love.

When Duke Frederick discovered that his daughter had fled with Rosalind, his rage was dreadful to behold. And happening at the same time to hear that Orlando was also missing, he

affected to believe that the maidens had shared his flight, and so sent for Oliver, to hear what he knew of them.

The Duke was so far past reason, that Oliver could not convince him that he was no friend to his brother Orlando, and no confidant of his intentions. Frederick would hear nothing, but accusing Orlando, and all bearing the name of De Bois, of treason, bade Oliver instantly go seek his missing brother, and bring him back, or he also should be banished, and all his estates confiscated. So Oliver, stripped of lands and money, was pushed out to seek the brother whom he had loved so little, and doomed to be beggared till he had found him.

One sunny afternoon Celia and Rosalind awaited the coming of Orlando, at one of the cool green trysting-places in the forest, where they were wont to meet. Already the sun had begun to go down, and he was not come, when, looking up, they espied some one else approaching them. This was a man evidently worn and disheveled by a long and tedious journey. His clothes were dusty and ragged, his beard and hair uncut, and his eyes swollen like one who lacked sleep. Still, in his bearing and voice, he bore some marks of nobleness which the two maidens could not fail to distinguish. He asked them if they were not the shepherds, Ganymede

and Aliena; and when they answered him, he told them this story: —

He was the cruel Oliver whom Orlando had described to them, and, driven forth by Duke Frederick to seek his brother, he had come at last to the forest of Arden. Worn out with fatigue, he lay down to sleep under the shade of a tree, and so Orlando came upon him, as he lay stretched in slumber. At that very moment a snake, ugly and venomous, had coiled about the sleeper's neck, ready to strike him with deadly fangs. In the thicket close behind him lurked a lioness, her eyes fixed on the sleeping man, waiting for some movement to prove he was living, before she seized him as her prey.

All this Orlando saw, and for a moment the temptation assailed him to leave this brother, his enemy and tormentor, to his fate. But a nobler feeling triumphed; and while the snake, frightened at the lioness, uncoiled and sped into the bushes, Orlando attacked the beast and slew her. Then falling on the neck of his awakened brother, who saw the generous deed, they wept in brotherly affection and mutual forgiveness.

All this Oliver told with an eloquence which moved the sympathetic Celia to tears; and then drawing forth a bloody handkerchief which Or-

lando had sent in token of a slight wound the lioness had given him, which would prevent his keeping tryst that day, he gave it to Ganymede. To his wonder, the seeming boy fainted like a weak girl at sight of it; but recovering soon, and being assured Orlando was safe, she begged Oliver tell him how well she had feigned to be the real Rosalind.

Now, events began so to entangle themselves, that Rosalind was fain to disclose her sex. Beside her love for Orlando, which made her wish to be known, and her affection for her father, which made her desire his approval, a scornful young shepherdess, named Phœbe, had fallen in love with her, in her disguise of Ganymede. Now this same handsome Phœbe was sought after by a love-lorn swain, Silvius, whom she scorned with as much ardor as she professed to love Ganymede. Most strange of all, the sombre Oliver had fallen captive to the dark eyes of Celia, and wished to marry her. So that Rosalind began to think it time to clear up all mysteries, and have the happy wedding-days fixed.

Thus the whole party met before the Duke, who had heard of the strange pranks Cupid was playing in his dominions. From most of them Ganymede exacted a promise. From the Duke, if that his daughter should appear, he would

give her in marriage to Orlando; from Orlando, that he would marry his Rosalind if she appeared; from Phœbe, that she should accept Silvius for her husband, if she found herself not of a mind to marry Ganymede. To which they all agreed.

Then retiring for a little, she came in again in her dress of Rosalind, her lovely face stained with blushes, her eyes full of glad tears, and, throwing herself into her father's arms, she asked his blessing. The joyous Duke folded her again and again to his breast, and then gave her to the proud Orlando. So there was a triple wedding. For when Orlando married Rosalind, Oliver was joined to Celia; and the discomfited Phœbe, finding that Ganymede was one of her own sex, made Silvius happy with her hand. And to make this wedding-feast most perfect, at the height of the joy Jacques de Bois came in bringing great news: how Duke Frederick had sallied out with some followers, to make war on the outlawed Duke and his train, but that, meeting with a hermit of great piety, he had strangely been converted, and offered in penitence to restore to the elder Duke all his rights.

So the true Duke got his crown again, and Orlando and Rosalind were his heirs; while

Celia and Oliver lived happily on their great estates.

Nor did Orlando forget his noble servant, old Adam, but took care of him till his death. As for old Jacques, the grumbler, he vowed he would go with Duke Frederick and be converted too; and let us hope that really happened to him.

MACBETH, KING OF SCOTLAND.

(FROM SHAKESPEARE.)

UPON a naked, blasted heath, where neither tree nor bush could live, so barren was it in its bleakness, three witches, gray, crooked, and misshapen, hovered round a boiling, bubbling caldron. The fire crackled under the huge vessel, from whose blazing depths came forth a vile and sickening odor. The edge was lurid with sulphurous flames, which gleamed upon the horrid faces of the unclean hags who tended it; lighting up in ghastly vividness their skinny arms, their sharp faces, fringed with grizzled, scattering hairs, which looked like beards, and showing more plainly than the light of day their eyes, — staring and blood-colored, yet expressionless as the faces of the dead.

The thunder pealed dully in the sky, and the rain fell in fine drops, each one of which seemed to pierce the clothing to the skin, as if it were a point of steel. Amid the rain and wind these strange beings moved slowly round and round the caldron's edge, uttering their weird incanta-

tions. Their smileless faces wore the blackness of the night; their voices sounded like the cry of vultures, or the shriek of the harpies when they swoop upon their prey.

What was the business of these minions of Hecate on the heath of Forres on such a night? Their meetings never boded good; their only purpose was to foster crime, to hint black deeds to minds still innocent, to poison with venomous suggestion the most wholesome conscience. All day they had watched the distant smoke and dust of battle, and only when the exhausted armies paused at the coming of night, had they begun upon this spot their unearthly orgies.

While they were still muttering and gibbering, two figures were seen riding across the plain on their way to the castle of Forres, from whose distant towers a light was shining here and there through the obscure mist. At sight of them, a sudden gleam of exultation lighted up the expressionless faces of the witches. The tallest horseman, still riding erect and proudly, in spite of the day's fatigues, was Macbeth, Thane of Glamis, a kinsman of the Scottish king, chief of a royal clan, the handsomest, bravest, and proudest of all King Duncan's nobles. With him rode Banquo, another cousin of the king, a man of rare virtue; not approved so much for his brave deeds, as for his wisdom in council; shining

rather in the quiet of peace than in the storms of war. Such were the two who crossed the heath together. The witches waited impatiently their coming. For them the magic caldron had been set, and to intercept them these secret hags had stretched among the blackened grass an invisible circle which should detain their horses' feet until they had had speech with the Thane of Glamis.

Macbeth, unappalled in the midst of scenes of bloodiest carnage, started with fear as his horse's feet stopped suddenly within the enchanted circle. His brave spirit, fearless before all real and tangible dangers, was a slave to superstition, and the sight of these supernatural creatures daunted him more than a host of mailed enemies would have done. But the serene Banquo was moved by no such terrors. In his estimation these apparitions might be illusions of the eye, or creatures of the imagination.

> "The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
> And these are of them."

As they paused thus, the witches crossed their path, and with ghostly waving of her hands, and solemn utterance, the first spoke, —

> "All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Glamis."

The second approached, more horrible than the first, and with the same weird gestures, cried, —

> "All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, *Thane of Cawdor.*"

Macbeth remained motionless with fear and astonishment. His eager hopes surmise the second title to be a prophecy. If the witches had power to divine rightly that he was Thane of Glamis, would they not also have known that the Thane of Cawdor was still living, and that not to him belonged the honor.

In the next instant the third witch, a hag of more dreadful aspect than either of the others, repeated the strange motions in his path, and, in a whisper so sharp and sibilant, it seemed to pierce the marrow of his brain, hissed in his ear, —

"All hail, Macbeth; THOU SHALT BE KING HEREAFTER!"

Then turning to Banquo, they repeated in the same alternation, —

"Hail! lesser than Macbeth, and greater."
"Not so happy, yet much happier."
"Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:
So all hail! Macbeth and Banquo!"

Then, as Macbeth, recovering himself a little, would have sought to question them, the witches, the blazing caldron, all the supernatural surroundings, vanished in a twinkling, and the two warriors were left alone in darkness on the vacant heath.

While they consulted with each other on the reality of the vision they had seen, they were met by two messengers from King Duncan, who

was already awaiting their coming in the castle of Forres. These were too intent upon delivering their message, to notice the distraught manners of Macbeth and Banquo, but greeted them instantly with congratulations on their brave services that day to the Scottish throne. They told Macbeth that the king had appointed them to signify his value of his knightly deeds by investing him with the titles of the Thane of Cawdor, who had proved disloyal, and was thus stripped of his titles and estates, that they might be conferred upon more deserving shoulders.

Macbeth was astonished almost beyond speech at the sudden fulfillment of the witches' prophecy. What if they had indeed spoken truth? He should be king hereafter! Might not the powers which had divined his greatness, which had put the crown into his thoughts, help now to place it on his head? His quick-kindled ambition rose higher at the thought, and with a powerful effort he shook off his abstraction, and rode hastily forward to greet his sovereign.

The battle of Forres had been a decisive one in the long civil war, and Duncan's kingdom now promised to return to peace and security. Macbeth purposed returning to his castle at Inverness, to recruit from his bloody exploits in the field, and the old monarch, loth to part with his loved kinsman and subject, anxious also to show

him all possible honor, decided to accompany him to his castle and spend a night there before journeying to the royal palace. Macbeth had hastily dispatched a messenger informing his wife of his new title of Cawdor, and giving the details of his encounter with the witches. As soon as Duncan announced his intention of becoming his guest for a night, he sent another messenger, bidding her make preparations for their arrival. Then the royal train set out for Inverness.

At the head rode Duncan — white-haired and benignant old monarch — whose enemies called him weak and doting, but whose friends knew him honorable and brave, though credulously trustful, and guileless as a child. Beside him rode his two sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, both in the early dawn of manhood, noble and refined in aspect, but inheriting a trifle too much of their father's gentle spirit to cope well with the rude exigencies of the times. Near them, the grave and reticent Banquo, attended by his young son Fleance, the hope and promise of his age. In the midst of the train was the noble Macduff, one of the most noted thanes of Scotland: temperate in his judgment, enthusiastic in his loves and hates; not the equal of Macbeth in elegance of bearing and in polish of manners, but no whit behind him in absolute bravery; as trustworthy in the council hall as in the battle-field; who

breathed in loyalty as the air of his native heath, and whose honor was as inflexible as death. Towering above them all, — conspicuous for his striking figure, his gallant horsemanship, — readiest in wit and in those delicate flatteries which charm the ear of royalty, — dashing, spirited, handsome, and brave, rode Macbeth, the new-made Thane of Cawdor.

Macbeth's messengers rode well. Scarcely had the first delivered the letter to his mistress, which informed her of her lord's accession to the titles and estates of Cawdor, and the prediction of the weird sisters, before the mailed heel of the second messenger clanked on the paved hall of the castle, and breathless with the haste of his journey, told her of Duncan's immediate visit at Inverness.

Lady Macbeth was reputed a worthy match for her noble husband in all the qualities which could become her station. Her beauty was unquestioned, her manners elegant and polished to a remarkable degree in that age of warfare; and though her mind was wonderfully bold and original, she concealed such masculine attributes under a mask of the most womanly softness and delicacy. Not inferior to Macbeth in any of the qualities which won him scores of friends, she far excelled him in strength of intellect and will, and in unshaken purpose. And her ambition was

as riotous as his. The witches' predictions and their partial fulfillment had bred in the mind of Macbeth a thousand half-formed thoughts of villainy. In her mind the conclusion was immediate. The knowledge of the final honor which had been promised her husband, the "Hail, Macbeth; thou shalt be king hereafter!" and the intelligence that Duncan slept that night under her castle's roof, were sufficient to bring her to the resolve that the obstacles which lay between the prophecy and its fulfillment, could be removed by *murder*. The resolve once taken, no doubts, nor fears, nor remorse, could move her from it.

Macbeth spurred on before his guests, and arrived a short time in advance of the party. Their first tender greetings hurriedly exchanged, she laid before him, first in dark hints, and then in open, undisguised words, her plan to make him king of Scotland.

At first Macbeth recoiled in horror from the revolting aspect of his own hidden thought. But though the frank wickedness of his wife startled him at first, there needed but little persuasion to bring him to lend himself to her designs, and before the kingly party entered the gates of Inverness, it was resolved between this guilty pair that the trusting old monarch, their kinsman and their guest, made sacred to them by

all the laws of hospitality and loyalty, should never again cross alive the threshold over which he had thus graciously passed, to confer upon it honor and distinction.

Duncan was unwarned of his fate, and he read no presage of it in the faces of his treacherous host and hostess. Macbeth was tremulous and eager. The shallowest observer could have read his agitation in his uncertain voice, in the tremor of his hand, his restless eye; but all believed that the honors heaped on him had disconcerted his usually unruffled spirit. But his wife wore a mask impenetrable to all scrutiny. When she met the royal train, it was in her richest attire, with jewels braided in her yellow hair. Her soft eyes beamed nothing but welcome, and no rebellious flush on her fair cheek told of the murderous passion that stirred in her blood.

That night, when all the reveling had ceased, and Ducan's attendants, worn out with eating and drinking, slept their soundest sleep, Macbeth and his ambitious wife met in the antechamber to the King's apartment. The grooms who guarded his couch, had been drugged by her fair hands; she forced upon her wavering spouse the daggers with which to do the bloody deed, and, spurred on by her scorn and her entreaties, he entered Duncan's chamber and slew him as he slept. Then, shuddering at their crime, so

dreadful in the freshness of its commission that they dared not look into each other's eyes lest each should read condemnation and horror of the other's deeds, they retired to their apartment to cleanse themselves of the blood upon their hands and weapons, and await the event of this night's work.

In the early morning the castle was filled with confusion and alarm. Macduff was the first to discover the murder, and frenzied with horror, he roused servants, guests, and kinsmen, from their beds. All was dismay and terror, and in the tumult, Malcolm and Donalbain, fearing treachery for themselves, fled instantly. Too weak to await what fate might bring them, they hastened to England, and drew suspicion on themselves by their flight, that they had been guilty of their father's murder. Banquo may have suspected his noble friend Macbeth, but he was silent, and made no confidant of their encounter with the witches; and in a short time, by reason of his near kinship with the dead monarch, as well as his popularity with the soldiers and populace, Macbeth easily made himself king. Thus the witches' prophecy was fulfilled.

But the crown thus gained did not sit easily on the wearer's head. Beside, those secret midnight hags upon the heath of Forres had declared that Banquo's children should be kings. And

Macbeth, who believed the witches to be unerring when they predicted *his* greatness, dared to hope that he could thwart their power when it ran counter to his own wishes. He plotted then to take the life of Banquo and his only child, young Fleance, that there might be no possibility of their succession to the crown.

To compass this he made a banquet, and invited Banquo as the noblest and most honored guest. At the time he was expected to ride through the vast grounds which surrounded the royal palace, three murderers, whom Macbeth had hired to do his bloodiest crimes, set upon Banquo and his son. Banquo was instantly dispatched, but Fleance escaped, and fled to England, where he knew he should join his royal cousins, Malcolm and Donalbain.

After the murder was done, and the bloody-handed assassins had received their fee, Macbeth entered his banquet-hall. His mind was much disturbed at the escape of Fleance, but he dissembled his trouble, and when he was seated at the feast with his nobles, he pledged their absent peer in his own royal glass, uttering smooth-tongued regrets that Banquo was not present with them.

Before his words were done, his guilty imagination began to work, and he seemed to see before him, in his own royal chair, the ghost of

Banquo, with its gaping wounds and dripping blood.

His reason and self-command gave way at the sight, and while the wondering guests saw only the empty chair, and the wild, distraught looks of their new monarch, Macbeth beheld his victim shake his gory locks at him in solemn threatening, and silently withdraw.

Thrice did the ghost appear, and thrice did Macbeth cower in abject horror at the dreadful sight, until his wife — now at the summit of her wishes, as the Queen of Scotland — bade the company depart, since some strange freak of fancy made her lord unfit for guests and banquets.

Unhappy Macbeth! he had paid too large a price for his greatness. No more wholesome sleep visited the pillow where he laid his weary head. His nights were filled with dreadful visitants, and his days were spent in devising plans by which he might make his power more stable and enduring. Remorse could not bring him penitence. He pictured himself in a sea of blood, whose shores were boundless. It was as easy to go forward on its crimson waves as to turn back. Since he had stained his hands with blood, courage, hope, and pity seemed dead to him.

But the unhappy woman who had shared his

crimes — the dearest partner of his greatness — was even more pitiably wretched. In the first enthusiasm of her ambition she was not appalled by any crime. She could scorn her weaker spouse because he feared to look upon the blood his hands had shed. But in her soul the revulsion of feeling had been greater and more terrible. More reticent and heroic than Macbeth, feeding on her remorse in silence lest she should add to the bitter thoughts that poisoned his life, she constrained herself to smile, and flatter, and play the part of royalty, while in her heart she carried an eternal wound, the slow agony of conscience. Nature avenged itself on the mask she wore, and in the dead of night, when she strove to forget her tortures in sleep, remorse became her conqueror. Night after night her wondering attendants watched her rise from her couch, and with a lighted taper in her hand, — fast-locked in sleep, with glazed and open eyes, in which a fixed horror seemed frozen, — she traversed the corridors till she reached a certain antechamber. Then with repeated rubbing of her hands, she sought to cleanse them from some fancied stains of blood. The sighs that heaved her breast were piteous enough to move even the ghost of her murdered victim, and when her frail form was wearied beyond endurance, she went back to her wretched couch, still wrapt in

sleep, to wait the waking of another miserable day.

Only one consolation was left the wicked pair. As their love for each other had been strong in innocence, it was still supreme in guilt. Misery only cemented their attachment more firmly, till they seemed to have but one life and one thought. If his wife had been his temptress, Macbeth had no reproach for her; and in his darkest hours her love was ready to shelter and protect and comfort him.

The greatest of Italian poets, Dante, has a story of two guilty lovers, dying in their crimes, whose souls, even in the deepest torment, could never be separated, and who still found consolation in bewailing together their lost happiness. Like them, this unhappy husband and wife were one in love, in guilt, and in remorse.

In the mean time, Macduff, whose loyalty had never despaired in the darkest hour of Scotland's fortunes, had been in England trying to stimulate the young princes, Malcolm and Donalbain, to return and head an army, which he promised should welcome them as soon as they set foot on their native soil. Macbeth heard of his efforts, and one of the most abhorrent acts of his life is the way he revenged himself upon Macduff. Knowing the wife and children of the latter were left at home in an ungarded castle, he sent

thither a band of ruffians, who murdered in cold blood the defenseless wife and her pleading babes.

At length the rumors of Macduff's success alarmed the monarch. He resolved to have recourse again to the augurs of his present fortunes. He would seek the cave of Hecate, and conjure the witches to unfold another page of the future, to tell him what was to be the end of his vexed and miserable life.

He found the cave — a dismal, subterraneous haunt — where they were wont to hold their midnight revels. The walls dripped with dampness, which felt to Macbeth's groping fingers, slimy and thick, like human gore. Bats of monstrous size flitted through the noisome air; reptiles, cold and noiseless, glided under foot. In the midst the caldron burned, and about it glided the dimly seen forms of the weird sisters.

In this place Macbeth entreated those evil beings to tell him of his own fate, and who should wear the crown after him. The witches would not answer. They told the monarch he should hear their masters. Straightway the rocky floor opened, and from the gaping fissure rose an armed head.

It cried, "Beware Macduff!" and disappeared.

A moment more, and to the loud roar of

thunder, a second head rose up, dripping with gore. It conjured Macbeth to be bold and resolute, since he need not fear till Birnam wood should come to Dunsinane. Again the vision sank, and in answer to his thoughts, he saw a long line of shadowy forms, wearing the Scottish crown, and each bearing the arms of the house of Banquo, glide slowly by. After them followed the pale ghost of Banquo, who pointed in solemn warning to the dim procession, and vanished into thin air as Macbeth gazed on him.

Disheartened at the sight, Macbeth departed from the cave, despairing of leaving the succession to his own issue. The same voice which had said, "Hail, Macbeth; thou shalt be king hereafter!" had declared that Banquo's children should be kings. And he no longer dared doubt the power of Hecate and her attendants.

But he had some gleams of comfort. They had declared he should be unconquered till Birnam wood should come to Dunsinane. The forest of Birnam was three miles distant from his royal castle of Dunsinane; and until the trees should tear out from the earth their firm roots, and march upon his castle, he might sleep in safety. At least, he should be unconquered, and should die a king. After him, let Banquo's pale progeny take the crown.

And now the sons of Duncan, and the fiery Macduff, infuriated at the slaughter of his wife and babes, had landed on the shores of Scotland. Their army was gathered. They were marching towards Dunsinane to beleaguer the usurper in his very stronghold. Macbeth heard of their movements, and buckling on his armor, awaited the approach of their forces. His courage rose high at the first scent of battle, and his cheek, paled with the terrors which conscience had inflicted, grew ruddy at the sound of the trumpets. While in the midst of his warlike preparations, a startled messenger came in with fear distorting all his visage. The forest of Birnam, three miles away, was moving towards them. It was already coming across the heath, in the middle of which stood the castle of Dunsinane. The sentinels upon the outer walls had seen the strange spectacle, and, mad with fear, had fled back into the inner court-yards.

Then Macbeth's heart sank in despair. Had fate so mocked him? He seemed to hear a peal of ghostly laughter from the pit of Hecate, which rang the death-knell to his fortunes. As he thought thus, the cries and moanings of women told him that his wife, the last stay and comfort in his misery, was *dead*. He heard it with the strong calmness of despair, and gave no time to grief or lamentation.

Now he saw the double meaning of the prophetic warning which had bade him fear only when Birnam wood should move to Dunsinane. The army of Macduff and Malcolm threw down the huge branches of the Birnam forest, with which they had concealed their moving hosts, and from behind their leafy screens stood revealed in immense force.

There was but a brief struggle. Macbeth was brave, but he could not fight against destiny. "Fate is a spaniel; we cannot beat it from us." Before sunset the head of Macbeth was raised upon a pole above the walls of Dunsinane by the conquering hand of Macduff, and its stony eyes looked down upon the hosts of Malcolm as he passed through the castle gates, the crowned and rightful *King of Scotland.*

THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURES OF PERICLES, PRINCE OF TYRE.

(FROM SHAKESPEARE.)

THE old city of Tyre was once one of the proudest and wealthiest cities on the globe. Its commerce was extensive, its merchants prosperous, and its kings very powerful. But Tyre had lost something of its ancient grandeur when young Pericles ascended the throne of his fathers. Rival kingdoms had arisen whose power was feared and dreaded in Tyre. It was, therefore, very necessary that the young prince, who was learned and thoughtful, and possessed the virtues of mature manhood, should ally himself in marriage with some kingdom whose influence and power would prop the falling fortunes of Tyre.

With this purpose the prince began to look about him as soon as he was of age to marry. The kingdom of Syria was ruled by King Antiochus, a powerful but cruel monarch. He had one daughter of whom Pericles had heard as one of the fairest and most accomplished of women.

Antiochus offered this daughter in marriage to any princely suitor who could guess a certain riddle, which he made and propounded to all who came to woo her. If the suitor should guess the answer to the riddle, he was to receive the princess in marriage; if he failed, his head was instantly struck off and placed on the palace gates as a warning to all fool-hardy lovers. Notwithstanding this horrible penalty, however, many princes had lost their heads through their love for the lady, and day after day a row of ghastly heads rotted on the palace walls of Antioch.

Now Pericles was a prince of very subtle and clear intellect, and also possessed of undaunted courage. He did not believe so hard a riddle could be made that he could not unravel its meaning, and as he knew an alliance with the princess of Antioch would be most favorable to the prosperity of Tyre, he set out prepared to risk his head for the possession of her hand.

He was received at the palace of Antiochus with much civility, and was urged very earnestly by the king not to peril his life so rashly, but Pericles was resolved on the attempt, and insisted on hearing the riddle propounded. Antiochus showed much anger at his resolution, and gave him the scroll which contained the fatal words. The princess herself, who was

usually unmoved at the fate of her lovers, changed color, and trembled, in her anxiety for his fate.

Pericles read the words of the riddle, and with a quickness which showed his wonderful judgment, he divined its meaning. But he also guessed that to answer it rightly would forever offend the king, and make him his enemy. So he stood irresolute before the king and princess. If he showed the king he had guessed the secret, he would draw upon himself the vengeance of Antiochus, which was powerful enough to follow him to Tyre; if he failed to answer, his head was no longer his own. Thinking thus, he asked the king for some days in which to consider the matter. Antiochus, who read in the hesitation of Pericles the fact that his secret was discovered, granted his request, and Pericles went out of his presence, and in a few hours had fled the city and was on his way to Tyre. As soon as he had gone, Antiochus summoned to him one of his trusty villains, and instructed him to follow Pericles without delay, and take his life at the first opportunity, by poison or dagger, or in any manner which suited the occasion best. But Pericles was prudent and far-seeing. He knew that by guessing the riddle which Antiochus had imagined could never be solved, he had forever drawn upon himself the king's wrath, and he

judged that the wicked monarch would pursue him to the uttermost with his schemes for vengeance. He knew, too, that Tyre was not strong enough to engage in war with Antioch, and he thought it best to secrete himself for the present, judging that Antiochus would not harm Tyre if he should absent himself for a time from that city and go into some other kingdom. As soon as he reached his own palace, therefore, he called to him a friend and counselor called Helicanus, a man of most remarkable probity and loyalty, and, leaving his kingdom and all his affairs in his hands, set sail for the city of Tharsus.

Pericles had heard rumors of a famine in Tharsus, and he prudently loaded his ships with corn, believing that by relieving the distresses of the people he should gain their good-will, and be able to remain there, quietly hidden from the vengeance of Antiochus. He arrived at Tharsus and found Cleon, the governor, and his wife Dionyza, plunged in great affliction on account of the distress of the city. People were dying in the streets for want of food, and at the very gates of the governor's palace young Pericles stumbled over the dead bodies of mothers, who lay clasping to their breasts the forms of their famished babes.

The corn with which his ships were loaded

afforded instant relief, and the grateful people overwhelmed him with gratitude and blessings. He stayed there for some time in peace and quietness, till suddenly a letter was received from the trusty Helicanus, informing him that Antiochus had discovered his refuge and would try any means to compass his death.

On this, Pericles again took to his ships, which were still in the harbor of Tharsus, and, without proper preparation for the voyage, set out for any port which offered him shelter. Thus it happened, his ships not being properly manned and managed, that they were overtaken by a storm, which destroyed the vessel in which Pericles was, and he was cast upon the coast of Pentapolis, on a barren shore, which was, however, only a few hours' ride from the palace of the very good king Simonides.

The waves which cast Pericles on this inhospitable-looking beach had engulfed all the worldly possessions he had brought with him from Tyre. He had thrown off his garments in his buffeting with the waters, and stood almost naked upon the shore. A few honest old fishermen, who were fishing near by, accosted him with words of pity for his forlorn condition. One of them offered him food and shelter for his pressing needs, and all crowded around him to hear of his escape.

They told him that the city of the good Simonides was only a few hours distant, and that on the morrow a grand tournament would be held in celebration of the princess Thaisa, the only child of Simonides. Whilst the fishermen were telling these things, to which Pericles listened with open ears, one of them dropped his net into the sea, and presently drew up, entangled in the lines, a complete suit of armor, somewhat rusty, but still fit for wearing. Pericles seized a hope which the sight of this armor suggested, and begged the fisherman to give it him, that he might be able to attend the tourney on the morrow, and joust in the princess's honor, hoping that by his skill in feats of arms he might attract the notice, and win the favor of, the king. The kind-hearted fisherman consented, only requesting Pericles to remember him if he were successful, and the good old man who had offered him shelter, generously promised his best gown to make a tunic to wear underneath his armor. So Pericles retired to rest under the humble roof of the fisherman, with his brain full of hopes and plans, and slept the sleep of great weariness.

In the morning Pericles found himself quite bravely furnished forth. The wife of the fisherman had worked all night to make him garments from the ample gown of her husband, and the armor had been mended and polished as well as

it might be. Besides all this, the old fellow lent him his only horse, and thus furnished, Pericles rode gallantly off for the court of Simonides.

He arrived at the tournament just in time to enter his name on the lists, and pass in with the other knights who took part. Simonides and Thaisa sat upon a raised throne, placed under a crimson canopy at the extremity of the amphitheatre in which the tourney was to take place. Pericles looked at the princess, and thought her the most beautiful woman he had ever gazed upon. Her face was modest, yet full of wit and sprightliness, and she was wonderfully graceful in person.

The first knight rode in, bearing on his shield an Ethiop reaching for the sun, with this motto: "*Lux tua mihi vita;*" then a second passed in, a third, a fourth, a fifth, and last came Pericles, his armor looking dull and tarnished beside the glittering suits of his rivals. The device on his shield was a withered branch, with a few green leaves budding from its top, and this motto: "*In hac spe vivo.*" Notwithstanding the meanness of his attire, the princeliness of Pericles shone through his clothing, so that to the clear eyes of the princess he seemed the noblest and bravest of them all.

The tourney commenced with the waving of colors, the sound of trumpets, and the ringing

notes of the bugles. At the beginning of the combat Pericles and the first knight rode twice rapidly round the amphitheatre and approached each other at full speed with extended spears. At the shock of the onset both horses threw themselves nearly erect upon their haunches, and when the dust cleared away, the adversary of Pericles lay stretched, pale and fainting upon the earth. One after another thus engaged with him, and one by one they were left unhorsed and powerless, till at last, with broken spear and covered with the dust and sweat of the encounter, young Pericles stood alone upon the field. Weary and dizzy from the affray, he dismounted, and knelt at the feet of the princess to receive the silver wreath of victory, which she placed upon his head. With her fair hand she gave him her colors to wear upon his helmet, and looking up into her face he gave and received a glance which sealed the fate of both. For Pericles knew from that moment that for him there lived no other woman, and Thaisa felt her heart melted in the ardent glance from the eyes of the young stranger.

The tourney over, Simonides held a great banquet, at which all the nobles and ladies of the court were present. Among these, Pericles in his rusty armor proved himself as accomplished in the graces of the dance as in feats of arms.

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Being pressed to show his skill in music, he took a lyre and improvised some words and music in praise of the princess, which more than ever won the heart of the king, who could not disguise his delight, but gave him the hand of Thaisa as his partner in the dance. So the night wore on in feasting and revelry till the last candle burnt out in the banquet hall.

Pericles remained some months at the court of Simonides. Every evening he resolved to leave the court on the following morning, and every morning he found some excuse for remaining one day more. The truth was, he loved very dearly the young princess, and believed that she loved him. But he knew his affairs were in so bad a state from the lasting enmity of King Antiochus that he felt it would be ungenerous in him to ask her to share his fallen fortunes. He had all this time kept his name and rank a secret from Simonides, believing his only safety was in his obscurity. But the noble old king had treated him with such distinction as his merits deserved, without asking whether he was of proud or humble origin. Simonides was one of the rarest of men, for he saw that true nobility was altogether in the man and not in his surroundings; and the manner in which he treated Prince Pericles proved that his people did not prize him too dearly, when they esteemed him the best and wisest of rulers.

Thaisa inherited her father's spirit. To her, the young hero who had shown himself brave in arms, skilled in the elegant arts, and whose conversation she found each day sparkling with wit and knowledge, was worthy of her love, even if he were beggared by adverse fortune. So when at length one day her father pressed her to decide on some one to whom she would give herself in marriage, she went to her chamber and pouring out her heart in a letter to Simonides, she informed him that the shipwrecked stranger had gained her love, and she desired him only, of all men she had ever seen, to be her lord and husband.

Simonides was delighted at this answer, and sent to bring the young people together in his presence. At first, affecting to be angry, he accused Pericles of having secretly won his daughter's affections. Pericles answered that he did love the princess. He confessed so much, for who could look on her and fail to love her? But he declared that, knowing his forlorn and beggared condition, he would sooner have died than made known his love.

At this Simonides could no longer dissemble, but, joining the hands of the young couple, he blessed them as his son and daughter, and went instantly out to vent his great joy in preparations for their immediate nuptials. Thus Per-

icles became the husband of this charming princess, and continued in the court of Simonides in the enjoyment of a contentment so perfect, that it seemed as if the future could have no more ill fortune in store for him.

But his adventures were not yet to cease. Nearly a year had passed since his marriage without hearing from his deserted kingdom of Tyre. Everything was not quiet in that city, however. Helicanus had ruled with great wisdom in his stead, but the people did not accept him as their real ruler, and were impatient and angry at the long, unexplained absence of their proper lord. At last impatience rose to mutiny against Pericles, and a deputation of lords waited on Helicanus to inform him, that as he had long wielded the sceptre very wisely, they wished to place the crown on his head, whose deserts were no less than such an honor. It happened that Helicanus had just received news of the death of Antiochus, and he now knew that it would be safe for his master to return to Tyre. He therefore begged the nobles to give him one year in which to find Pericles and restore to him his throne, and promised, if at the end of that time he were not found, to be himself crowned king. With this the citizens were obliged to be content, and this loyal minister of Pericles sent messengers and letters in all directions, to find the

prince. After long search they heard of him in Pentapolis, and going to that city they besought him to accompany them back to Tyre.

When Thaisa found that he was really a prince of so much repute, she did not love him more, since that was impossible, but she rejoiced at his good fortune, and begged him to go immediately to Tyre. He would have had her remain at her father's court till he could go to his kingdom and make preparations to receive her, but she longed so much to accompany him that he had not the will to forbid her. A ship was fitted out with all possible comfort and elegance, an ample train of female attendants accompanied Thaisa, and in great state they set sail from the harbor of Pentapolis. Everything seemed to promise a calm and pleasant journey. But the ill fortune which had for a season seemed to forget Pericles, again assailed him. A few days they sailed fairly and prosperously, but at the end of that time a violent storm arose, and the ship was beaten and tossed about by the waves. In the midst of this disaster, while the winds and the waves were at their worst, amid the roaring of waters, the creaking of timbers, and the volleying of thunder, an infant daughter was born to Pericles. Thaisa did not live to see the face of her babe; for worn out with her anxiety, and the terror she had endured from the storm, she

fell into a stupor from which she could not be recovered, and breathed out her life on the bosom of her faithful servant, her nurse Lychorida. Pericles would have awaited the subsiding of the storm to put into the nearest port and give her queenly burial rites, but the superstition of the sailors had been aroused by the terrific storm. They insisted that the corpse of Thaisa should be thrown overboard, declaring that the storm would never abate while it was in the vessel. Pericles was obliged to yield to their clamors, and a chest was prepared for the body of the poor queen. Within this he spread the costliest stuffs the ship afforded, — cloths of gold and silver, rare spices, and choicest perfumes; then decorating her form with jewels, and shrouding it in satin, he placed Thaisa in the chest, and threw it into the sea.

Behold the wretched Pericles left upon his battered ship, with the poor babe in his arms, who smiled at him with the unconscious tranquillity of infancy. His heart was so torn with the loss of his queen, that he could find no comfort in the blessed gift of this little daughter. He looked on each tender feature, and found in the eye, the chin, the forehead, some trace of his dear wife. But this likeness only made his anguish more keen. Rousing himself at length from the apathy of grief in which he was plunged,

he inquired what coast the ship sailed nearest. The sailors told him they were near Tharsus, but still a long distance from Tyre. He recalled the ancient friendship which had existed between Cleon and himself, and directed the ship to make for that harbor. She did so, and he reached the city without further adventure, receiving a cordial welcome from the Governor and Dionyza.

After the first warmth of the meeting and their condolings for the loss of his queen were over, Pericles placed his infant in the arms of Dionyza. He had bestowed upon her the name of Marina, from the sea, which was her birthplace. He begged these friends, in whom he had great confidence, to rear his child with their own daughter, declaring he would never cut his hair or shave his beard, until his daughter, now so tender an infant, should reach a marriageable age, and be united to a worthy husband. Having made these plans for her breeding and education, Pericles left the palace of Cleon and Dionyza, and returned to Tyre, where he received the sceptre from Helicanus, and commenced a peaceful and just reign.

In the mean time the costly chest in which Pericles had encased the body of his beloved wife had floated upon the waves, and was tossed ashore at Ephesus. Here some gentlemen, who were early abroad, found it among the wrecks,

lying in the sand. It happened that there dwelt upon the coast in Ephesus, one of the wisest of living physicians, named Cerimon. He knew the properties of all herbs and minerals, their powers of cure, and prepared such wonderful remedies as the world had never seen. To him, then, this chest containing the lifeless body of Thaisa was brought. When Cerimon beheld this box, his first conjecture was that it was filled with golden treasure which had been washed off some lost vessel, and cast ashore. He ordered his servants to tear open the lid, and the pungent odor of the spices, with which Pericles had surrounded the body of Thaisa, filled the whole apartment. He bent over the chest with some curiosity to find what was indeed inclosed there, and beheld the face of the most beautiful woman he had ever seen, upturned to his.

Her pale hands were folded on her breast, and her lips and cheeks still glowed with the hue of life. Transfixed with admiration, Cerimon bent over her, and his eye was caught by a written scroll which Pericles had placed beside her. He opened it and read : —

"Here I give to understand,
(If e'er this coffin drive a-land,)
I, King Pericles, have lost
This Queen, worth all our mundane cost.
Who finds her, give her burying,
She was the daughter of a King.
Besides this treasure for a fee,
The gods requite his charity."

Now Cerimon had had great experience in bringing back to life people who had lain a long time apparently dead. Especially he recalled the case of an Egyptian who had lain nine hours in a trance, and had afterward been recovered. Remembering this, he resolved, if it were within human means, to preserve a lady so beautiful, and so precious to the unknown writer of the scroll. He ordered preparation to be made for a medicinal bath, all kinds of stimulants to be got ready, and proceeded himself to use those powerful medicaments by which he hoped to restore her to life. His labors were rewarded, for in a short time the color began to deepen on her cheek, from her parted lips a slight breath began to issue, and Cerimon could feel under the silken drapery in which she was enveloped, the beating of her heart. He redoubled his efforts, and presently she sat up, and in a faint voice asked for her lord and husband.

As soon as Thaisa was sufficiently recovered to hear the story of her supposed death, and her burial in the stormy waves, which had so kindly thrown her into the hands of Cerimon, all these circumstances were related to her. She was convinced that Pericles must have been lost in the sea from which she had been so wonderfully preserved, and she resolved to go to the temple of Diana, which was in Ephesus, and devote the

rest of her life to the service of that goddess. Cerimon did not gainsay her wish, and she was soon enrolled among those who officiated at the votive altars, and became renowned as the most beautiful and chaste of all the priestesses of Diana.

Marina, left in the care of Cleon and Dionyza, grew daily in grace and loveliness. Her father had left as her attendant, the old servant Lychorida, who had nursed the queen in her illness upon the ocean, and in this faithful woman Marina found a second mother. The young princess was instructed in all feminine arts. She learned to embroider in a manner which was considered wonderful even then, when embroidery was one of the fine arts. She sang and played on the harp with great skill, and she was an apt scholar in the languages. The only daughter of Dionyza, who was called Philoten, was the sharer of all the princess's studies, and her close companion, but while Marina was graceful and lovely, Philoten was deformed and ugly; where Marina excelled in accomplishments, she was left far behind.

Dionyza, for her daughter's sake, beheld the beauty and sweetness of Marina with envious eyes. That her only child, nurtured with so much maternal love and fondness, should be outstripped by a stranger, was hateful beyond meas-

ure to her. She did not allow this feeling to be restrained even by the remembrance of how much Cleon and herself, indeed, the whole city of Tharsus, owed to the father of this young girl, nor did the sweet disposition of Marina in the least soften her heart; indeed, it served still more to steel it against her.

About this time, when Marina was nearly fourteen, and according to the custom of the country in which she lived, nearly of marriageable age, her old nurse Lychorida was taken ill and died. Marina had felt the growing coldness of Dionyza, and had clung with all the tenderness of her nature to this one dear old friend, as the only remembrance left her of her dead mother and absent father. When she died, her grief passed all bounds, and she could not be comforted. She went every day to weep over the grave of her old nurse, and to strew it with flowers.

While she was bent on the daily fulfillment of these pious rites, the wicked and ungrateful Dionyza conceived a fearful project. She had so long nourished her hatred of Marina, that it was only a short step to crime. Seeing how lonely and unprotected Marina remained, she plotted to take her life. She instructed one of her servants, a low villain, to join her in one of her walks, and drawing her into some lonely

place, to kill her. The murderer obeyed her commands, and, tempting Marina to an unfrequented place on the sea-shore, he was about to slay her, when she begged for a short respite. He gave her a few minutes in which to prepare for death, and the princess, going by herself, knelt upon the sand, lifting up her pure eyes and hands toward heaven in supplication.

Now it happened that, as she knelt thus, some pirates prowling about for booty discovered her, and seizing upon her as a prize, bore her to their ship, which was anchored near by. They immediately set sail for Mitylene, and sold her there as a female slave. Here her skill in all womanly accomplishments proved a great source of good fortune to her. She was able to instruct in needle-work, music, and various other branches, and she sang so exquisitely that her voice was noted through the whole city. Lysimachus, the Governor of Mitylene, noticed the maiden, and desired that she should be kindly treated.

After Marina was carried off by the pirates, the servant of Dionyza returned to his mistress and told her that he had obeyed her commands, and that Marina was dead. On this the wicked woman revealed to Cleon what she had done. He professed to be much shocked at it, and reminded her how much cause they had to dread

the anger of the citizens if this deed became known, since they had always cherished a grateful memory of Pericles for his services in their times of famine. But he felt no real sorrow for the deed, and readily joined with his wife in concealing what had been done. They agreed together to affect great grief, and to give out that Marina died suddenly from too much sorrow at her nurse's death. Then they gave her empty coffin pompous burial, and erected over her vacant tomb a magnificent marble pillar, on which was an inscription which told in fine words the beauty and worth of Marina.

It now being near Marina's fourteenth birthday, Pericles, who had all this time been reigning quietly in Tyre, ever cherishing deep in his heart the memory of his lost queen, resolved to go to Tharsus to bring home his daughter, and make plans for seeing her worthily married. He took with him a number of his nobles, among the rest the aged Helicanus, who had always been his chief adviser and counselor. They reached Tharsus in the midst of the ceremonies which attended the funeral of Marina. When Pericles heard that his daughter was dead, whom he had not loved less because her resemblance to her dead mother had made the sight of her impossible till time had softened his anguish, he was completely heart-broken.

He only remained long enough to listen to the fictitious story which Dionyza told him of her death, and then immediately took to his ships.

Scarcely caring whither he went, he allowed the ship to sail without question, until, by some wonderful fortune, they anchored in Mitylene, where Marina now dwelt. As soon as they were in harbor, Lysimachus, the Governor, who was a young and gallant gentleman, came on board the ship of Pericles to see the stranger who had thus unexpectedly arrived at their city. Pericles lay in his cabin, prone upon his face. His hair and beard, which had been uncut for fourteen years, streamed about his person, and made him look like a wild beast in his lair. Lysimachus approached him and endeavored to talk with him, to find out the motives for his visit to Mitylene, but he would not open his lips. After spending some time in vain endeavor to draw him from his apathy, Lysimachus remembered the wonderful voice of Marina, and the charm which it had to draw the wretched from the contemplation of their miseries, and he asked Helicanus, who now informed him of the name and rank of his master, if the maid might not be sent to try her skill upon the King.

Marina was sitting in a shady grove near the city, surrounded by a group of young girls, to some of whom she was teaching music, and in-

structing others in singing and embroidery, when the messengers of the Governor came for her. She hastened to go with them, and was soon led into the presence of Pericles. At first the sight of this wild-looking man, who lay stretched upon his face on a rude pallet, filled her with awe and dread; but very soon summoning courage, she commenced to sing a soothing melody.

He gave no sign that he heard. At length, growing more bold, she came near him and ventured to lay her hand upon his shoulder. She begged him to consider if he were not wrong in so giving way to grief, since there were others whose misfortunes had perhaps been as great as his, who did not so accuse Heaven in yielding to them. She told him that she, young as she was, had much cause to be sad, for by right she was a princess, whose father was a powerful king; that she had been born upon the sea, where her mother had died in giving her birth, and that her childhood had never known a father's or a mother's love.

At her words, Pericles lifted up his face and beheld something in her features and the expression of her countenance which held his gaze entranced. He asked eagerly her name and the story of her birth. When she told him she was called Marina, and commenced relating her his-

tory from infancy, Pericles became so filled with joy that he could hardly restrain himself to hear her adventures. He arose from his couch, and, taking her to his breast, he wept over her, till, wearied with his emotions, he fell into a deep slumber.

While he slept, the goddess Diana appeared to him in a shining vision, and directed him to proceed immediately to Ephesus with his new-found daughter, and there, upon his knees before her shrine, declare in a loud voice his name and his adventures. When he awoke, the impression of the dream was so strong upon him that he did not hesitate to obey it.

Before he set out for Ephesus, the young Governor, Lysimachus, sought the Prince, and asked of him in marriage the hand of his daughter Marina. He told Pericles that he had loved the maid since she first came to Mitylene, and he thought she had looked on him with favorable eyes. On being questioned, Marina avowed herself nowise averse to the handsome Lysimachus, and they were betrothed before setting out for Ephesus.

On their arrival at the temple of Diana, they found the building filled with a great crowd of people, who were in attendance at a festival in honor of the goddess. Among the citizens present was Cerimon, with a large train of attend-

ants. Unabashed by the great number of spectators, Pericles knelt before the grand altar of Diana, and in a loud voice commenced relating all his adventures, — his shipwreck at Pentapolis, his marriage with Thaisa, her loss at sea, and the story of his daughter's ill treatment from Dionyza.

While he was speaking the priestesses were listening, when suddenly the beautiful Thaisa gave a loud cry, and coming forward, threw herself upon the neck of Pericles. She learned for the first time, that she had a living husband and daughter, and he now found again the wife he thought to be dead. As soon as all had a little recovered from their first wonder, Thaisa told her story, which was confirmed by the learned Cerimon, and with tears of great joy Pericles folded his wife and daughter in one embrace.

As soon as they could make ready, the happy party set sail for Tyre. On their way thither they stopped at Pentapolis, and found the good King Simonides just expiring. He left his kingdom to Pericles, who placed on the throne his son-in-law and daughter, and left them to reign together. He also gave great privileges to the fishermen on that coast, in grateful memory of the favors he had received from them. Leaving Pentapolis, he went to Tharsus. Here

he informed the citizens of the wrongs his daughter had suffered at the hands of Dionyza and Cleon, and the enraged populace took the lives of the guilty couple. The city was given into the hands of Pericles, who left the faithful Helicanus as its ruler and governor.

Then Pericles and his Queen went on to Tyre, where they reigned long years in wondrous happiness and peace. She bore him a son, who was afterward the Prince of Tyre, and at a very ripe age Pericles and Thaisa died, and their ashes were placed in one sepulchre.

THE TEMPEST.

(FROM SHAKESPEARE.)

ONCE upon a time there lived upon an island, far off in Southern seas, a wonderful wise magician, with one only daughter. The island was far away from all inhabited lands, and no human being had ever set foot on its shores, till the magician came there. But it had been the abode of genii and fairies, and all kinds of elfin creatures, ever since it first rose from the bosom of the green sea. It was an isle of more than earthly beauty. All sorts of plants and flowers grew there from spring to winter, and from winter to spring again. Groves of palms and orange-trees, of willows and of oaks, grew side by side, and the island blossomed with color and beauty such as eye never beheld in any other spot.

Here the great magician Prospero lived and reigned over myriads of subjects, — not human subjects, but all the creatures of the elements, — the fairies of the earth, air, and water, of which the isle was full. Prospero had not always been

king over such an unreal kingdom as this seems to us. Not many years before, when his daughter Miranda, who was now a lovely young maiden, was an infant of two or three years, he had been ruler over a powerful realm, — nothing less than the Duchy of Milan. But though he was a good prince, and loved his people very dearly, he was too fond of the study of magic, and all sorts of occult arts and sciences. He thought, meanwhile, that his kingdom was taken good care of, for he trusted all his affairs in the hands of his only brother, whom he believed a good and loyal minister of his will. One would have imagined that Prospero's inquiries into all the mysteries of magic might have taught him how to read the designs of men, but it seems they did not; for while he was deep in his books, and suspected no harm, this bad brother Antonio took possession of his throne, seized Prospero and the little Princess Miranda, thrust them into a leaky boat, and pushed them off into the wide ocean, all alone by themselves.

But it sometimes happens that the winds and waves, and all the great forces of Nature, though they seem so pitiless, are more kind than men. It proved so in this case, for the waves gently tossed, and the winds blew them on, to the shores of this enchanted island, where Prospero dwelt when the story commences.

When they first landed on the island, Prospero heard issuing from the forest which skirted the shores, wailings and lamentations, which seemed to be uttered by some human creature. He entered the wood, and, guided by these cries, came at length to a tall pine, and there in the heart of a living tree, with only the head and shoulders visible, he found imprisoned the body of an exquisite creature, evidently some delicate fairy of the air. He was firmly wedged in the very middle of the trunk of this huge tree, which had grown around and bound him constantly tighter and tighter in its tough, woody fibres. Prospero stopped and conjured him to tell his name, and why he was thus horribly tortured.

On this the spirit ceased his cries, and told the Duke that his name was Ariel, that he belonged to a race of fairies of the air, and that he was thus imprisoned in the entrails of this pine by the power of a vile witch named Sycorax, who had for a time possessed and governed the island. He told Prospero also that the island was now inhabited by the son of this frightful hag, — a vicious monster, whose name was Caliban, — and that this cruel wretch now occasionally visited his prison to punish and torment him in addition to his present tortures.

When Prospero heard this story, he exacted a solemn vow from Ariel that he would serve

him faithfully as servant and subject if he were once set free from the pine. Prospero exacted this promise because he knew that, as fairies had no souls, he could not depend on his gratitude. When Ariel took this vow, and called on all that fairies hold most sacred to witness his oath, Prospero uttered some fearful conjuration, and in an instant Ariel spread his sparkling wings in the sunshine and hovered over their heads. He then took carefully in his arms the little Princess Miranda, and floating through the air as lightly as the down of a thistle, conducted Prospero to a cave in a huge rock, where he could find comfortable shelter.

In this rocky cave the magician made his home. He furnished it with all comforts and necessaries, and even had in it a luxurious grotto for the chamber of the little princess, which, by the means of magic, he furnished with more than royal splendor. Here his delicate Ariel served him faithfully, and here the young Miranda grew daily in the rarest grace and beauty. The monster Caliban, whom no kindness could tame, Prospero kept to do all rude offices for him, the hewing of wood and drawing of water for the little household; and the monster, not daring to disobey his commands, growled and cursed while he did his great master's bidding.

So they lived till the time when Miranda was

about sixteen. So beautiful a creature as this young daughter of Prospero had rarely been seen. Bred among the enchantments of thls island, her own rich loveliness was nourished by wonders, till she seemed more like a spirit than a mortal. Her father, too, had taught her much strange and curious learning, so that she was wise in things foreign to her sex and years. She had seen no faces which resembled the human, except those of her father, and his servants Ariel and Caliban. Unaware of her rank as princess, or of the loss of worldly power which her father had suffered in her infancy, she was quite happy in his little kingdom, and regarded him as the most potent of earthly princes.

While things were in this condition on the island, a large fleet appeared with spread sails, which looked in the far distance like a flock of tiny white birds spreading their wings against the blue sky. This fleet belonged to Alonzo, King of Naples, who had just married his only daughter to an African prince, and having escorted her to the abode of her husband in Tunis, was now returning home after the marriage festivities. The duchy of Milan was tributary or subject to the kingdom of Naples, and all the principal lords of that kingdom were on board the fleet, Antonio, Prospero's bad brother, among the rest. King Alonzo had also with him his son Fer-

dinand, heir to the crown of Naples, and his brother Sebastian, besides many other noblemen of Naples and Milan. All these nobles, dukes, and princes were on board the King's vessel, which headed the fleet.

Prospero had for some time known of the approach of this fleet, and had divined what persons were on board, and at what moment the King's ship would sail near the island. When this moment arrived he sent Ariel to intercept the King's ship, and to separate it from the other vessels.

Ariel did his work well and faithfully, like a true creature of the elements to which he belonged. He made the whole atmosphere around the ship glitter with flames and flash with lightning. Here, there, and everywhere, he flamed in the eyes of the astonished crew. Upon the mast, the bows, and in the vessel's track he sat aflame, so that the air and water seemed to vomit fires. The sailors, struck with fear, could hardly work the ship, which Ariel all the time drew closer and closer to the shores of the island. At length the lords, the young prince, and the King himself, leaped into the foaming sea, and all swam to the shore in safety.

Ariel plunged the sailors into a deep sleep, and left them securely fastened under the hatches on the vessel. Then he managed cunningly to sep-

arate into small groups those who swam to land, so that each party supposed the others lost. In one part of the island he drew some of the lower officers of the ship's crew; in another sheltered portion of the shores were placed the King Alonzo, Duke Antonio, Sebastian the King's brother, and some other nobles; and by some strange music, that had enchantment in it, he led the son of the King, Prince Ferdinand, to the entrance of the cave, where Prospero awaited him.

Ferdinand was amazed at this wondrous sweet music, which seemed to float over his head, and although he was grieving for the loss of his father and all his friends, whom he thought dead, he could not help listening to and admiring this sweet song: —

"Come unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands:
Court'sied when you have and kissed
The wild waves whist,
Foot it featly here and there;
And, sweet sprites, the burden bear.
Burden. — Hark, hark!
Bow, wow!
The watch-dogs bark.
Bow, wow!
Ariel. — Hark, hark! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer
Cry, Cock a doodle doo!"

As Ariel ended, Ferdinand looked up and met the eyes of the loveliest maiden he had ever

gazed on. Since everything seemed to be enchanted in this place, he thought she must be the goddess of the isle. He spoke to her thus, but she told him that she was no goddess, only a simple maiden, and as mortal as himself. And as she had never seen any human shape before save that of her father and his two servants, the handsome young prince seemed to her something almost supernatural, and like a hero of romance. Thus it happened, that from the first moment they looked into each other's eyes they loved each other.

Although it was a part of Prospero's plans that these two should love, yet he did not desire that his daughter should be too easily won; so at this moment he advanced and claimed Ferdinand as his prisoner. The prince tried to resist, and was about to draw his sword at being so rudely attacked, when his arm was instantly made powerless by the force of magic, and he was obliged to yield. He followed Prospero into his cave, and in spite of Miranda's tears and entreaties, was treated as a captive. Prospero, affecting the manner of a severe master, set him to the task of removing some heavy logs, and piling them up near the grotto.

During all this time King Alonzo, Antonio, Sebastian, and the rest, were in another part of the island. They, too, heard all sorts of strange

noises, and saw all kinds of strange sights. Fatigued with all their escapes and adventures, Alonzo and some of the others lay down upon the ground to sleep, leaving only Antonio and Sebastian awake. Now Antonio was one of those bad men who are not satisfied with their own wickedness and the fruits of it, but wish to tempt others to bad deeds. As they watched there together, he began to say to Sebastian, that since Ferdinand was drowned, he, the brother of the King, was the next heir to the throne. Then he went on skillfully to hint that if Alonzo were dead, Sebastian might now ascend the throne. Sebastian listened till his avarice and ambition were aroused, and he had drawn his sword and was about to kill the King, when Ariel, who was always on the alert, came in to interrupt the plan, aroused the sleeping lords, and so saved Alonzo. The wicked project of the two conspirators was thus defeated. Then they all rose up and went together to see if they could find any sign of human habitation.

Caliban had been sent off by Prospero to gather fagots to burn, and on his way met two common fellows belonging to the ship, who had managed to get to shore with a bottle of liquor from the wreck, and were already half drunk with what they had taken. Caliban had never seen man except Prospero, and supposing all

human beings to be equally powerful, he paid them great respect. Stephano, the one who had possession of the bottle, generously gave the monster a drink, and the fumes of the liquor, rising straight to Caliban's brain, made him partly intoxicated. The stupid monster then concluded that the man who owned so potent a beverage must be even more powerful than his master, and he proposed to them to aid him in a plot to assassinate Prospero, that they might become owners of the island, which he described as abounding in all sorts of natural wealth. Stephano and his companion, Trinculo, readily entered into the plan, and they all journeyed back to the cave, to get possession of Prospero's magic books and robes, and then to murder him.

When evening came on, all Prospero's plans were working famously. Ferdinand had told the story of his parentage and rank to Prospero, had besought him that he might have Miranda for his wife, and the old Duke had graciously given his blessing to their love. Alonzo, Sebastian, and Antonio were now close by, in a grove near the entrance of the cave. The drunken fellows and Caliban, whose designs Ariel had overheard and betrayed to his master, were being well pinched and tortured by spirits of the air, whom Prospero set on to harass them.

As the King and his followers drew close to

the cave, Prospero suddenly revealed himself to their astonished eyes, and accused Antonio of his crime in stealing the kingdom. He also reproached the King of Naples for having countenanced his brother in defrauding him of his duchy. Alonzo was overcome with grief and remorse, especially as he was ready to consider the loss of his son as a punishment for his misdeeds.

While he stood in grief, Prospero drew aside a curtain, and showed Ferdinand and Miranda playing chess together. They were a lovely sight, the handsome prince and young maid, as they sat there, wholly wrapt in contemplation of each other, and unconscious of the party who were gazing on them.

But when the Prince and King recognized each other, you can imagine the joy of the meeting. Everything was explained; the King gave his consent to the marriage of the young lovers, while Antonio, unable to resist the just demands of his powerful brother, yielded him back his dukedom, and pretended to be penitent.

Prospero nobly forgave all injuries, and giving the dainty Ariel his liberty from that time forth, he embarked upon the King's ship, which lay peacefully in the harbor, and they all set sail for Naples, where Ferdinand and Miranda were speedily united in marriage. Prospero was

again placed on the throne of Milan, and the enchanted island has never since known human inhabitant, but remains lonely and beautiful in the midst of the sea.