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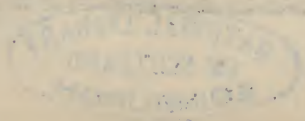
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THE
STORY TELLER
CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Prince Lupin and the White Cat,.....	3
The Yellow Dwarf,.....	7
The Three Wishes,.....	11
Puss in Boots,	13
The Three Beggars,.....	17
The Soldier's Wife,.....	21
Jack Easy,.....	23



THE STORY TELLER.

PRINCE LUPIN AND THE WHITE CAT.

A CERTAIN king had three sons, all handsome, brave, and fine young gentlemen; but being suspicious that they had formed a design to deprive him of his crown, he thought of a method to divert them from their intended purpose. Having called them one day into his closet, he spoke to them as follows:—"My sons, I am now come to a great age, and cannot apply myself to public affairs with so much care as formerly; therefore, I intend to resign my crown to one of you; but, as it is but right to require some proof of your abilities, in order to determine which is the most worthy of so valuable a present, I propose and promise, that he who shall bring me the most beautiful little dog shall immediately take possession of my throne."

The three princes readily agreed to this proposal, each concluding himself most likely to succeed in fulfilling this extraordinary request. After taking leave of the king, they set out, with orders to return that day twelvemonth with dogs. Each took a different road, without any attendants; but we shall leave the two eldest at present, and confine our story to the youngest.

This accomplished prince, as he was more desirous to show his duty to his father than to become a king, was more fortunate in his undertaking than either of the others. One night, having travelled till it was very late, and being overtaken by a storm in a large forest, he discovered a light at a distance, and, pursuing his journey with all speed, he arrived at a most stately castle, the gates of which were of massy gold, and the walls of fine china, whereon were painted the histories of all the fairies that ever appeared on earth. At the door hung a chain of diamonds, with a deer's foot at the end; on pulling

which, the prince heard a bell of so pleasing a sound, that he concluded it to be made of gold or silver. Immediately the door opened, and twelve hands, each holding a flambeau, gently conducted him into a hall of mother-of-pearl, and from thence through a vast variety of chambers, all richly covered with paintings and jewels. The beauty of these ornaments was greatly heightened by a number of lights that hung from the ceiling in glass sconces of exquisite workmanship.

After having passed through sixty apartments, a fine easy chair moved towards him of its own accord; the fire lighted itself, and the hands pulled off his clothes, which had been drenched in the storm, and dressed him in others so extraordinarily fine and rich, that it dazzled his sight to behold himself. While the prince was in the utmost astonishment at this uncommon adventure, he saw a multitude of cats enter the room, and seat themselves on the bench. One held a music-book, and some played on instruments, while others beat time. In the midst of this concert, a small figure came forward in a mourning veil, led by two cats in black cloaks, and followed by a long train of cats, some with rats, and others with mice, in their mouths. The young prince was so surprised that he had not power to move; when the little figure, lifting up its veil, discovered the prettiest white cat that ever was seen. "Prince," said she, "be not afraid, but give me your company with cheerfulness. It shall be the ambition of me and all my mewling attendants to give you pleasure."

On a signal given, supper was brought in; but the prince at first declined eating, till the White Cat, guessing the reason, assured him that there were no rats nor mice in any thing that was set before him. As the prince was admiring this beautiful cat, he observed a small picture hanging upon her foot. He asked her to show it him; and how great was his surprise to see a charming young man very much resembling himself! Yet, observing the White Cat to sigh, he was afraid at that time to satisfy his curiosity concerning it, and so endeavoured to divert her by entertaining conversation, in which he found her to be extremely sensible, and acquainted with every thing that passed in the world. He slept every night in an apartment hung with tapestry made of the wings of butterflies, on a bed of the most delicious flowers, and every day was spent in the most delightful amusement. In this manner almost a year slipped away insensibly; and the prince entirely forgot his native home and the little dog he was to carry to his father. But the White Cat knew when he was to return; and one day, as they were walking together in a grove near the palace, "Do you remember, prince," said she, "the pro-

mise you made your father? Your brothers have already procured some curious little dogs, and there remain but three days for you to find one more beautiful, or lose a kingdom." These words awoke the prince from his dream of pleasure. "Alas!" cried he, "what have I been doing? My honour is lost for ever." "Do not afflict yourself," said the White Cat, "I will find a horse that will carry you home in less than twelve hours. And as for the little dog, take this acorn, in which there is one; put it to your ear and you will hear it bark." The prince did so, and, transported with pleasure, thanked her a thousand times. Bidding her farewell, he mounted the wooden horse, and arrived at his father's palace just as his brothers entered the court-yard. He ran to embrace them, and all three went together to the king. The two eldest presented their dogs, which were so equally beautiful that it was impossible to know in whose favour to determine. But the youngest soon put an end to the debate; for, pulling the acorn out of his pocket and opening it, they saw a little dog lying on cotton, so small that it might go through a ring; it was of a mixture of colours, and its ears reached the ground. The king was convinced that nothing could be met with so beautiful; but, being unwilling yet to part with his crown, he told his children, that he must make a further trial of their love and diligence before he performed his promise; they must take another year to find out a web of cloth fine enough to go through the eye of a small needle.

This request, though unjust, they thought it best to comply with; and our prince mounted his wooden horse, and returned with speed to his White Cat, on which alone he depended for assistance. He found her laid on a quilt of white satin. As soon as she saw him, she expressed the utmost joy; while the prince caressed her in the most tender manner, and told her the success of his journey. The White Cat redoubled her efforts to render the prince more happy, if possible, than he had been before. The instant he wished for anything the hands brought it to him; and the second year rolled away so fast, that the prince would again have forgot his orders, had not the White Cat reminded him thereof: "But make yourself perfectly easy concerning the web," said she, "for I have one wonderfully fine. Take this walnut; be sure to crack it in your father's presence, and you will find in it such a web as you want."

The prince thanked her in the most grateful manner; and was presently carried by the wooden horse to his father's palace, where his brothers had got before him. They pulled out their webs, which were exceeding fine, and would go through

the eye of a large needle, but could not be made to pass through the eye of a small one. The king was going to avail himself of this pretext, when the youngest prince unexpectedly entered, and produced a walnut, which he cracked. Finding only a kernel of wax, the king and all present ridiculed him for thinking to find a web of cloth in a nut. However, he broke the kernel, and saw in it a corn of wheat, and in that a grain of millet-seed; he then opened the millet-seed, and, to the utter astonishment and confusion of all the beholders, drew out a web of cloth four hundred yards long. The needle was brought, and the web was put through the eye of it five or six times with the greatest ease.

The king fetched a deep sigh, and turning towards his sons, "My children," said he, "I am still desirous of putting you to a new trial: go for another year; and he that brings me the most beautiful damsel shall marry her and be crowned king; and I swear most solemnly, that I will require no other proof of your filial affection and discretion." Our sweet prince heard this tyrannic command without a murmur; and, remounting his courser, flew to his dear White Cat; which, knowing the moment of his return, was prepared to receive him in the golden gallery. "Prince," said she, "the king, I find has refused you the crown; however, I hope you will take care to deserve it, and I will provide you with a beautiful damsel who will gain the prize."

The prince grew more and more fond of her; and in her abode enjoyed every magnificent entertainment that fancy could invent. When this last year was near expired, the White Cat thus addressed him:—"If you are sensible of the favours I have conferred upon you, now is the time to make me amends. Do not hesitate, but cut off my head and tail, and throw them into the fire." Tears started from the prince's eyes at this request, and he was going several times to refuse; but the White Cat insisted upon it so earnestly, that at last, with a trembling hand, he chopped off her head and tail, and threw them according to order into the fire. In an instant the body of the White Cat was changed into the most beautiful lady that ever was seen, and immediately a great number of gentlemen and ladies, holding their cats' skins over their shoulders, came and fell prostrate at her feet, crying, "Long live our gracious queen! How great is our joy to see her once more in her natural shapel!" The prince was glad beyond description to behold so charming a creature, but could not help expressing an earnest desire to know the cause of this surprising transformation. "Restrain your curiosity," says the lovely queen, "till we arrive at your father's court,

where I am now ready to accompany you, and where I will relate my unheard-of misfortunes. Come, see, the carriage waits." So saying, she gave her hand to the prince, who led her into a chariot, the inside of which was fine velvet, set with brilliants, the outside gold; and the horses' harness was made of emeralds.

Away they flew, and were presently at the gates of the king's palace, where the two eldest princes were already arrived with their two princesses, in fine calashes of blue, embossed with gold. The courtiers crowded to present these three illustrious couples to the king. The two eldest princes with their ladies advanced first, and were received very graciously by the monarch, who declared they had brought him two such beauties, that he knew not to which he should give the preference; but the moment the youngest approached with his queen, both full of grace and dignity, the king cried out in ecstasy, "This is the incomparable beauty, whose worth and excellence claims and deserves my crown!" "I came not to rob you of your crown," answered the discreet queen; "I was born heiress to six kingdoms. Give me leave to present one of them to you, and one to each of your sons; for which I ask no other return than this amiable prince in marriage."

The king and all the court were struck with joy at this declaration; and the nuptials were celebrated the same day with great magnificence. Never were a pair more happy; and the young prince, to the last moment of his life, blessed the accident that led him to the abode of the sweet White Cat.

THE YELLOW DWARF.

THERE was once a queen, who, though she had borne many children, had but one daughter left alive, of whom she was fond to an excess, hnmouring and indulging her in all her ways and wishes. This princess was exceedingly beautiful, so that she was called All-Fair, and had twenty kings courting her at one time. Her mother, being advanced in years, would fain have had her married and settled before she died, but no entreaties could prevail; whereupon she determined to go to the Desert Fairy to ask advice concerning her stubborn daughter.

Now, this fairy being guarded by two fierce lions, the queen made a cake of millet, sugar candy, and crocodiles' eggs, in order to appease their fury and pass by them; and having thus provided herself, she set out. After travelling some time, she found herself weary, and lying down under a tree, fell

asleep. When she awoke, she heard the lions which guarded the fairy roaring, upon which, looking for her cake, she found it was gone. This threw her into the utmost agony, not knowing how to save herself from being devoured by them; when, hearing somebody cry, "Hem! hem!" she lifted up her eyes, and beheld a little yellow man on a tree, half-a-yard high, picking and eating oranges.

"Ah! queen," said the Yellow Dwarf, (for so he was called on account of his complexion, and the orange tree he lived in), "how will you escape the lions? There is but one way. I know what business brought you here! promise me your daughter in marriage, and I will save you." The queen, though she could not but look upon so frightful a figure with horror, yet was forced to consent; whereupon she instantly found herself in her own palace, and all that had passed seemed only as a dream; nevertheless, she was so thoroughly persuaded of the reality of it, that she became melancholy.

The young princess being unable to learn the cause of her dejection, resolved to go and inquire of the Desert Fairy; and, accordingly, having prepared a cake for the lions, she also set off for her abode. It happened that All-Fair took exactly the same route her mother had done before her; and coming to the fatal tree, which was loaded with oranges, she had a mind to pick some; therefore, setting down her basket, wherein she carried the cake, she plentifully indulged herself. The lions now began to roar, when All-Fair, looking for her cake, was thrown into the utmost trouble on finding it gone. As she was lamenting her deplorable situation, the Yellow Dwarf presented himself to her with these words:—"Lovely princess, dry up your tears, and hear what I am going to say. You need not proceed to the Desert Fairy to know the reason of your mother's indisposition, she is ungenerous enough to repent of having promised you, her adorable daughter, to me in marriage." "How!" interrupted the princess, "my mother promised me to you in marriage! you! such a fright as you!" "Nay, none of your scoffs," returned the Yellow Dwarf, "I wish you not to stir up my anger. If you will promise to marry me, I will be the tenderest and most loving husband in the world; if not, save yourself from the lions if you can." In short, the princess was forced to give her word that she would have him, but with such agony of mind that she fell into a swoon; and when she recovered, she found herself in her own bed, finely adorned with ribbons, and a ring of a single red hair so fastened round her finger that it could not be got off.

This adventure had the same effect upon All-Fair as the former had upon her mother. She grew melancholy,

which was remarked and wondered at by the whole court. The best way to divert her, they thought, would be to urge her to marry; which the princess, who was now become less obstinate on that point than formerly, consented to; and thinking that such a pigmy as the Yellow Dwarf would not dare to contend with so gallant a person as the King of the Golden Mines, she fixed upon this king for her husband, who was exceedingly rich and powerful, and loved her to distraction. The most superb preparations were made for the nuptials, and the happy day was fixed; when, as they were proceeding to the ceremony, they saw moving towards them a box, whereon sat an old woman remarkable for her ugliness. "Hold, queen and princess," cried she, knitting her brows, "remember the promises you both made to my friend the Yellow Dwarf. I am the Desert Fairy, and if All-Fair does not marry him, I swear by my coif, I will burn my crutch." The queen and princess were struck motionless by this unexpected greeting of the Fairy; but the Prince of the Golden Mines was exceedingly wroth; and, holding his sword to her throat, "Fly, wretch!" said he, "or thy malice shall cost thee thy life." No sooner had he uttered these words, than the top of the box flying off, out came the Yellow Dwarf, mounted upon a large Spanish cat, who placing himself between the king and the fairy, uttered these words:—"Rash youth, thy rage should be levelled at me, not at the Desert Fairy. I am thy rival, and claim her by promise, and a single hair round her finger."

This so enraged the king, that he cried out, "Contemptible creature! wert thou worthy of notice, I would sacrifice thee for thy presumption." Whereupon the Yellow Dwarf clapping spurs to his cat, and drawing a large cutlass, defied the king to combat; and so they went into the court-yard. The sun then immediately turned red as blood, and it became dark; thunder and lightning followed, by the flashes whereof were perceived two giants vomiting fire on each side of the Yellow Dwarf.

The king behaved with such undaunted courage as to give the Dwarf great perplexity; but was dismayed when he saw the Desert Fairy, mounted on a winged griffin, with her head covered with snakes, strike the princess so hard with a lance that she fell into the queen's arms all over with blood. He left the combat to go to her relief; but the dwarf was too quick for him, and, flying on his Spanish cat to the balcony where she was, he took her from her mother's arms, leaped with her upon the top of the palace, and immediately disappeared.

As the king stood confused and astonished at this strange adventure, he suddenly found a mist before his eyes, and himself lifted up in the air by some extraordinary power; for the Desert Fairy had fallen in love with him. To secure him for herself, therefore, she carried him to a frightful cavern, hoping he would there forget All-Fair, and tried many artifices to complete her designs. But finding this scheme ineffectual, she resolved to carry him to a place altogether as pleasant as the other was terrible; and accordingly set him by herself in a chariot drawn by swans. In passing through the air, he had the unspeakable surprise to see his adored princess in a castle of polished steel, leaning her head on one hand, and wiping away the tears with the other. She happened to look up, and had the mortification to see the king sitting by the fairy, who then, by her art, made herself appear extremely beautiful. Had not the king been sensible of the fairy's power, he would certainly then have tried to free himself from her. At last they came to a stately palace, fenced on one side by walls of emeralds, and on the other by a boisterous sea.

The king, by pretending to be in love with the fairy, obtained liberty to walk by himself on the shore; and, as he was one day invoking the powers of the sea, he heard a voice, and presently after was surprised with the appearance of a Mermaid, which, coming up with a pleasant smile, spoke these words:—"O King of the Golden Mines, I well know all that has passed in regard to you and the fair princess. Don't suspect this to be a contrivance of the fairy's to try you, for I am an inveterate enemy both to her and the Yellow Dwarf; therefore, if you will have confidence in me, I will lend you my assistance to procure the release not only of yourself, but of All-Fair also." The overjoyed king promised to do whatever the Mermaid bade him; whereupon, setting him upon her tail, they sailed away on a rolling sea.

When they had sailed some time, "Now," said the Mermaid to the king, "we draw near the palace where your princess is kept by the Yellow Dwarf. You will have many enemies to fight before you can come to her; take, therefore, this sword, with which you may overcome every thing, provided you never let it go out of your hand." The king returned her all the thanks that the most grateful heart could suggest; and the Mermaid landed and took leave of him, promising him farther assistance when necessary.

The king boldly advanced, and meeting with two terrible sphinxes, laid them dead at his feet with his sword. Next he attacked six dragons that opposed him, and despatched them also. Then he met with four-and-twenty nymphs, with gar-

lands of flowers, at sight of whom he stopped, being loath to destroy so much beauty ; when he heard a voice say, "Strike ! strike ! or you will lose your princess for ever !" upon which he threw himself in the midst of them, and soon dispersed them. He now came in view of All-Fair, and, hastening to her, exclaimed, "O my princess, behold your faithful lover !" But she, drawing back, replied, "Faithful lover ! Did I not see you passing through the air with a beautiful nymph ? Were you faithful then ?" "Yes," replied the king, "I was. That was the detested Desert Fairy, who was carrying me to a place where I must have languished out all my days, had it not been for a kind Mermaid, by whose assistance it is that I am now come to release you." So saying, he cast himself at her feet ; but, catching hold of her gown, unfortunately let go the magic sword ; which the Yellow Dwarf no sooner discovered, than, leaping from behind a shrub where he had been concealed, he ran and seized it. By two cabalistical words, he then conjured up two giants, who laid the king in irons. "Now," said the dwarf, "my rival's fate is in my own hands ; however, if he will consent to my marriage, he shall have his life and liberty." "No," said the king, "I scorn thy favour on such terms ;" which so provoked the dwarf, that he instantly stabbed him to the heart. The disconsolate princess, aggravated to the last degree at such barbarity, thus vented her grief:—"Thou hideous creature, since entreaties could not avail thee, perhaps thou now reliest upon force ; but thou shalt be disappointed, and thy brutal soul shall know perpetual mortification from the moment I tell thee I die for the love I have for the King of the Golden Mines !" And so saying, she sunk down upon his body, and expired without a sigh.

Thus ended the fate of these two faithful lovers, which the Mermaid very much regretted ; but, all her power lying in the sword, she could only change them into two palm-trees ; which, preserving a constant mutual affection for each other, caress and unite their branches together.

THE THREE WISHES.

THERE was once a man, not very rich, who had a very pretty woman to his wife. One winter's evening, as they sat by the fire, they talked of the happiness of their neighbours who were richer than they. . Said the wife, "If it were in my power to have what I wish, I should soon be happier than all

of them." "So should I too," said the husband; "I wish we had fairies now, and that one of them was kind enough to grant me what I should ask." At that instant they saw a very beautiful lady in their room, who said to them, "I am a fairy; and I promise to grant to you the three first things you shall wish; but take care—after having wished for three things, I will not grant one wish further." The fairy disappeared; and the man and his wife were much perplexed. "For my own part," said the wife, "if it were left to my choice, I know very well what I should wish for. I do not wish yet, but I think nothing is so good as to be handsome, rich, and to be of great quality." But the husband answered, "With all these things, one may be sick and fretful, and one may die young; it would be much wiser to wish for health, cheerfulness, and long life." "But to what purpose is long life with poverty?" says the wife, "it would only prolong your misery. In truth, the fairy should have promised us a dozen of gifts, for there are at least a dozen things which I want." "That may be true," said the husband; "but let us take time; let us consider till morning the three things which are most necessary for us, and then wish." "I'll think all night," said the wife; "meanwhile let us warm ourselves, for it is very cold." At the same time the wife took the tongs to mend the fire; and seeing there were a great many coals thoroughly lighted, she said without thinking on it, "Here's a nice fire; I wish we had a yard of black pudding for our supper; we could dress it easily." She had hardly said these words, when down came tumbling through the chimney a yard of black pudding. "Plague on your greedy guts with your black pudding!" said the husband; "here's a fine wish indeed! Now, we have only two left; for my part I am so vexed that I wish the black pudding fast to the tip of your nose. The man soon perceived that he was sillier than his wife; for at this second wish, up starts the black pudding, and stuck so fast to the tip of the poor wife's nose, there was no means to take it off. "Wretch that I am!" cried she; "you are a wicked man for wishing the pudding fast to my nose." "My dear," answered the husband, "I vow I did not think of it; but what shall we do? I am about wishing for vast riches, and propose to make a golden ease to hide the pudding." "Not at all," answered the wife; "for I should kill myself were I to live with this pudding dangling at my nose; be persuaded, we have still one wish to make; leave it to me, or I shall instantly throw myself out of the window." With this she ran and opened the window; but the husband, who loved his wife, called out, "Hold, my dear wife! I give you

leave to wish for what you will." "Well," said the wife, "my wish is that this pudding may drop off." At that instant the pudding dropped off; and the wife, who did not want wit, said to her husband, "The fairy has imposed upon us; she was in the right; possibly we should have been more unhappy with riches than we are at present. Believe me, friend, let us wish for nothing, and take things as it shall please God to send them; in the meantime, let us sup upon our pudding, since that's all that remains to us of our wishes." The husband thought his wife judged right; they supped merrily, and never gave themselves further trouble about the things which they had designed to wish for.

PUSS IN BOOTS.

THERE was a miller who had three sons, and when he died he divided what he possessed among them in the following manner:—He gave his mill to the eldest, his ass to the second, and his cat to the youngest.

Each of the brothers accordingly took what belonged to him without the help of an attorney, who would soon have brought their little fortune to nothing in law expenses.

The poor young fellow who had nothing but the cat, complained that he was hardly used: "My brothers," said he, "by joining their stocks together, may do very well in the world; but for me, when I have eaten my cat, and made a fur-cap of his skin, I may soon die of hunger!"

The cat, which all this time sat listening just inside the door of a cupboard, now ventured to come out, and addressed him as follows:—

"Do not thus afflict yourself, my good master; you have only to give me a bag, and get a pair of boots made for me, so that I may scamper through the dirt and the brambles, and you shall see that you are not so ill provided for as you imagine."

Though the cat's master did not much depend upon these promises, yet as he had often observed the cunning tricks Puss used to catch rats and mice, such as hanging by the hind-legs, and hiding in the meal to make them believe that he was dead, he did not entirely despair of his being of some use to him in his unhappy condition.

When the cat had obtained what he asked for, he gaily began to equip himself; he drew on the boots—and putting the bag about his neck, he took hold of the strings with his fore-

paws, and bidding his master take courage, immediately sallied forth.

The first attempt Puss made was to go into a warren, in which there was a great number of rabbits. He put some bran and some parsley into his bag; and then, stretching himself out at full length as if he was dead, he waited for some young rabbits, (which as yet knew nothing of the cunning tricks of the world,) to come and get into the bag, the better to feast upon the dainties he had put into it.

Scarcely had he lain down before he succeeded as well as could be wished. A giddy young rabbit crept into the bag, and the cat immediately drew the strings, and killed him without mercy.

Puss, proud of his prey, hastened directly to the palace, where he asked to speak to the king. On being shown into the apartment of his majesty, he made a low bow, and said, —“I have brought you, sire, this rabbit from the warren of my lord the marquis of Carabas, who commanded me to present it to your majesty with the assurance of his respect.” This was the title the cat thought proper to bestow upon his master. “Tell my lord marquis of Carabas,” replied the king, “that I accept of his present with pleasure, and that I am greatly obliged to him.”

Soon after the cat laid himself down in the same manner in a field of corn, and had as much good fortune as before; for two fine partridges got into his bag, which he immediately killed and carried to the palace. The king received them as he had done the rabbit, and ordered his servants to give the messenger something to drink. In this manner he continued to carry presents of game to the king from my lord marquis of Carabas, once at least every week.

One day, the cat having heard that the king intended to take a ride that morning by the river side with his daughter, who was the most beautiful princess in the world, he said to his master, “If you will but follow my advice your fortune is made. Take off your clothes, and bathe yourself in the river, just in the place I shall show you, and leave the rest to me.”

The marquis of Carabas did exactly as he was desired, without being able to guess at what the cat intended. While he was bathing the king passed by, and Puss directly called out as loud as he could bawl, “Help! help! my lord marquis of Carabas is in danger of being drowned!” The king hearing the cries, put his head out at the window of his carriage to see what was the matter; when, perceiving the very cat which had brought him so many presents, he ordered his

attendants to go directly to the assistance of my lord marquis of Carabas.

While they were employed in taking the marquis out of the river, the cat ran to the king's carriage and told his majesty that while his master was bathing some thieves had run off with his clothes as they lay by the river side, the cunning cat all the time having hid them under a large stone.

The king hearing this, commanded the officers of his wardrobe to fetch one of the handsomest suits it contained, and present it to my lord marquis of Carabas, at the same time loading him with a thousand attentions. As the fine clothes they brought him made him look like a gentleman, and set off his person, which was very comely, to the greatest advantage, the king's daughter was mightily taken with his appearance, and the marquis of Carabas had no sooner cast upon her two or three respectful glances, than she became violently in love with him.

The king insisted on his getting into the carriage, and taking a ride with them. The cat, enchanted to see how well his scheme was likely to succeed, ran before to a meadow that was reaping, and said to the reapers, "Good people, if you do not tell the king, who will soon pass this way, that the meadow you are reaping belongs to my lord marquis of Carabas, you shall be chopped as small as minced meat."

The king did not fail to ask the reapers to whom the meadow belonged. "To my lord marquis of Carabas," said they all at once; for the threats of the cat had terribly frightened them. "You have here a very fine piece of land, my lord marquis," said the king. "Truly, sire," replied he, "it does not fail to bring me every year a plentiful harvest."

The cat, which still went on before, now came to a field where some other labourers were making sheaves of the corn they had reaped, to whom he said as before, "Good people, if you do not tell the king, who will presently pass this way, that the corn you have reaped in this field belongs to my lord marquis of Carabas, you shall be chopped as small as minced meat."

The king accordingly passed a moment after, and inquired to whom the corn he saw belonged. "To my lord marquis of Carabas," answered they very glibly; upon which the king again complimented the marquis on his noble possessions.

The cat still continued to go before, and gave the same charge to all the people he met with; so that the king was greatly astonished at the splendid fortune of my lord marquis of Carabas.

Puss at length arrived at a stately castle, which belonged

to an Ogre, the richest ever known ; for all the lands the king had passed through and admired were his. The cat took care to learn every particular about the Ogre, and what he could do, and then asked to speak with him, saying, as he entered the room in which he was, that he could not pass so near his castle without doing himself the honour to inquire for his health.

The Ogre received him as civilly as an Ogre could do, and desired him to be seated. "I have been informed," said the cat, "that you have the gift of changing yourself into all sorts of animals ; into a lion, or an elephant, for example." "It is very true," replied the Ogre somewhat sternly ; "and to convince you, I will directly take the form of a lion." The cat was so much terrified at finding himself so near a lion, that he sprang from him, and climbed to the roof of the house ; but not without much difficulty, as his boots were not very fit to walk upon the tiles.

Some minutes after, the cat perceiving that the Ogre had quitted the form of a lion, ventured to come down from the tiles, and owned that he had been a good deal frightened. "I have been further informed," continued the cat, "but I know not how to believe it, that you have the power of taking the form of the smallest animals also ; for example, of changing yourself to a rat or a mouse. I confess I should think this must be impossible." "Impossible ! you shall see ;" and at the same instant he changed himself into a mouse, and began to frisk about the room. The cat no sooner cast his eyes upon the Ogre in this form, than he sprang upon him, and devoured him in an instant.

In the meantime the king, admiring, as he came near it, the magnificent castle of the Ogre, ordered his attendants to drive up to the gates, as he wished to take a nearer view of it. The cat, hearing the noise of the carriage on the drawbridge, immediately came out, saying, "Your majesty is welcome to the castle of my lord marquis of Carabas." "And is this splendid castle yours also, my lord marquis of Carabas ? I never saw any thing more stately than the building, or more beautiful than the park and pleasure grounds around it ; no doubt the castle is no less magnificent within than without ; pray, my lord marquis, indulge me with a sight of it."

The marquis gave his hand to the young princess as she alighted, and followed the king, who went before ; they entered a spacious hall, where they found a splendid collation which the Ogre had prepared for some friends he had that day expected to visit him ; but who, hearing that the king with the princess and a great gentleman of the court were within had not dared to enter.

The king was so much charmed with the amiable qualities and noble fortune of the marquis of Carabas, and the young princess too had fallen so violently in love with him, that when the king had partaken of the collation, and drank a few glasses of wine, he said to the marquis, "It will be your own fault, my lord marquis of Carabas, if you do not soon become my son-in-law." The marquis received the intelligence with a thousand respectful acknowledgments, accepted the honour conferred upon him, and married the princess that very day.

The cat became a great lord, and never after pursued rats and mice but for his amusement.

THE THREE BEGGARS.

THREE blind beggars were on their way from Compiègne, to seek alms in the neighbourhood. They kept the high road to Senlis, and walked at a great pace, each holding a cup and stick in his hand. A young ecclesiastic, well mounted, who was riding towards Compiègne, and attended by a valet on horseback, was struck at a distance with their steady and rapid strides.

"Those fellows," said he, "for men who appear blind, make very firm steps. I'll endeavour to find them out, and see if they are not impostors."

Accordingly, as he came near them, and as the beggars, hearing the trampling of the horses' feet, had ranged themselves in a line to ask for charity, he called to them, and pretending to give them some money, but in reality giving them nothing, said:—

"There is a besant; it is intended for you all three; and you will divide it between you."

"Yes, your reverence; and may God bless you in return for it."

Although no one of them received the money, yet each was confident his comrade had got it. Thus, after many thanks and good wishes to the horseman, they resumed their march, full of spirits; but at the same time slackening their pace.

The churchman feigned also to proceed on his journey; but at some distance he alighted, and delivering his horse to the care of his valet, directed him to wait his arrival at the gates of Compiègne. He then gently approached the beggars, and followed them, to watch the issue of the adventure.

When they no longer heard the noise of horses, the leader of this little band halted.

“Comrades,” said he, “we have made a good day’s work; and I think we had best return to Compiègne, and spend the money this good christian bath given us. It is a long time since we have had a carousal; and now we have enough to enjoy ourselves completely, let us think of nothing but pleasure.”

On their arrival in town, they heard a cry of “Good wine!—wine of Soissons!—wine of Auxerre!—fish and good fare! Walk in gentlemen; pray walk in.”

They would not go any farther, but entered the first house; and after having cautioned the people not to judge of their means by their outward appearance, (in the tone of men who derive confidence from the weight of their purse,) they desired that they might be served quickly and well.

Nicholas (for that was the name of the landlord) being used sometimes to see persons of their vocation spend more than such as appear to be much more in affluent circumstances, received them respectfully. He showed them into his best dining-room; begged they would be seated, and order what they liked best; assuring them that there was nothing in Compiègne but what he could set before them, and in a style that would give them perfect satisfaction.

They desired that plenty of good things might be got ready; and instantly, master, waiter, maid, all in the house set about it. A neighbour was even sent for to assist.

At length, by virtue of several hands and good speed, they contrived to serve up a good dinner of five dishes; and immediately the beggars sat down to it, laughing, singing, drinking to each other, and diverting themselves with clumsy jokes on the simple traveller who was at the expense of the feast.

He had followed them with his valet to the inn, and was within hearing of the merriment. He even resolved, that he might not lose any part of it, to dine and sup in a snug manner with the landlord. The beggars all this while occupied the best room, and were waited on like noblemen. Their mirth was thus prolonged till the night was pretty far advanced, when, to make a suitable close to so jovial a day, they each called for a bed, and went to rest.

The next morning the landlord, who wanted to get rid of them, sent his servant to call them up. When they were come down stairs, he made out their bill, which amounted to tenpence. That was the moment the mischievous churchman so impatiently expected. To enjoy the transaction more at his ease, he came and posted himself in a corner of the room, but without showing himself, lest his presence might be a restraint on the guests.

“Master,” says the blind men to the landlord, “we have a besant; take your account, and give us our change.”

He holds out his hand to receive it; and, as no one offers it him, he asks them again, when each says, “It is not I.”

The landlord then gets into a passion. “So, gentlemen vagrants, you think I am to serve here as a butt for your diversion. Be so good as to end all this mockery, and pay me immediately my tenpence, otherwise I’ll give you all three a drubbing.”

They then began to inquire of each other for the piece of money—to suspect each other’s honesty—to call names—to quarrel; till at length such an uproar and confusion ensued, that the landlord, after giving each of them a box on the ear, called his servant to come down with two good sticks.

The ecclesiastic all this while kept laughing in his hiding-place till he was ready to fall into convulsions. But when he found the affair was becoming serious, and heard them talk of sticks, he came forward, and with an air of surprise, asked the cause of the quarrel. “Sir, here are three knaves who came yesterday to consume my provisions; and now I ask them for my due, they have the insolence to mock me. But, by all that’s sacred, they shall not get off in that manner, and before they go out——.”

“Softly, softly, master Nicholas,” said the churchman, “these poor men have not wherewithal to pay you; and, in that case, they deserve rather your pity than your resentment. How much does their bill amount to?”

“Tenpence.”

“What! is it for so paltry a sum that you raise all this disturbance? Come, make yourselves easy; I will take it upon myself. And, for my part, what am I to pay you?”

“Fivepence, Sir.”

“That’s enough. I shall pay you fifteen-pence; now let these unfortunate men go; and know that to harass the poor is a sin of the first magnitude.”

The blind men, who were terrified at the apprehension of the bastinado, made their escape with all possible haste; while Nicholas, who had reckoned on losing his tenpence, (being delighted to find a person to pay it,) launched out into the most flattering encomiums on the churchman.

“What a good man!” cried he; “that is the kind of priests we should have, and then they would be respected. But, unfortunately, there are few such! Be assured, Sir, so handsome an action will not go unrewarded. You will prosper in the world, take my word for it; and will find the good effects of your generosity.”

All that the crafty traveller had been saying to his host, was but a fresh piece of roguery on his part ; for, in luring the innkeeper with such ostentation of generosity, he only meant to trick him as he had already done the beggars.

Just at that moment the parish-bell was ringing to prayers. He asked who was to perform the service ; they told him it was their parson.

“As he is your pastor, master Nicholas,” he further said, “you are most probably acquainted with him ?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“And if he would engage to pay the fifteen-pence that I owe you, would you not acknowledge us quit ?”

“Undoubtedly, Sir, if it were thirty, and you desired it.”

“Well, then, come along with me to the church, and we will speak to him.”

They went out together ; but first the ecclesiastic directed his valet to saddle the horses, and to keep them in readiness.

The priest, as they entered the church, had just put on his sacerdotal habit, and was going to read prayers.

“This will keep us very long,” said the traveller to his host ; “I have not time to wait, but must proceed immediately upon my journey. It will satisfy you, I should imagine, to have the parson’s word for the money ?”

Nicholas having nodded assent, the other went up to the parson, and dexterously slipping into his hand twelve deniers, said :—

“Sir, you will pardon my coming so near the pulpit to speak to you ; but much ceremony need not be observed between persons of the same condition. I am travelling through your town, and lodged last night at one of your parishioners’, whom in all probability you know, and whom you may see hard by. He is a well-meaning man, honest, and entirely exempt from vice ; but, unfortunately, his head is not so sound as his heart ; his brain is somewhat cracked. Last night one of his fits of madness prevented us all from sleeping. He is a good deal better, thank God, this morning ; nevertheless, as his head is still affected, and full of religion, he begged we would conduct him to church, and that he might hear you say a prayer, that the Lord may, in his goodness, restore him to perfect health.”

“Most cheerfully,” answered the parson. He then turned to his parishioner, and said to him, “Friend, wait till I have done the service, when I’ll take care that you shall have what you desire.”

Nicholas, who thought this an ample assurance of what he went for, said no more ; but attended the traveller back to

his inn, wished him a good journey, and then returned to the church to receive his payment from the parson.

The latter, as soon as he had performed the service, came with his stole and book towards the innkeeper.

"Friend," said he, "go down upon your knees."

The other, surprised at this preamble, observed that there was no occasion for such ceremony in receiving fifteen-pence.

"Truly they are not mistaken," said the parson to himself, "this man cannot be in his right senses." Then assuming a tone of soft insinuation, "Come, my good friend," said he, "place your trust in God; he will have pity on your condition."

At the same time he puts the Bible on the other's head, and begins his prayer. Nicholas, in anger, pushes away the book; declares he cannot stay to be trifled with, guests being waiting for him at his house; that he wants his fifteen-pence, and has no occasion for prayers.

The priest, irritated at this, calls to his congregation, as they were going out of church, and desires them to seize the man, who was raving.

"No, no! I am not mad; and, by St. Corneille, you shall not trick me in this manner. You engaged to pay me, and I will not leave this place till I get my money."

"Seize him! seize him!" cried the priest.

They accordingly fastened upon the poor devil; one taking hold of his arms, another of his legs, a third clasping him round the middle, while a fourth exhorted him to be composed. He makes violent efforts to get out of their clutches, swears and foams with rage, like one possessed,—but all in vain; for the parson puts the stole round his neck, and reads quickly his prayer from beginning to end, without excusing him a single word: after which he sprinkles him copiously with holy water, bestows on him a few benedictions, and lets him loose.

The unlucky wight saw clearly that he had been made a dupe. He went home, overwhelmed with shame and vexation at the loss of his fifteen-pence; but then he had in lieu of them, got a prayer and benediction.

THE SOLDIER'S WIFE.

WALDEN was playing on his flute in a slow and pensive strain, when the mournful cries of a child, and the complaining voice of a woman, struck his ears. "Oh, merciful God!" exclaimed the poor creature, "hear with compassion the moans of my unhappy babe!"

Walden ceased to play, and looking over the hedge, he surveyed the child with compassion, as the woman lay on the grass to rest herself. He asked her in a soft voice, why the poor infant cried.

"He is hungry," replied the woman, weeping bitterly, "we have not had any thing to eat since yesterday morning."

"Gracious God! since yesterday morning! wait here a few minutes, and I will return."

He flew away with incredible swiftness, and re-appeared in a short time, with a bowl of milk and a small loaf, towards which the child stretched out his little arms, and the woman to whom he delivered them began to feed it.

"Sit down my good woman, and eat of it yourself," said Walden, "I will take care of your infant." Placing himself on the grass beside it, he dipped a bit of the loaf in the milk, and patiently assisted his little famished charge.

The child looked up in his face and smiled. Walden, pleased and affected at this intuitive mark of gratitude, kissed its little forehead.

"What is your occupation?" he asked the woman, who was eating with avidity; "you are, I suppose, the mother of this little creature: where do you live?"

"No, it is not my own," replied she, "and I do not know its parents. I am the wife of a poor soldier, my worthy sir, and I have travelled from beyond Berlin a great way; my husband had been away from me three years, and I wanted to see him again—for I loved him dearly. My own two little children I left with their grandmother, and I sold every thing I did not absolutely want at home, that I might carry him a little trifle of money. Accordingly I set out, and got to the end of my journey just as my husband had marched with his corps to drive a party of Austrians from some little village; so when it was all over, and they had done what they had been ordered, I ran to the place to meet him."

Here the poor woman burst into tears. "And when I got there he was dying of his wounds; yet he knew me, and stretched out his hand, saying, 'Oh, Annette! our children.' These were his last words. I thought I should have died too, but God willed, for the sake of our little ones and this babe, that I should live. In the same house where my poor husband expired, was the wife of an Austrian soldier, who died two days afterwards, and left this babe, which nobody on earth seemed to take care about. Almost all the village had been burned down, and all the inhabitants had run away; so that when our soldiers marched, I begged them to take the poor child with them; but then they said to me, 'What could we

do with it?" and that was very true; but to let the child stay, and die with hunger, was impossible; so I resolved to take it, let what would happen; and I set out to return to my own home, with the babe in my arms. On my way I was weary enough; but I never met with any body that took compassion on me or my burden, so I walked on; but I fell sick, as you may see by my looks, and spent the little money I had left, and then I sold my clothes and every thing I could spare. All went except these poor rags; yet still I thought if I could but get home I should do very well. I am used to hard work, and I could even do for this little creature, who has nobody in the world but me to put a morsel of bread into its poor mouth; so I can't bear to let it starve."

As she said this, she pressed the child to her bosom, and her tears dropped upon it, whilst she repeated, "if I was but able to work, or I could but get enough to keep it till I reach my home."

"Poor babe!" said Walden, "poor, yet happy creature, who, in losing her who gave thee birth, found a second mother! eyes that dropt tears of pity on thy lot, and a heart that loves thee! No, thou shalt not from hard necessity be deserted!"

Walden then wrote upon a leaf of his pocket-book the name of the woman, and that of the village where she informed him she lived with her family; and giving her a small sum of money, promised that he would remit the same to her every year.

The woman, on holding the gold in her hand, which had never contained so much before, exclaimed, "Oh! this is too much, worthy sir;" and being desired to keep it, she added, "we shall now be rich, indeed; my own little ones, and this one, and their grandmother, we shall all be rich!"

"Good creature!" exclaimed Walden with emotion, "you are rich, indeed, in a heart to which all other riches are dross! your humanity to this orphan will be better rewarded; but if this were my last crown you should have it. Hasten away, or I may be tempted to take the child, to have the pleasure of bringing it up, that it may love me as it will you." On hearing this, the woman hastily pressed the infant to her bosom, and giving Walden a farewell benediction, pursued her journey with alacrity.

JACK EASY.

JACK EASY came to a good fortune at the death of his father, and mounted his hobby without its ever having been properly broken in; he galloped over the plains of Faney, went off in a full canter to the road of Dissipation, and leaped over all

the five-barred gates of Advice and Discretion. It may naturally be supposed, that before long his filly gave him a fall: poor Jack came down sure enough; but he only shook himself, brushed off the dirt of the road, and mounted again in as high spirits as ever; excepting, that he now began to sit firmer in the saddle, and to look about him: this, however, did not hinder him from getting into a swamp, called a lawsuit, where he remained a considerable time before he could get out; his fortune was now reduced from some thousands to a few hundreds; and by this time, no man better knew the way of life than my friend Jack Easy. He had been through all the dirty cross-roads of business, money-borrowing, bankruptcy, and law; and at last arrived at a jail.

My friend Jack did not despond; he consoled himself with the reflection that he was a single man; some of his misfortunes were the consequences of his own imprudence, others of unforeseen accidents, and most of them originated from his good nature and generosity. He, however, never excused; he lumped them all together, took them in good part, and blamed nobody but himself.

Fortune, however, at last put on her best smiles, and paid Jack a visit in the King's Bench, in the shape of a handsome legacy. Jack smiled at the thing, and once more mounted his nag. He now rode more cautiously, and turned into the road of Economy, which led to a comfortable inn with the sign of Competency over the door; he had borrowed a martingale from an old hostler called Experience; and for the first time in his life used a curb. He began already to find, that though he did not gallop away as formerly, yet he went on in his journey pleasantly enough. Some dashing riders passed him, laughing at his jog-trot pace; but he had no occasion to envy them long; for presently some of them got into ruts, others were stuck fast in bogs and quagmires, and the rest were thrown from their saddles to the great danger of their necks. Jack Easy, meanwhile, jogged on merrily; he now preferred getting off and opening a gate, to leaping over it; and smiled at an obstacle as at a turnpike, where he must necessarily pay toll. You might now see Jack Easy walking his hobby along the road, enjoying the scene around him, with contentment sparkling in his eyes. If the way happened to be crowded with horsemen and carriages, you might observe him very readily taking his own side of the road, and letting them pass.

Thus my friend Jack Easy came in with a jog-trot to the end of his journey, leaving his example behind him as a kind of finger-post for the good of other travellers.