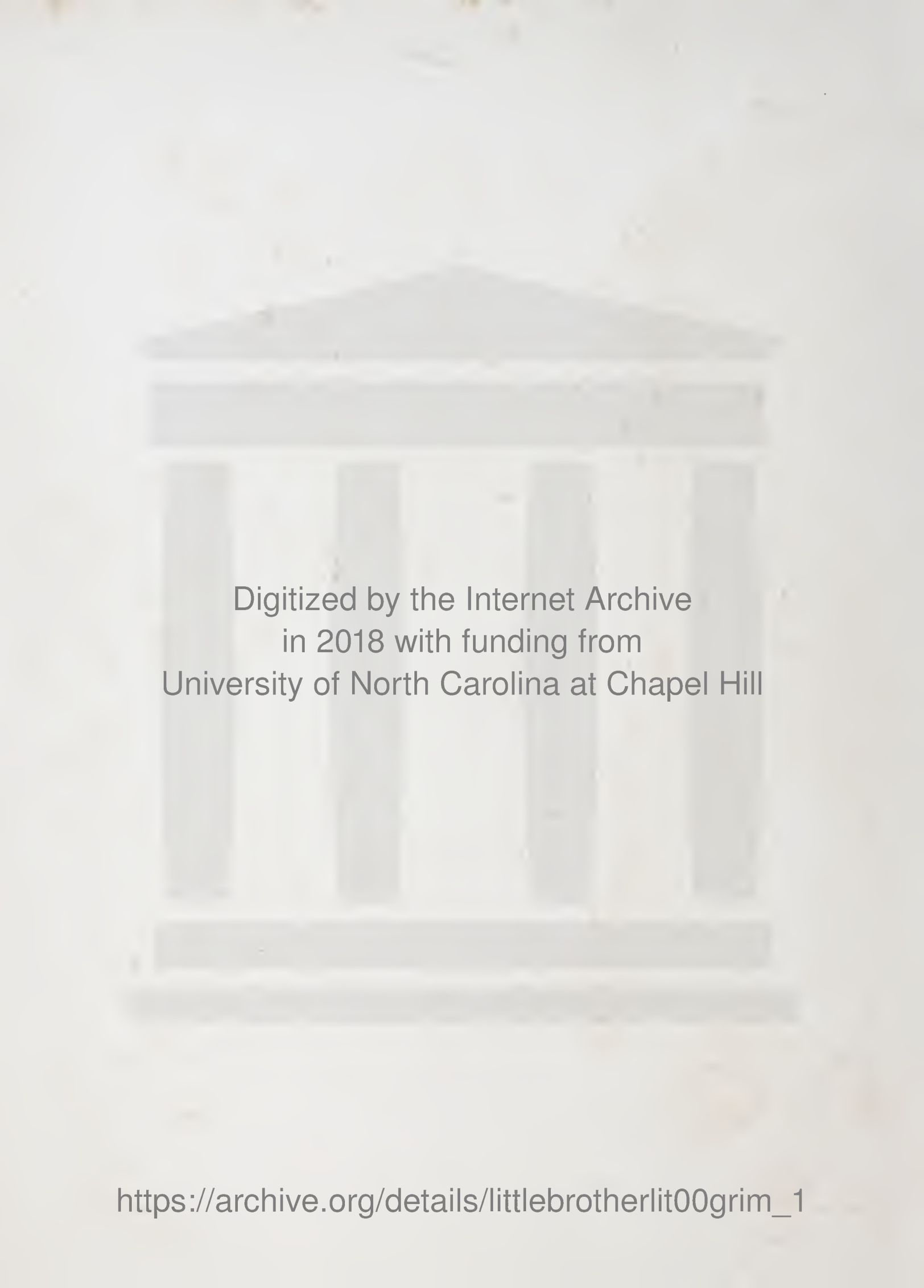
LITTLE BROTHER & LITTLE SISTER

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR RACKHAM



Little Brother and Little Sister

SHE TOOK OFF HER GOLDEN GARTER AND PUT IT ROUND THE ROE-BUCK'S NECK.

LITTLE·BROTHER & LITTLE·SISTER

AND·OTHER·TALES

BY·THE·BROTHERS·GRIMM

ILLUSTRATED·BY
ARTHUR·RACKHAM

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

These forty stories, chosen and illustrated for this edition by Arthur Rackham, together with the selection which we published some years ago with illustrations by the same artist, make a total of one hundred stories which include, it is thought, all the best of the Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm. Of the remainder most are probably of interest rather to students of folklore than to the girls and boys of to-day, and many are little more than variants or similar tales from other sources. The story called 'The Nose Tree' has been more or less re-written from the rather abridged form among the notes where alone it is included in the original. And in adapting it and the other stories from the German text, the publishers have to acknowledge the permission of Messrs. George Bell and Sons to make use of Mrs. Hunt's translation in Bohn's Standard Library, which Messrs. Bell claim to be the only complete English rendering of the original with the notes and comments of the Brothers Grimm.

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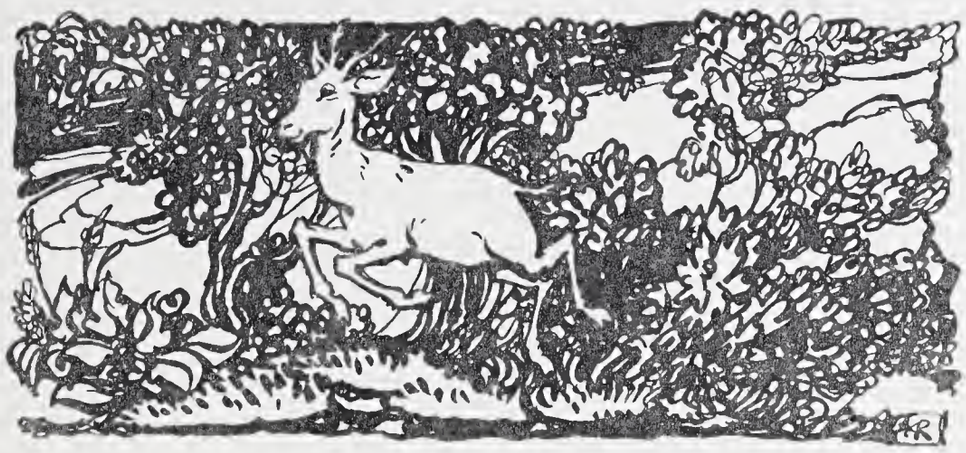


Little Brother and Little Sister

LITTLE BROTHER took Little Sister by the hand and said, 'Since our mother died we have not had another happy hour; our step-mother beats us every day, and if we come near her she kicks us away with her foot. Our meals are the hard crusts of bread that are left over; and the little dog under the table is better off, for she often throws it a nice morsel. May Heaven pity us. If only our mother knew! Come, let us go forth together into the wide world.'

The whole day they walked through meadows and fields, and over stony wastes; and when it rained Little Sister said, 'Heaven and our hearts are weeping together.' In the evening they came to a large forest, and they were so weary with sorrow and hunger and their long journey, that they lay down in a hollow tree and fell asleep.

Next day when they awoke, the sun was already high in the sky, and shone down hot into the tree. Then Little Brother said, 'Little Sister, I am thirsty; if I knew where there was a little brook I would go and drink. Listen! I think I hear one.' So he got up and took Little Sister by the hand, and they set off to find the brook.

But their wicked step-mother was a witch, and had seen how the two children had gone away, and she had crept after them secretly, as witches do creep, and had bewitched all the brooks in the forest.

So when they found a little brook leaping brightly over the stones, Little Brother was going to drink out of it, but Little Sister heard how it said as it ran, ' Who drinks of me will become a tiger ; who drinks of me will become a tiger.' Then Little Sister cried, ' Pray, Little Brother, do not drink, or you will become a wild beast, and tear me to pieces.'

Little Brother did not drink, although he was so thirsty, but said, ' I will wait for the next spring.'

When they came to the next Little Sister heard this one also say, ' Who drinks of me will become a wolf ; who drinks of me will become a wolf.' Then Little Sister cried out, ' Pray, pray, Little Brother, do not drink, or you will become a wolf, and eat me up.'

Little Brother did not drink, and said, ' I will wait until we come to the next spring, but then I must drink, say what you like ; for my thirst is too great.'

And when they came to the third brook Little Sister heard how it said as it ran, ' Who drinks of me will become a deer ; who drinks of me will become a deer.' Little Sister said, ' Oh, I pray you, dear brother, do not drink, or you will become a deer, and run away from me.' But Little Brother had already knelt down by the brook, and had leant over and drunk some water, and as soon as the first drop touched his lips there he lay, a little roebuck.

And now Little Sister wept over her poor bewitched Little Brother, and the little fawn wept also, and sat sorrowfully by her. But at last the maiden said, ' Be quiet, dear little fawn, I will never, never leave thee.'

Then she took off her golden garter and put it round the roebuck's neck, and she plucked rushes and wove them into a soft cord. With this she tied the little fawn and led it along as she walked deeper and deeper into the forest.

She crept after them secretly, as witches do creep.

And when they had gone a very long way they came at last to a little house, and the girl looked in ; and as it was empty, she thought, ' Here we can stay and live.' Then she sought for leaves and moss to make a soft bed for the fawn ; and every morning she went out and gathered roots and berries and nuts for herself, and brought tender grass for the fawn, who ate out of her hand, and was quite content and frisked about her. In the evening, when Little Sister was tired, and had said her prayer, she laid her head upon the roebuck's back : that was her pillow, and she slept softly on it. And if only Little Brother had had his human form it would have been a delightful life.

For a long time they lived alone like this in the wilderness. But it happened that the King of the country held a great hunt in the forest. Then the blasts of the horns, the barking of dogs, and the merry shouts of the hunters rang through the trees, and the little roebuck heard all, and was only too anxious to be there.

' Oh,' said he to Little Sister, ' let me be off to the hunt, I cannot bear it any longer ' ; and he begged so hard that at last she agreed.

' But,' said she to him, ' come back to me in the evening ; I must shut my door for fear of the rough hunters, so knock and say, " My Little Sister, let me in ! " that I may know you ; and if you do not say that, I shall not open the door.' Then the young roebuck leaped away, so happy was he and so merry in the open air.

The King and his huntsmen saw the pretty creature, and made chase after him, but they could not catch him, and when they thought that they surely had him, away he sprang through the bushes and could not be seen. When it was dark he ran to the cottage and knocked, and said, ' My Little Sister, let me in.' Then the door was opened for him, and he jumped in, and rested the whole night through upon his soft bed.

The next day the hunt went on afresh, and when the

roebuck again heard the bugles, and the ho! ho! of the hunters, he had no peace, but said, 'Little Sister, let me out, I must be off.' Little Sister opened the door for him, and said, 'But you must be here again in the evening and say your pass-word.'

When the King and his huntsmen again saw the young roebuck with the golden collar, they all chased him, but he was too quick and nimble for them. This went on for the whole day, but at last by evening the hunters had surrounded him, and one of them wounded him slightly in the foot, so that he limped and ran slowly. Then a hunter crept after him to the cottage and heard how he said, 'My Little Sister, let me in,' and saw that the door was opened for him, and was shut again at once. The hunter took notice of it all, and went to the King and told him what he had seen and heard.

Then the King said, 'To-morrow we will hunt once more.'

Little Sister, however, was dreadfully frightened when she saw that her fawn was hurt. She washed off the blood and laid herbs on the wound, and said, 'Go to your bed, dear fawn, that you may get well again.' But the wound was so slight that next morning the roebuck did not feel it any more. And when again he heard the horns of hunters, he said, 'I cannot bear it, I must be there; they shall not find it so easy to catch me.'

Little Sister cried, and said, 'This time they will kill you, and here am I alone in the forest and forsaken by all the world. I will not let you out.'

'Then you will have me die of grief,' answered the fawn; 'when I hear the bugles I feel as if I must jump out of my skin.' Then Little Sister could not do otherwise, but opened the door for him with a heavy heart, and the roebuck, full of health and joy, bounded out into the forest.

When the King saw him, he said to his huntsman, 'This time chase him all day long till nightfall, but take care that no one does him any harm.'

As soon as the sun had set, the King said to the huntsmen, 'Come and show me the cottage in the wood'; and when he reached the door, he knocked and called out, 'Dear Little Sister, let me in.' The door opened, and the King walked in, and there stood a maiden more lovely than he had ever seen before. The maiden was frightened when there came in, not her little roebuck, but a man who wore a golden crown upon his head. But the King looked kindly at her, stretched out his hand, and said, 'Will you go with me to my palace and be my dear wife?'

'Yes, indeed,' answered the maiden, 'but my little fawn must go with me, I cannot leave him.'

The King said, 'It shall stay with you as long as you live, and shall want nothing.' Just then he came running in, and Little Sister tied him again with the cord of rushes, took it in her hand, and left the cottage with the King.

The King took the lovely maiden upon his horse and carried her to his palace, where the wedding was held with great pomp. She was now the Queen, and they lived together happily for a long time; the roebuck was tended and cherished, and ran about at liberty in the palace garden.

But their wicked step-mother, because of whom the children had gone out into the world, thought all the time that Little Sister had been torn to pieces by the wild beasts in the wood, and that Little Brother had been shot for a roebuck by the hunters. Now when she heard that they were so happy, and so well off, envy and hatred rose in her heart and left her no peace, and she thought of nothing but how she could bring them to misfortune. Her own daughter, who was as ugly as night, and had only one eye, complained to her and grumbled. 'A Queen!' she said, 'that ought to have been my luck.'

'Only be quiet,' answered the old woman, and comforted her by saying, 'when the time comes I shall be ready for it.'

As time went on the Queen had a pretty little boy, and it happened when the King was out hunting. So the old

witch took the form of the chamber-maid, went into the room where the Queen lay, and said to her, 'Come, the bath is ready; it will do you good, and give you fresh strength; make haste before it gets cold.'

The daughter also was at hand to help her. So they carried the Queen into the bath-room, put her into the bath, and then they shut the door and ran away. But in the bath-room they had made a fire of such deadly heat that the beautiful young Queen was soon suffocated.

When this was done the old woman took her daughter, put a nightcap on her head, and laid her in bed in place of the Queen. She gave her too the shape and the look of the Queen, only she could not make good the lost eye. But in order that the King might not see it, she had to lie on the side on which she had no eye.

In the evening when he came home and heard that he had a son he was heartily glad, and was going to the bed of his dear wife to see how she was.

But the old woman quickly called out, 'For your life leave the curtains drawn. The Queen ought not to see the light yet, and must have rest.' The King went away, and did not find out that a false Queen was lying in the bed.

But at midnight when all slept the nurse who was sitting in the nursery by the cradle, and who was the only person awake, saw the door open and the true Queen walk in. She took the child out of the cradle, laid it on her arm, and nursed it. Then she shook up its pillow, laid the child down again, and covered it with the little quilt. And she did not forget the roebuck, but went into the corner where it lay, and stroked its back. Then she went quite silently out of the door again. The next morning the nurse asked the guards whether any one had come into the palace during the night, but they answered, 'No, we have seen no one.'

She came thus many nights and never spoke a word. The nurse always saw her, but she did not dare to tell any one about it.

When some time had passed in this manner, the Queen began to speak in the night, and said—

'How fares my child, how fares my deer?
But twice again shall I appear.'

The nurse did not answer, but when the Queen had gone again, went to the King and told him all. The King said, 'Oh, heavens! what is this? To-morrow night I will watch by the child.' In the evening he went into the nursery, and at midnight the Queen again appeared and said—

'How fares my child, how fares my deer?
Still once again shall I appear.'

And she nursed the child as she was wont to do before she disappeared. The King dared not speak to her, but on the next night he watched again. Then she said—

'How fares my child, how fares my deer?
Never again shall I appear.'

Then the King could not restrain himself; he sprang towards her, and said, 'You can be no other than my own dear wife.'

'Yes,' she answered, 'I am your dear wife,' and at the same moment life came back to her again, and by God's grace she became fresh, rosy, and full of health.

Then she told the King the evil deed which the wicked witch and her daughter had been guilty of. The King ordered both to be led before the judge, and judgment was delivered against them. The daughter was taken into the forest where she was torn to pieces by wild beasts, but the witch was cast into the fire and burnt to death. And as soon as she was burnt up the roebuck changed his shape, and received his human form again, so Little Sister and Little Brother lived happily together all the rest of their lives.

Snow-white and Rose-red

THERE was once a poor widow who lived in a lonely cottage. In front of the cottage was a garden where stood two rose-trees, one a white rose and the other red. She had two children who were like the two rose-trees, and one was called Snow-white, and the other Rose-red. They were as good and happy, and as busy and cheerful as ever were any two children in the world, only Snow-white was more quiet and gentle than Rose-red. Rose-red liked better to run about in the meadows and fields picking flowers and chasing butterflies. But Snow-white sat at home with her mother, and helped her with her house-work, or read to her when there was nothing to do.

The two children were so fond of each other that they always held each other by the hand when they went out together, and when Snow-white said, ' We will not leave each other,' Rose-red answered, ' Never so long as we live,' and their mother would add, ' What one has, she must share with the other.'

They often ran about the forest alone and gathered red berries, and no wild animals did them any harm, but came close to them trustfully. The little hare would eat a cabbage-leaf out of their hands, the roe grazed by their side, the stag leapt merrily by them, and the birds sat still upon the boughs, and sang all the songs they knew.

No mishap ever overtook them. If they had stayed too late in the forest, and night came on, they just laid themselves down near one another upon the moss, and slept until morning came, and their mother knew this and had no distress on their account.

Once when they had spent the night in the wood and the dawn had roused them, they saw a beautiful child in a shining white dress sitting near their bed of moss. He rose up and looked kindly at them, but said nothing and went away into the forest. And when they looked round they found that they had been sleeping quite close to a precipice, and would certainly have fallen over it in the darkness if they had gone only a few paces further. And their mother told them that it must have been the angel who watches over good children.

Snow-white and Rose-red kept their mother's little cottage so neat that it was a pleasure to look inside it. In the summer Rose-red took care of the house, and every morning laid a nosegay by her mother's bed before she awoke, and in it was a rose from each tree. In the winter Snow-white lit the fire and hung the kettle over it on the hook. The kettle was of copper and shone like gold, so brightly was it polished.

In the evening, when the snowflakes fell, the mother said, 'Go, Snow-white, and bolt the door,' and then they sat round the hearth, and the mother took her spectacles and read aloud out of a large book, and the two girls listened as they sat and span. And close by them lay a lamb upon the floor, and behind them upon a perch sat a white dove with its head tucked under its wing.

One evening, as they were sitting cosily together, there was a knock at the door as if some one wished to be let in.

The mother said, 'Quick, Rose-red, open the door, it must be a traveller who is seeking shelter.'

Rose-red went and pushed back the bolt, thinking that it was some poor man, but it was not. It was a bear that pushed his broad, black head in at the door.

Rose-red screamed and sprang back, the lamb bleated, and the dove fluttered, and Snow-white hid herself behind her mother's bed. But the bear began to speak and said, 'Do not be afraid, I will do you no harm! I am half-frozen, and only want to warm myself a little beside your fire.'

'Poor bear,' said the mother, 'lie down by the fire, only

take care that you do not burn your coat.' Then she cried, 'Snow-white, Rose-red, come out, the bear will do you no harm, he means kindly.'

So they both came out again, and by and by the lamb and dove came nearer, and ceased to be afraid of him.

The bear said, 'Here, children, knock the snow out of my coat a little.'

So they brought the broom and swept the bear's hide clean, and he stretched himself by the fire and growled contentedly. It was not long before they grew quite at home, and began to play tricks with their clumsy guest. They tugged his hair with their hands, put their feet upon his back and rolled him about, or they took a hazel-switch and beat him, and when he growled they laughed. But the bear took it all in good part, only when they were too rough he called out, 'Children, children, leave me my life!'

'Snow-white, Rose-red,
Will you beat your lover dead?'

When it was bed-time, and the others went to bed, the mother said to the bear, 'You can lie there by the hearth, and then you will be safe from the cold and the bad weather.' As soon as day dawned the two children let him out, and he trotted across the snow into the forest.

Henceforth the bear came every evening at the same time, laid himself down by the hearth, and let the children amuse themselves with him as much as they liked, and they got so used to him that the doors were never fastened until their black friend had arrived.

When spring had come and all outside was green, the bear said one morning to Snow-white, 'Now I must go away, and cannot come back for the whole summer.'

'Where are you going, then, dear bear?' asked Snow-white.

'I must go into the forest and guard my treasures from the wicked dwarfs. In the winter, when the earth is frozen

hard, they are obliged to stay below and cannot work their way through. But now, when the sun has thawed and warmed the earth, they break through it, and come out to pry and steal, and what once gets into their hands, and in their caves, does not easily see daylight again.'

Snow-white was quite sorry for his going away, and as she unbolted the door for him, and the bear was hurrying out, he caught against the bolt and a piece of his hairy coat was torn off, and it seemed to Snow-white as if she had seen gold shining through it, but she was not sure about it. The bear ran away quickly, and was soon out of sight among the trees.

A short time afterwards the mother sent her children into the forest to get firewood. There they came to a big fallen tree which lay on the ground, and close by the trunk something was jumping backwards and forwards in the grass, but they could not make out what it was. When they got nearer they found it was a dwarf with an old withered face and a snow-white beard a yard long. The end of his beard was caught in a crack in the tree, and the little fellow was jumping backwards and forwards like a dog tied to a rope, and did not know what to do.

He glared at the girls with his fiery red eyes and cried, 'Why do you stand there? Can you not come here and help me?'

'Why, little man, what are you about there?' asked Rose-red.

'You stupid, prying goose!' answered the dwarf; 'I was going to split the tree, of course, to get a little wood to cook with. The little bit of food that one of us wants gets burnt up directly with thick logs. We do not swallow so much as you coarse, greedy folk do. I had just driven the wedge safely in, and everything was going as I wished, but the wretched wood was too smooth and suddenly out jumped the wedge, and the tree closed so quickly that I could not pull out my beautiful white beard. So now it is tight in and I cannot get away, and the silly, sleek, milk-faced things laugh! Ugh! how odious you are!'

THE END OF HIS BEARD WAS CAUGHT IN A CRACK IN THE TREE.

The children tried very hard, but they could not pull the beard out, it was caught too fast.

'I will run and fetch some one,' said Rose-red.

'You senseless goose!' snarled the dwarf; 'why should you fetch some one? You are already two too many for me. Can you not think of something better?'

'Don't be impatient,' said Snow-white, 'I will help you,' and she pulled her scissors out of her pocket, and cut off the end of his beard.

As soon as the dwarf felt himself free he laid hold of a bag which lay among the roots of the tree, and which was full of gold, and lifted it up, grumbling to himself, 'Clumsy people, cutting off a piece of my fine beard. Bad luck to you!' and then he swung the bag upon his back, and went off without even once looking at the children.

Some time after that Snow-white and Rose-red went to catch a dish of fish. As they came near the brook, they saw something like a large grasshopper jumping towards the water, as if it were going to leap in. They ran up and found it was the dwarf.

'Where are you going?' said Rose-red; 'you surely don't want to go into the water?'

'I am not such a fool!' cried the dwarf; 'don't you see it 's that wretched fish wants to pull me in?' The little man had been sitting there fishing, and unluckily the wind twisted his beard in the fishing-line, at the very moment that a big fish took the bait. The little weakling had not strength to pull it out, and the fish had the better of it, and was pulling the dwarf nearer the edge. He held on to all the reeds and rushes, but it was little good, he was forced to follow the movements of the fish, and was in urgent danger of being dragged into the water.

The girls came just in time. They held him fast and tried to free his beard from the line, but all in vain; beard and line were entangled fast together. Nothing was left but to bring out the scissors and cut the beard, whereby

a little bit of it was lost. When the dwarf saw that he screamed out :

'Do you call that civil, you toad-stool, disfiguring one's face like that ? Was it not enough to clip off the end of my beard ? Now you have cut off the best part of it. I cannot let myself be seen by my people. I wish you had been made to run the soles off your shoes ! ' Then he took out a sack of pearls which lay in the rushes, and without saying a word more he dragged it away and disappeared behind a stone.

It happened that soon afterwards the mother sent the two children to the town to buy needles and thread, and laces and ribbons. The road led them across a heath upon which huge rocks lay strewn here and there. Soon they noticed a great bird hovering in the air, flying slowly round and round above them. It sank lower and lower, and at last settled near a rock not far off. Directly afterwards they heard a loud cry of terror. They ran up and saw with horror that the eagle had seized their old friend the dwarf, and was going to carry him off.

The children, full of pity, at once caught tight hold of the little man, and pulled against the eagle so long that at last he let his booty go.

As soon as the dwarf had recovered from his first fright he cried with his shrill voice, 'Could you not have done it more carefully ! You dragged at my brown coat so that it is all torn and full of holes, you helpless clumsy creatures ! ' Then he took up a sack full of precious stones, and slipped away again under the rock into his hole. The girls, who by this time were used to his thanklessness, went on their way and did their business in the town.

As they crossed the heath again on their way home they surprised the dwarf, who had emptied out his bag of precious stones in a clean spot, and had not thought that any one would come there so late. The evening sun shone upon the brilliant stones. They glittered and sparkled with all colours so beautifully that the children stood still and looked at them.

'Why do you stand gaping there?' cried the dwarf, and his ashen-grey face became copper-red with rage.

He was going on with his bad words when a loud growling was heard, and a black bear came trotting towards them out of the forest. The dwarf sprang up in a fright, but he could not get to his cave, for the bear was already close.

Then in the dread of his heart he cried, 'Dear Mr. Bear, spare me, I will give you all my treasures. Look, the beautiful jewels lying there! Grant me my life. What do you want with such a skinny little fellow as I am? You would not feel me between your teeth. Come, take these two wicked girls, they are tender morsels for you, fat as young quails. For mercy's sake eat them!'

The bear took no heed of his words, but gave the scoundrel just one blow with his paw, and he did not move again.

The girls had run away, but the bear called to them. 'Snow-white and Rose-red, do not be afraid. Wait, I will come with you.'

Then they knew his voice and waited, and when he came up to them suddenly his bearskin fell off, and he stood there a handsome youth, clothed all in gold. 'I am a King's son,' he said, 'and I was bewitched by that wicked dwarf, who had stolen my treasures. I have had to run about the forest as a savage bear until I was freed by his death. Now he has got his well-deserved punishment.'

Snow-white was married to him, and Rose-red to his brother, and they divided between them the great treasure which the dwarf had gathered together in his cave. The old mother lived peacefully and happily with her children for many years. She took the two rose-trees with her, and they stood before her window, and every year bore the most beautiful roses, white and red.

Sweet Porridge

ONCE there was a poor but good little girl who lived alone with her mother, and the time came when they no longer had anything to eat. So the child went into the forest, and there she met an aged woman who knew of her distress, and presented her with a little pot, which when she said, ' Cook, little pot, cook,' would cook good, sweet porridge ; and when she said, ' Stop, little pot,' it would cease cooking. The little girl took the pot home to her mother, and now they were freed from their poverty and hunger, and ate sweet

porridge as often as they chose. Once upon a time when the girl had gone out, her mother said, 'Cook, little pot, cook.' And it did cook and she ate till she was satisfied, and then she wanted the pot to stop cooking, but did not know the right word. So it went on cooking and the porridge rose over the edge, and still it cooked on and on until the kitchen and whole house were full, and then the next house, and then the whole street, just as if it wanted to satisfy the hunger of the whole world, and there was the greatest alarm, but no one knew how to stop it. At last when only one single house remained, the child came home and just said, 'Stop, little pot,' and it stopped and gave up cooking. And whosoever wished to return to the town had to eat his way back.

Thumbling's Travels

A CERTAIN tailor had a son, who was so tiny that he was no bigger than a Thumb, and because of this he was always called Thumbling. He had, however, plenty of courage, and said to his father, 'Father, I must and will go out into the world.'

'That 's right, my son,' said the old man, and took a long darning-needle and made a knob of sealing-wax on it at the candle, 'and there is a sword for thee to take with thee on the way.'

Then the little tailor wanted to have just one more meal with them, and skipped into the kitchen to see what his lady mother had cooked for the last time. It was just dished up, and the dish stood on the hearth. Then said he, 'Mother, what 's there for dinner to-day ? '

'See for thyself,' said his mother.

So Thumbling jumped on to the hearth, and peeped into the dish, but as he stretched his neck too far in the steam

from the food caught him, and carried him up the chimney. He rode about in the air on the steam for a while, until at length he sank down to the ground again. Now the little tailor was out in the wide world, and he travelled about, and went to work with a master in his craft, but the food was not good enough for him. 'Mistress, if you don't feed us better, I shall go,' said Thumbling, 'and early to-morrow morning I 'll chalk on the door of your house, "Too many potatoes, too little meat! Farewell, Mr. Potato-King."'

'What wouldst thou have forsooth, grasshopper?' said the mistress, growing angry, and she seized a dish-cloth, and was just going to strike him. But my little tailor crept nimbly under a thimble, and peeped out from beneath it, and put his tongue out at her. She took up the thimble to catch him, but little Thumbling hopped into the cloth, and while the mistress was opening it out and searching for him, he got into a crack in the table. 'Ho, ho, lady mistress,' cried he, and thrust his head out, and when she hit at him he leapt down into the drawer. At last, however, she caught him and drove him out of the house.

The little tailor journeyed on and came to a great forest, where he fell in with a band of robbers who were planning to steal the King's treasure. When they saw the little tailor, they thought, 'That 's the little fellow for us! He can creep through the keyhole and pick the lock.'

'Hi!' cried one of them, 'thou giant Goliath, wilt thou go to the treasure-chamber with us? Thou canst slip in and throw out the money.'

Thumbling thought for a moment, and then said 'yes,' and he went with them to the treasure-chamber. He began by searching the doors from top to bottom to see if he could find a crack in them. It was not long before he espied one broad enough to let him in. He was just about to slip in at once, when one of the two sentries who stood before the door, caught sight of him, and said to the other, 'Eh! what an ugly spider is creeping there; I will kill it.'

'Let the poor creature alone,' said the other, 'it has done thee no harm.' So Thumbling got safely through the crack into the treasure-chamber, opened the window beneath which the robbers were standing, and threw out to them one dollar after another. While the little tailor was hard at work, he heard the King coming to inspect his treasure-chamber, and crept hastily into hiding. The King noticed that several solid silver pieces were missing, but could not conceive who could have stolen them, for locks, bars, and bolts were all in order, and well guarded. Then he went away again, saying to the sentries, 'Be on the watch, some one is after the money.' When therefore Thumbling began again, they heard the chink, chink of moving coins. They ran in swiftly to seize the thief, but the little tailor, who heard them coming, was still swifter, and leapt into a corner and covered himself with a dollar, so that nothing could be seen of him, and at the same time he mocked the sentries and cried, 'Here am I!' Thither ran the sentries, but by the time they got there, he had already hidden in another corner and was crying, 'Ho, ho, here am I!' The watchmen dashed there at top speed, but Thumbling had long ago hopped into a third corner, and was crying, 'Ho, ho, here am I!' And thus he made fools of them, and drove them so long round about the treasure-chamber that they were tired out and went away. So, one by one, he threw out all the money. He flung out the last coin with all his might, hopping nimbly on to it as it flew down through the window. The robbers paid him

So, one by one, he threw out all the money.

great compliments. 'Thou art a valiant hero indeed,' said they; 'wilt thou be our captain?'

Thumbling, however, said he wouldn't, as he wanted to see the world first. They now divided the booty, but the little tailor asked for one groat only because he could not carry more.

Then he buckled on his sword again, bade the robbers good-bye, and took to the road. First, he went to work under some masters, but he had no liking for that, and at last he hired himself as man-servant in an inn. The maids, however, could not endure him, for he saw secretly all that they did without their seeing him, and he told their master and mistress what they had helped themselves to off the plates, and carried off out of the cellar. Then said they, 'Wait! We 'll pay thee off!' and arranged with each other to play him a trick.

Soon afterwards one of the maids was mowing in the garden, and saw Thumbling jumping and creeping up and down in the long grass. Quickly she mowed him up with the grass, made it all into a bundle, and took it and threw it to the cattle. Now among them there was a great black cow, who swallowed him down whole without hurting him. But down below it pleased him ill, for it was quite dark, and there wasn't any candle burning either. So while the cow was being milked he cried,

'Strip, strap, strull,
Will the pail soon be full?'

But the noise of the milking kept him from being heard. After this the master of the house came into the cowshed and said, 'That cow shall be killed to-morrow.'

Then Thumbling was so alarmed that he cried out in a clear voice, 'Let me out first, for I am shut up inside her.'

The master heard that quite well, but did not know from whence the voice came. 'Where art thou?' asked he.

'In the black one,' answered Thumbling, but the master did not understand what that meant, and went out.

Next morning the cow was killed. Happily Thumbling

did not meet with one blow at the killing and quartering, and he got among the sausage-meat. And when the butcher came in and began his work, he cried out with all his might, 'Don't chop too deep, don't chop too deep, for I am here.' But no one heard this because of the noise of the chopping-knife. Now, indeed, poor Thumbling was in trouble, but trouble sharpens the wits, and he dodged about so cleverly between the blows that none of them touched him, and he got off with a whole skin. But still he could not get away, there was nothing for it, and he had to let himself be thrust into a black-pudding with the bits of bacon. He found himself in rather close quarters, and besides that he was hung up in the chimney to be smoked, and there the time did hang terribly heavy on his hands.

At length in winter he was taken down again, as the black-pudding was to be set before a guest. And while the hostess was cutting it in slices, he took care not to stretch out his head too far, I can tell you, lest a bit of it should be sliced off; at last he saw his opportunity, cleared a way for himself, and jumped out.

The little tailor, however, would not stay any longer in a house where he fared so ill, and at once set out on his journey again. But his liberty did not last long. In the open country he met with a fox who snapped him up without thinking.

'Hullo, Mr. Fox,' cried the little tailor. 'Set me free, set me free! It 's me here, sticking in your throat!'

'Thou art right,' answered the fox. 'And it 's little or nothing thou art to me too. So if thou 'lt promise me the fowls in thy father's yard I 'll let thee go.'

'With all my heart,' replied Thumbling. 'Thou shalt have all the cocks and hens, that I promise thee.'

Then the fox let him go again, and himself carried him home. When the father once more saw his dear son, he willingly gave the fox all the fowls he had. 'For this I bring thee a handsome bit of money too,' said Thumbling, and gave his father the silver groat which he had earned on his travels.

The Skilful Hunter

THERE was once a young fellow who had learned the trade of locksmith, and told his father he would now go out into the world and seek his fortune.

'Very well,' said the father, 'I am quite content with that,' and gave him some money for his journey.

So he travelled about and looked for work. After a time he resolved not to follow the trade of locksmith any more, for he no longer liked it, but he took a fancy for hunting. Then there met him in his rambles a hunter dressed in green, who asked whence he came and where he was going? The youth said he was a locksmith's apprentice, but that the trade no longer pleased him, and he had a liking for woodcraft, would he teach it to him?

'Oh, yes,' said the hunter, 'if thou wilt go with me.'

Then the young fellow went with him, bound himself to him for some years, and learned the art of hunting. After this he wished to try his luck elsewhere, and the hunter gave him nothing in the way of payment but an air-gun, which had, however, this property, that it hit its mark without fail whenever he shot with it. Then he set out and found himself in a very large forest, which he could not get to the end of in one day. When evening came he seated himself in a high tree in order to escape the wild beasts. Towards midnight, it seemed to him as if a tiny little light glimmered in the distance. He looked down through the branches towards it, and kept well in his mind where it was. But in the first place he took off his hat and threw it down in the direction of the light, so that he might go to the hat as a mark when he had descended. Then he climbed down and went to his hat, put it on again and went straight forward. The farther he went, the larger the

light grew, and when he got close to it he saw that it was an enormous fire, and that three giants were sitting by it, who had an ox on the spit and were roasting it.

Presently one of them said, 'I must just taste if the meat will soon be fit to eat,' and he pulled a scrap off, and was about to put it in his mouth when the hunter shot it out of his hand.

'Well, really,' said the giant, 'if the wind has not blown the bit out of my hand!' and helped himself to another. But when he was just about to taste it, the hunter again shot it away from him.

On this the giant gave the one who was sitting next him a box on the ear, and cried angrily, 'Why art thou snatching my piece away from me?'

'I have not snatched it away,' said the other; 'a sharp-shooter must have shot it away from thee.'

The giant took another piece, but he could not keep it in his hand, for the hunter shot it out.

Then the giant said, 'That must be a good shot to shoot the bit out of one's very mouth. Such an one would be useful to us.' And he cried out loud, 'Come here, thou sharp-shooter. Seat thyself at the fire beside us and eat thy fill, we will not hurt thee. But if thou wilt not come, and we have to bring thee by force, thou art a lost man!'

When he heard this, the youth went up to them and told them he was a skilled hunter, and that whatever he aimed at with his gun, he was certain to hit. Then they said if he would go with them he should be well treated, and they told him that outside the forest there was a great lake, behind which stood a tower, and in the tower was imprisoned a lovely princess, whom they wished very much to carry off.

'Good,' said he, 'I will soon get her for you.'

Then they added, 'But there is still something else; there is a tiny little dog, which begins to bark directly any one goes near, and as soon as it barks every one in the royal palace wakes up, and for this reason we cannot get there. Canst thou undertake to shoot it dead?'

'Yes,' said he, 'that will be a little bit of fun for me.'

After this he got into a boat and rowed over the lake, and as soon as he landed, the little dog came running out, and was about to bark, but the hunter took his air-gun and shot it dead. When the giants saw that, they rejoiced, and thought they already had the King's daughter safe, but the hunter wished first to see how matters stood, and told them that they must stay outside until he called them. Then he went into the castle, and all was perfectly quiet within, and every one was asleep. When he opened the door of the first room, a sword was hanging on the wall which was made of pure silver, and there was a golden star on it, and the name of the King, and on a table near it lay a sealed letter which he broke open, and inside it was written that whoever had the sword could kill any one who opposed him. So he took the sword from the wall, hung it at his side and went on. Next he entered the room where the King's daughter was lying asleep, and she was so beautiful that he stood still and held his breath to look at her. He thought to himself, 'How can I give an innocent maiden into the power of the wild giants, who have evil in their minds?' He looked about further, and under the bed stood a pair of slippers, on the right one of which was her father's name with a star, and on the left her own name with a star. She wore also a great neck-kerchief of silk embroidered with gold, and on the right side was her father's name, and on the left her own, all in golden letters. Then the hunter took a pair of scissors and cut the right corner off and put it in his knapsack, and then he took the right slipper with the King's name, and thrust that in too. The maiden still lay sleeping, and he cut a little piece from her nightgown, and thrust it in with the rest, but he did it all without touching her. Then he went out and left her lying asleep undisturbed, and when he came to the gate again, the giants were still standing outside waiting for him, and expecting that he was bringing the princess. But he cried out to them that they were to come in, for the maiden was already in their power, and that he could

The giant gave the one who was sitting next him a box on the ear.

not open the gate to them, but that there was a hole through which they must creep. As the first began to creep through the hunter wound the giant's hair round his hand, pulled his head in, and cut it off at one stroke with his sword, and then he drew the rest of him in. He called to the second to come on and cut his head off in the same way, and then he killed the third also, and he was well pleased that he had freed the beautiful maiden from her enemies. Before he went he cut out their tongues and put them too in his knapsack. Then thought he, ' I will go home to my father and let him see what I have already done, and afterwards I will travel about the world. The luck which God is pleased to grant me will easily find me.'

But when the King in the castle awoke, he saw the three giants lying there dead. So he went into his daughter's bedroom, woke her up, and asked her who could have killed the giants ?

Then said she, ' Dear father, I know not, I have been asleep.'

But when she rose and would have put on her slippers, the right one was gone, and when she looked at her neck-kerchief it was cut, and the right corner was missing, and when she looked at her nightdress a piece was cut out of it. The King summoned his whole court together, soldiers and every one else who was there, and asked who had set his daughter at liberty, and killed the giants ? Now it happened that he had a captain, who was one-eyed and hideous, and he said that he had done it. Then the old King said that as he had accomplished this, he should marry his daughter.

But the maiden said, ' Rather than marry him, dear father, I will go away into the world as far as my legs can carry me.'

But the King said that if she would not marry him she should take off her royal garments and wear peasant's clothing, and out she should go, and that she should go to a potter, and begin to sell earthen vessels. So she put off her royal apparel, and went to a potter and borrowed crockery enough for a stall, and she promised him also that if she had sold it by the evening, she would pay for it. Then the King said she was

to seat herself in a corner with it and sell it, and he arranged with some peasants to drive over it with their carts, so that everything should be broken into a thousand pieces. So when the King's daughter had set up her stall in the street, by came the carts and smashed all she had into fragments.

She began to weep and said, ' Alas, how shall I ever pay for the pots now ? '

The King had, however, wished by this to force her to marry the captain, but instead of that, she went again to the potter, and asked him if he would lend her some more pots and pans. He said no, she must first pay for the things she had already had.

Then she went to her father and cried and lamented, and said she would go out into the world.

Then said he, ' I will have a little hut built for thee in the forest outside, and in it thou shalt stay all thy life long and cook for every one, but thou shalt take no money for it.'

When the hut was ready, a sign was hung on the door on which was written, ' For nothing to-day, to-morrow for pay.' There she remained a long time, and it was rumoured about the world that a maiden was there who cooked without asking for payment, and that this was set forth on a sign outside her door.

The hunter heard it too, and thought to himself, ' That would suit thee. Thou art poor, and hast no money.'

So he took his air-gun and his knapsack, with all the things in it that he had formerly carried away with him from the castle as tokens of his truthfulness, and he went into the forest, and found the hut with the sign, ' For nothing to-day, to-morrow for pay.' He had put on the sword with which he had cut off the heads of the three giants, and so prepared, he entered the hut, and ordered something to eat to be given to him. He was charmed with the beautiful maiden, who was indeed as lovely as any picture.

She asked him where he came from and where he was going, and he said, ' I am roaming about the world.'

Then she asked him where he had got the sword, for that

in truth her father's name was on it. He asked her if she were the King's daughter ?

' Yes,' answered she.

' With this sword,' said he, ' did I cut off the heads of three giants.' And he took their tongues out of his knapsack in proof. Then he also showed her the slipper, and the corner of the neck-kerchief, and the bit of the nightdress. Hereupon she was overjoyed, and said that he was the one who had delivered her. On this they went together to the old King and brought him to the hut, and she led him into her room, and told him that the hunter was the man who had really set her free from the giants. And when the aged King saw all the proofs of this, he could no longer doubt, and said that he was very glad he knew how everything had happened, and that the hunter should marry her, at which the maiden was glad at heart.

Then she dressed the hunter as if he were a foreign nobleman, and the King ordered a feast to be prepared. When they went to table, the captain sat on the left side of the King's daughter, but the hunter was on the right, and the captain thought he was a foreign lord who had come on a visit. When they had eaten and drunk, the old King said to the captain that he would set before him something which he must guess.

' Supposing any one said that he had killed the three giants and he was asked where the giants' tongues were, and was forced to go and look, and there were none in their heads, how could that happen ? '

The captain said, ' Then they cannot have had any.'

' Not so,' said the King. ' Every animal has a tongue,' and then he asked what any one would deserve who made such an answer.

The captain replied, ' He ought to be torn to pieces.' Then the King said he had pronounced his own sentence, and the captain was put in prison and then torn into four pieces. But the King's daughter was married to the hunter. Afterwards he sent for his father and mother, and they lived with their son in happiness, and when the old King died the kingdom came to him.

The True Sweetheart

ONCE upon a time there was a girl who was young and beautiful, but she had lost her mother when she was quite a child, and her step-mother did all she could to make the girl's life wretched. Whenever this woman gave her anything to do, she worked at it with a will, and did the utmost she could. Still she could not touch the heart of the wicked woman by that, she never was satisfied, it was never enough. The harder the girl worked, the more work was put upon her, and all that the woman thought of was how to weigh her down with still heavier burdens, and make her life still more miserable.

One day she said to her, 'Here are twelve pounds of feathers which thou must strip, and if they are not done this evening, thou mayst expect a good beating. Dost thou imagine thou art to idle away the whole day?'

The poor girl sat down to the work, but tears ran down her cheeks as she did so, for she saw plainly enough that it was quite impossible to finish the work in one day. Whenever she had a little heap of feathers lying before her, and she sighed or smote her hands together in her anguish, they flew away and she had to pick them out again, and begin her work anew. Then she put her elbows on the table, laid her face in her two hands, and cried, 'Is there no one, then, on God's earth to have pity on me?'

Then she heard a low voice which said, 'Be comforted, my child, I have come to help thee.'

The maiden looked up, and an old woman was by her side. She took the girl kindly by the hand, and said, 'Just tell me what is troubling thee.'

As she spoke so kindly, the girl told her of her miserable life, and how one burden after another was laid upon her, and how she never could get to the end of the work which was given to her. 'If I have not done these feathers by this evening, my step-mother will beat me. She has threatened she will, and well I know she keeps her word.'

Her tears began to flow afresh, but the good old woman said, 'Do not be afraid, my child. Rest a while, and in the meantime I will look to thy work.'

The girl lay down on her bed, and soon fell asleep. The old woman seated herself at the table with the feathers, and ho! how they did fly off the quills, which she hardly touched with her withered hands! The twelve pounds were soon finished, and when the girl woke up, great snow-white heaps were lying, piled up, and everything in the room was neatly cleared away, but the old woman had vanished. The maiden thanked God, and sat still till evening came, when the step-mother came in and marvelled to see the work completed.

'Just look, you awkward creature,' said she, 'what can be done when people are industrious. And why couldst thou not set about something else? There thou sittest with thy hands crossed.' But when she went out she said to herself, 'The creature is worth more than her salt. I must give her some work that is still harder.'

Next morning she called the girl, and said, 'There is a spoon for thee. With that thou must empty out for me the great pond which is beside the garden, and if it is not done by night, thou knowest what will happen.'

The girl took the spoon, and saw that it was full of holes, but even if it had not been, she never could have emptied the pond with it. She set to work at once, knelt down by the water, into which her tears were falling, and began. But the good old woman appeared again, and when she learned the cause of her grief, she said, 'Be of good cheer, my child. Go into the bushes and lie down and sleep. I will soon do thy work.'

As soon as the old woman was alone, she barely touched

the pond, and a vapour rose up on high from the water, and mingled itself with the clouds. Gradually the pond was emptied, and when the maiden awoke before sunset and came back, she saw nothing but the fishes which were wriggling in the mud. She went to her step-mother, and showed her that the work was done. 'It ought to have been done long before this,' said she, and grew white with anger, but she began to think of something new.

On the third morning she said to the girl, 'Out on the plain there thou must build me a splendid castle, and it must be ready by the evening.'

The maiden was dismayed, and said, 'How can I complete such a great work?'

'I will stand no contradiction,' screamed the step-mother. 'If thou canst empty a pond with a spoon that is full of holes, thou canst build a castle too. I will take possession of it this very day, and if anything is wanting, even if it be the most trifling thing in the kitchen or cellar, thou knowest what lies before thee!'

She drove the girl out, and when she came to the valley, there lay the rocks, all tumbled one over the other, and all her strength would not have enabled her to move even the smallest of them. She sat down and wept, and yet she hoped the old woman would help her. Nor was she long in coming, and she soon comforted her and said, 'Lie down there in the shade and sleep, and I will soon build the castle for thee. If it would be a pleasure to thee, thou canst live in it thyself.'

When the maiden had gone away, the old woman touched the grey rocks. They began to rise, and swiftly began gathering together as if giants were building the walls. On these the building arose, and it seemed as if countless hands were working invisibly, placing one stone upon another. There was a dull heavy noise from the ground. Pillars rose up of their own accord, and ranged themselves in order one by the other. The tiles laid themselves in rows upon the roof, and when noonday came, the great weathercock, in the shape of

a golden figure of the Virgin with fluttering garments, was already turning itself on the top of the tower. The inside of the castle was being finished while evening was drawing near. How the old woman managed it, I know not, but the walls of the rooms were hung with silk and velvet, embroidered chairs were there, and richly ornamented armchairs by marble tables, crystal chandeliers hung down from the ceilings and were reflected in the polished floors, green parrots were there in gilt cages and so were strange birds which sang most beautifully, and on all sides there was as much magnificence as if a king was going to live there.

The sun was just setting when the girl woke up, and the brightness of a thousand lights flashed in her face. She hurried to the castle, and entered by the open door. The steps were spread with red cloth, and flowering trees stood upon the golden balustrade. When she saw the splendour of the halls, she stood as if turned to stone. Who knows how long she might have stood there if she had not remembered the step-mother? 'Alas!' she said to herself, 'if only she could but be satisfied, and would give up making my life a misery.'

The girl went and told her that the castle was ready.

'I will move into it at once,' said she, and rose from her seat. When they entered the castle, she had to hold her hand before her eyes, the brightness of everything was so dazzling. 'Thou seest,' said she to the girl, 'how easy it has been for thee to do this. I ought to have given thee something harder.' She went through all the rooms, and examined every corner to see if anything was wanting or imperfect, but she could discover nothing. 'Now we will go down below,' said she, looking at the girl with malicious eyes. 'The kitchen and the cellar still have to be examined, and if thou hast forgotten anything thou shalt not escape thy punishment.' But the fire was burning on the hearth, and the meat was cooking in the pans, the tongs and shovel were leaning against the wall, and the shining brazen utensils all arranged in sight. Nothing was wanting, not even a coal-box or a water-pail. 'Which is the

way to the cellar?' she cried. 'If that is not abundantly filled, it shall go ill with thee.' She herself raised the trap-door and descended. But she had hardly made two steps before the heavy trap-door which was only laid back, fell with a bang. The girl heard a scream, and quickly lifted the door to go to her aid, but she had fallen down, and the girl found her lying lifeless at the bottom.

And now the magnificent castle belonged to the girl alone. She did not know at first how to reconcile herself to her good fortune. Beautiful dresses were hanging in the wardrobes, the chests were filled with gold or silver, or with pearls and precious stones, and she had never a wish that could not be fulfilled. Soon the fame of the beauty and riches of the maiden went over all the world. Wooers presented themselves daily, but none pleased her. At length there came the son of the King himself and he knew how to touch her heart, and she promised to marry him.

In the garden of the castle was a lime-tree, and one day, when they were sitting under it, he said to her, 'I will go home and get my father's consent to our marriage. I beg thee to wait for me here, under the lime-tree; I shall be back with thee in a few hours.'

The maiden kissed him on his left cheek, and said, 'Be true to me, and never let any one else kiss thee on this cheek. I will wait here under the lime-tree until thou returnest.'

The maid stayed beneath the linden until sunset, but he did not return. She sat there three days from morning till evening waiting for him, but in vain. As he was not there by the fourth day, she said, 'Assuredly some accident has befallen him. I will go and seek him, and will not come back until I have found him.' She packed up three of her most beautiful dresses, one embroidered with bright stars, the second with silver moons, the third with golden suns, tied up a handful of jewels in her handkerchief, and set out to find the Prince. She inquired everywhere but no one had seen him. No one knew anything about him. Far and wide did she wander through

the world, but she found him not. At last she hired herself to a farmer as a cow-herd, and buried her dresses and jewels beneath a stone.

And now she lived as a herdswoman, taking care of the kine, but she was very sad and full of longing for her beloved one. She had a little calf which she taught to know her, and fed it out of her own hand, and when she said,

'Little calf, forget me not,
As the prince his love forgot,
Who beneath the linden sat.'

the little calf knelt down, and she stroked it.

When she had lived for two years alone and sorrowing, a report was spread over all the land that the King's daughter was about to celebrate her marriage. The road to the town passed through the village where the maiden was living, and once it happened when the maiden was driving out her herd, her betrothed travelled by. He was sitting proudly on his horse, and never looked round, but when she saw him she recognised her beloved, and it was as if a sharp knife pierced her heart. 'Alas!' said she, 'I believed him true, but he has forsaken me.'

Next day he came again along the road. When he was near she said to the little calf,

'Little calf, forget me not,
As the prince his love forgot,
Who beneath the linden sat.'

When he heard her voice, he looked down and reined in his horse. He looked into her face, and put his hands before his eyes as if he were trying to remember something, but after a minute he rode on and was soon out of sight. 'Alas!' said she, 'he no longer knows me,' and her grief was greater than ever.

Soon after this a great festival was to be held for three days at the King's court, and the whole country was invited to it.

THE THIRD TIME SHE WORE THE STAR-DRESS WHICH SPARKLED AT EVERY STEP.

'Now will I try my last chance,' thought the maiden, and when evening came she went to the stone under which she had buried her treasures. She took out the dress with the golden suns and put it on, and adorned herself with the jewels. She let down her hair, which she had concealed under a kerchief, and it fell down in long curls about her, and thus she went into the town, and in the darkness was observed by no one. When she entered the bright hall, every one started back in amazement, but no one knew who she was. The King's son went to meet her, but he did not recognise her. He led her out to dance, and was so enchanted with her beauty that he thought no more of the other bride. When the ball was over, she vanished in the crowd, and hastened before daybreak to the village, where she put on her herd's dress again.

Next evening she took out the dress with the silver moons, and put a half-moon made of precious stones in her hair. When she appeared at the festival, all eyes were turned upon her, but the King's son hastened to meet her, and deeply in love with her, danced with her alone, and no longer so much as glanced at any one else. Before she went away she was forced to promise him to come again to the festival on the last evening.

When she appeared for the third time, she wore the star-dress which sparkled at every step she took, and her hair-ribbon and girdle were starred with jewels. The prince had already been waiting for her for a long time, and forced his way up to her. 'Do but tell who thou art,' said he, 'I feel just as if I had already known thee for a long time.'

'Knowest thou not what I did when thou didst leave me?' Then she stepped up to him, and kissed him on the left cheek, and in a moment it was as if scales fell from his eyes, and he recognised the true bride.

'Come,' said he to her, 'here I stay no longer,' and he gave her his hand, and led her down to the carriage.

The horses sped away to the magic castle as if the wind had been harnessed to the carriage. The illuminated windows

already shone in the distance. When they drove past the lime-tree, countless glow-worms were swarming about it, and it shook its boughs and shed sweet fragrance around it. On the steps flowers were blooming, and the rooms echoed with the song of strange birds, but in the hall the whole court was assembled, and the priest was waiting to marry the bridegroom to the true bride.

The Twelve Brothers

ONCE upon a time there were a king and a queen who lived happily together and had twelve children, but they were all boys.

Then said the King to his wife, 'If the thirteenth child which thou art about to bring into the world is a girl, the twelve boys shall die, in order that her possessions may be great, and that the kingdom may fall to her alone.'

He also caused twelve coffins to be made, and filled with shavings, and in each lay the little pillow for the dead, and he had them taken and locked up in a room of which he gave the Queen the key, bidding her not to speak of this to any one.

The mother, however, now sat and lamented all day long, until the youngest son, who was always with her, and whom she had named Benjamin, from the Bible, said to her, 'Dear mother, why art thou so sad?'

'Dearest child,' she answered, 'I may not tell thee.' But he let her have no rest until she went and unlocked the room, and showed him the twelve coffins ready filled with shavings. Then she said, 'My dearest Benjamin, thy father has had these coffins made for thee and for thy eleven brothers, for if I bring a little girl into the world, you are all to be killed and buried in them.'

And as she wept while she was saying this, the son com-

forted her and said, ' Weep not, dear mother, we will save ourselves, and go hence.'

At that she said, ' Go forth into the forest with thy eleven brothers, and let one of you sit constantly on the highest tree which can be found, and keep watch, looking towards the tower here in the castle. If I give birth to a little son, I will put up a white flag, and you may venture to come back, but if I bear a daughter, I will hoist a red flag, and then fly hence as quickly as you are able, and may the good God protect you. And every night I will rise up and pray for you—in winter that you may have a fire to warm you, and in summer that you may not faint in the heat.'

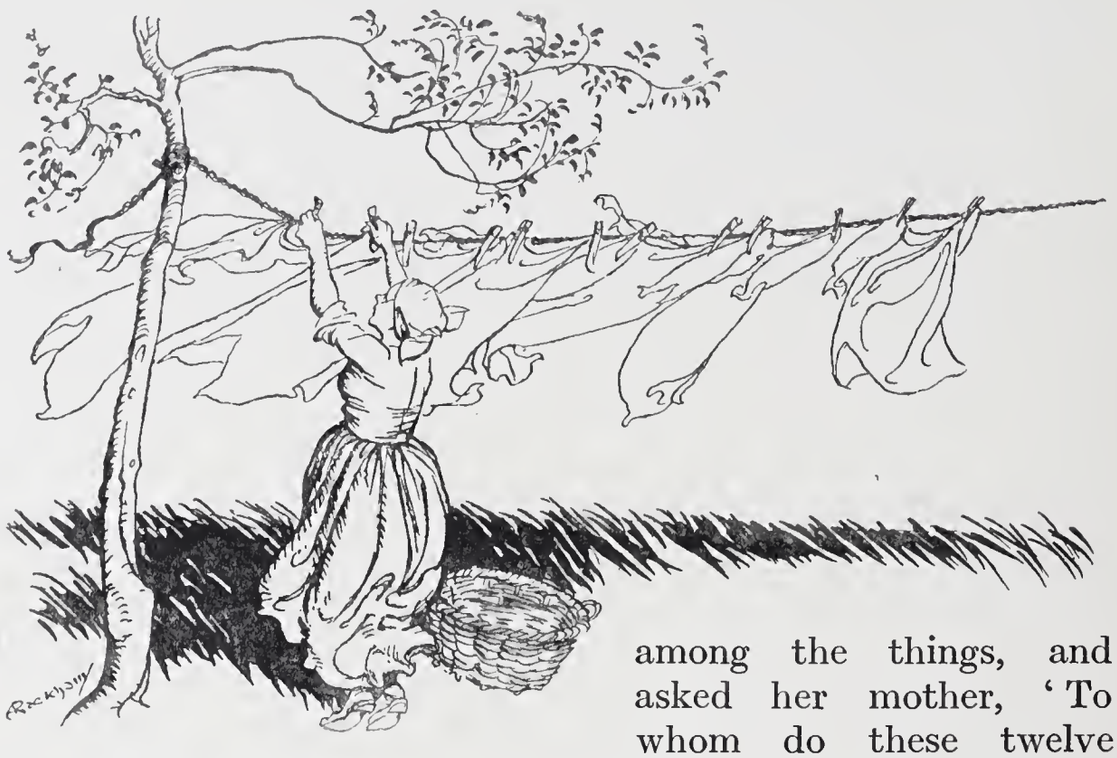
Therefore, after she had blessed her sons, they went forth into the forest. They each kept watch in turn, and sat on the highest oak and looked towards the tower. When eleven days had passed and the turn came to Benjamin, he saw that a flag was being run up. It was, however, not white, but the blood-red flag which announced that they were all to die.

When the brothers heard that, they were very angry and said, ' Are we all to suffer death for the sake of a girl ? We swear that we will avenge ourselves !—wheresoever we find a girl, her red blood shall flow.'

Thereupon they went deeper into the forest, and in the very midst of it, where it was the darkest, they found a little enchanted hut, which was standing empty.

Then said they, ' Here we will dwell, and thou Benjamin, who art the youngest and weakest, thou shalt stay at home and keep house, while the rest of us go out and get food.' Then they went into the forest and shot hares, wild deer, birds and pigeons, and whatsoever there was to eat; this they took home to Benjamin, who cooked it for them all. They lived together ten years in the little hut, nor did the time seem long in passing.

The little daughter to whom their mother the Queen had given birth, was now grown up ; she was good of heart, and fair of face, and had a golden star on her forehead. Once, when it was the great washing, she saw twelve men's shirts



among the things, and asked her mother, 'To whom do these twelve shirts belong, for they are far too small for father?'

Then the Queen answered with a heavy heart, 'Dear child, these belong to thy twelve brothers.'

Said the maiden, 'Where are my twelve brothers? I have never yet heard of them.'

'God knows where they are,' she replied; 'they are wandering about the world.' Then she took the maiden and opened the chamber for her, and showed her the twelve coffins with the shavings, and pillows for the head.

'These coffins,' said she, 'were destined for thy brothers, but they went away secretly before thou wert born,' and she related to her how everything had happened.

Then said the maiden, 'Dear mother, weep not, I will go and seek my brothers.'

So she took the twelve shirts and went forth, straight into the great forest. She walked the whole day, and in the evening she came to the bewitched hut. Then she entered it and found a young boy, who asked, 'From whence comest

'To whom do these twelve shirts belong?'

thou, and whither art thou bound?' and was astonished that she was so beautiful, and wore royal garments, and had a star on her forehead.

'I am a king's daughter,' she answered, 'and I am seeking my twelve brothers, and I will walk as far as the sky is blue until I find them.' She also showed him the twelve shirts which belonged to them.

Then Benjamin saw that she was his sister, and said, 'I am Benjamin, thy youngest brother.' And she began to weep for joy, and Benjamin wept also, and they kissed and embraced each other with the greatest love.

But after this he said, 'Dear sister, there is still one difficulty. We have determined that every maiden whom we meet shall die, because we have been obliged to leave our kingdom on account of a girl.'

Then said she, 'I will willingly die, if by so doing I can deliver my twelve brothers.'

'No,' answered he, 'thou shalt not die. Seat thyself

beneath this tub until our eleven brothers come, and then I will soon come to an agreement with them.'

She did so, and when it was night the others came home from hunting, and their dinner was ready. And as they were sitting at table, and eating, they asked, ' What news is there ? '

Said Benjamin, ' Don't you know anything ? '

' No,' they answered.

' You have been in the forest,' he continued, ' and I have stayed at home, and yet I know more than you do.'

' Tell us then,' they cried.

' Promise me that the first maiden who meets us shall not be killed.'

' Yes,' they all cried, ' she shall have mercy, only do tell us the news.'

Then said he, ' Our sister is here,' and he lifted up the tub, and the King's daughter came forth in her royal garments with the golden star on her forehead, and she was beautiful, delicate, and fair. Then they were all rejoiced, and fell on her neck, and kissed and loved her with all their hearts.

Now she stayed at home with Benjamin and helped him with the work. The eleven went into the forest and caught game, and deer, and birds, and wood-pigeons that they might have food, and the little sister and Benjamin took care to make it ready for them. She sought the wood for cooking and herbs for vegetables, and put the pans on the fire so that the dinner was always ready when the eleven came. She likewise kept order in the little house, and put beautiful clean white coverings on the little beds, and the brothers were always contented and lived in great harmony with her.

One day the two at home had prepared a lovely feast, and when they were all there, they sat down to eat and drink and were full of gladness. Now there was a little garden belonging to the enchanted cottage where grew twelve lilies, and the sister, wishing to give her brothers pleasure, picked the twelve flowers to present each brother with one while they were at dinner. But at the self-same moment that she

plucked the flowers the twelve brothers were changed into twelve ravens, and flew away over the forest. And the little house and the garden vanished also. And now the poor maiden was left all alone in the wild forest, and as she looked round, there was an old woman standing near her.

'My child,' she said, 'what hast thou done? Why didst thou not leave the twelve white flowers growing? They were thy brothers, who are now for evermore changed into ravens.'

The maiden burst into tears. 'Is there no way of delivering them?' she cried.

'No,' said the woman, 'in the whole world there is but one way, and that so hard that never wilt thou deliver them by it, for dumb thou must be for seven years, and mayst not speak nor laugh. If thou didst speak one single word, and only one hour of the seven years were wanting, all would be in vain, and that one word would be thy brothers' death.'

Then said the maiden in her heart, 'I know for certain that I shall set my brothers free,' and she sought a high tree and climbed up it and there she sat and span, and neither spoke nor laughed. Now it so happened that a king was hunting in the forest, who had a great greyhound that ran to the tree where the maiden was sitting, and leaped round it, whining, and barking at her. The King came up and saw the beautiful King's daughter with the golden star on her brow, and was so enchanted with her beauty that he shouted to ask her if she would be his wife. She made no answer, but nodded her head gently. So he climbed up to her and carried her down, seated her upon his horse, and bore her home. The wedding took place with great magnificence and rejoicing, but the bride neither spoke nor smiled.

When they had lived happily together for a few years, the King's mother, who was a wicked woman, began to slander the young Queen, and said to the King, 'This is but a common beggar girl whom thou hast brought back with thee. Who knows what sorcery she may not practise in secret! Even if she be dumb, and not able to speak, she still might laugh

for once ; those who do not laugh have bad consciences.' At first the King would not believe it, but the old woman urged this so long, and accused her of so many evil things, that at

The wicked mother-in-law was put into a barrel full of boiling oil and venomous snakes.

last the King let himself be persuaded and sentenced her to death.

And now a great fire was kindled in the courtyard in which she was to be burnt, and the King stood above at a window and looked on with tearful eyes, because he still loved her so much. And when she was bound fast to the stake, and the flames were licking at her clothing with red tongues, the very

last instant of the seven years expired. A whirring of wings was heard in the air, and twelve ravens came flying towards the place. They sank down, and no sooner had they touched the earth when they became her twelve brothers, whom she had freed from enchantment. They scattered the burning faggots and trod out the flames, set their dear sister free, and kissed and embraced her. And now as she dared to open her mouth and speak, she told the King why she had been dumb, and had never laughed. The King rejoiced when he heard that she was innocent, and they all lived in great happiness until their death. The wicked mother-in-law was taken before the judge, and condemned to be put into a barrel full of boiling oil and venomous snakes, and died an evil death.

The Three Spinners

THERE was once a girl who was idle and who would not spin, and let her mother say what she would, she could not get her to do it. At last one day the mother lost all patience, and became so angry that she beat the girl, who began to weep aloud. Now at this very moment the Queen was driving by, and when she heard the crying she stopped her carriage, went into the house and asked the mother why she was beating her daughter so that the girl's cries could be heard right out in the road ? The woman was so ashamed to expose her daughter's laziness that she said, 'I cannot get her to leave off spinning. She 's for ever wanting to spin and I am poor, and cannot procure the flax.'

Then answered the Queen, 'There is nothing I like better to hear than spinning, and I am never so happy as when the wheels are humming. Let me have your daughter with me in the palace, I have flax enough, and there she shall spin to her heart's content.' The mother was heartily satisfied with this, and the Queen took the girl away with her. When they reached the palace, she led her upstairs to three rooms which were filled from top to bottom with the finest flax.

'Now spin me all this,' said she, 'and when thou hast done it, thou shalt have my eldest son for a husband, even though thou art poor. I care not for that, for thy tireless industry will be dowry enough.'

The girl was secretly terrified, for she could not spin the flax, no, not if she lived to be three hundred years old, and sat at it every day from morning till night. So when she was alone, she began to cry, and sat thus for three days without moving a finger. On the third day in came the

Queen, and was surprised when she saw that nothing had been done yet; but the girl excused herself by saying that she had not been able to begin because of her grief at leaving her mother's house. The Queen was satisfied with this, but said as she left, 'To-morrow, thou must begin to work.'

When the girl was alone again, she did not know what to do, and in her distress she went to the window. There she saw approaching three women. The first of them had a broad flat foot, the second had such a great underlip that it hung down over her chin, and the third had a great broad thumb. They stopped beneath the window, and looked up, and asked the girl what the matter was. She told them all her trouble, and they offered to help her.

'If thou wilt invite us to thy wedding,' they said, 'and not be ashamed of us, but wilt call us thine aunts, and place us at thy table, we 'll spin all the flax for thee, and very soon too.'

'With all my heart,' she agreed, 'do but come in, and begin the work at once.'

Then she let in the three strange women, and cleared a place for them in the first room, where they sat themselves down and began their spinning. The first one drew out the thread and turned the wheel with her foot; the second wetted the thread; the third twisted it, and struck the table with her thumb; and at each stroke a skein of thread fell to the ground spun in the finest manner possible. The girl hid the three spinners from the Queen whenever she came, and showed her the great quantity of thread, until she could not praise her enough. When the first room was empty she went on to the second, and last to the third, and that too was quickly cleared. Then the three women took their leave saying, 'Forget not what thou hast promised us, it will make thy fortune.'

When the maiden showed the Queen the empty rooms, and the great heap of yarn, she gave orders for the wedding,

and the bridegroom rejoiced that he was to have such a clever and industrious wife, and praised her mightily.

'I have three aunts,' said the girl, 'and as they have been very kind to me, I should not like to forget them in my good

In came the three women dressed in the strangest fashion.

fortune; pray give me leave to invite them to our wedding, and let them sit with us at table.' The Queen and the Prince saw no reason why they should not allow that. So when the feast began, in came the three women dressed in the strangest fashion, and the bride said, 'Welcome, dear aunts.'

'Oh,' said the bridegroom, 'how comes it that thy friends are so hideous?' And turning to the one with the broad foot, he said, 'How did you come by such a broad flat foot?'

'By treading,' she answered, 'by treading.'

Then he went to the second, and said, 'How did you come by your hanging lip?'

'By licking,' she answered, 'by licking.'

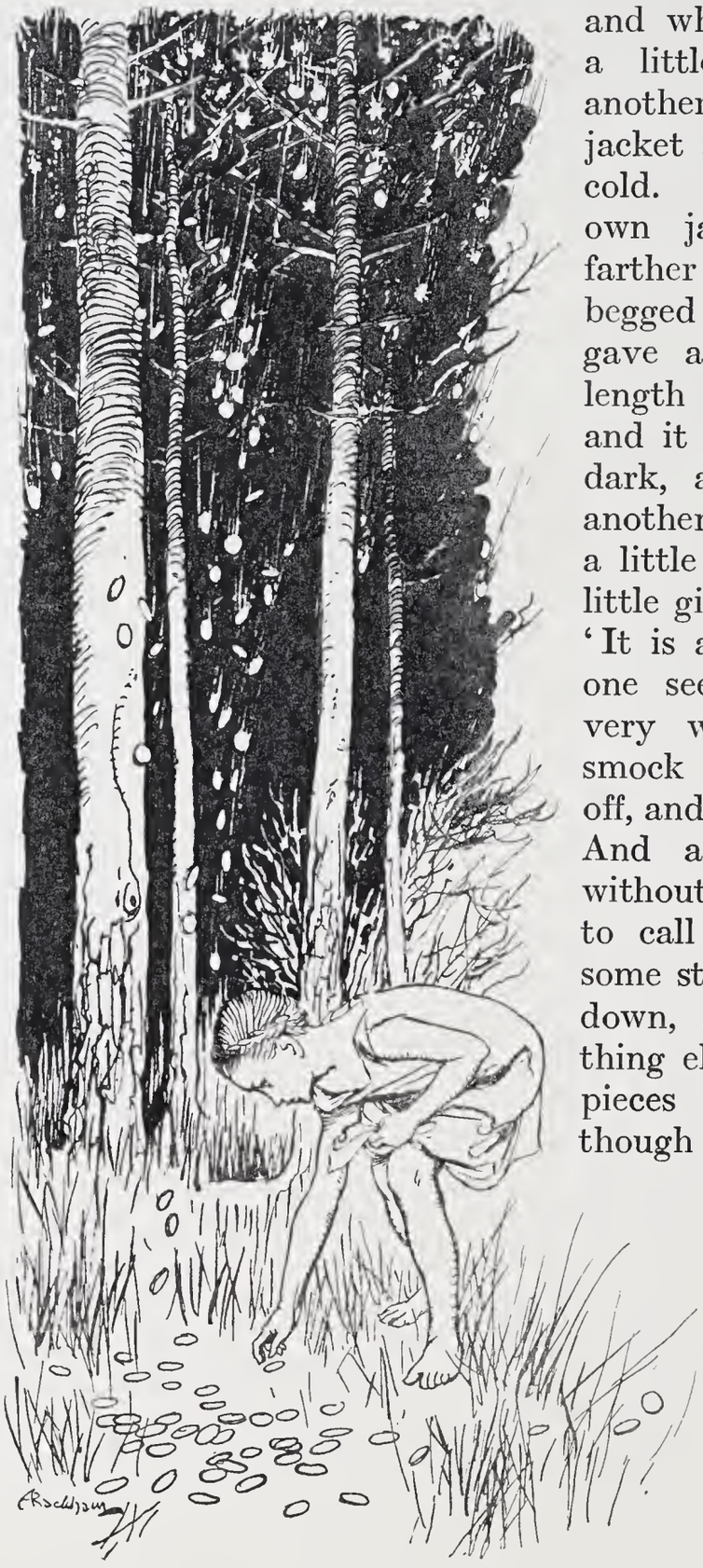
Then he asked the third, 'And how did you come by your great broad thumb?'

'By twisting the thread,' she answered, 'by twisting the thread.'

At this the King's son was alarmed and declared, 'Never again shall my beautiful bride touch a spinning-wheel.' And that 's how she got rid of her hateful spinning.

The Star-Money

ONCE upon a time there was a little girl whose father and mother were dead, and she was so poor that she no longer had any little room to live in or bed to sleep in, and at last she had nothing else but the clothes she was wearing and a little bit of bread in her hand which some charitable soul had given her. She was, however, good and pious. And as she was thus forsaken by all the world, she went forth into the open country, trusting in the good God. On her way she met a poor man who said, 'Ah, give me something to eat, I am so hungry!' At once she gave him the whole of her piece of bread, and said, 'May God bless it to thy use,' and went on. Then came a child who moaned and said, 'My head is so cold, do give me something to cover it with.' So she took off her hood and gave it to him,



and when she had walked a little farther, she met another child who had no jacket and was frozen with cold. So she gave it her own jacket, and a little farther on another one begged for a frock, and she gave away that also. At length she came to a forest and it had already become dark, and there came yet another child, and asked for a little shirt, and the good little girl thought to herself, 'It is a dark night and no one sees thee, thou canst very well give thy little smock away,' and took it off, and gave away that also. And as she stood there without one single thing left to call her own, suddenly some stars from heaven fell down, and they were nothing else but hard smooth pieces of money, and although she had just given her little shirt away, she had a new one of the very finest linen. Then she gathered the money into this, and was rich all the days of her life.

The Old Woman in the Wood

A POOR servant-girl was once travelling with the family with whom she was in service through a great forest, and when they were in the midst of it, robbers came upon them out of a thicket, and murdered all they could find. All perished together except the girl, who had jumped out of the carriage in a fright, and hidden behind a tree. When the robbers had made off with their plunder, she came out and beheld the great disaster. She began to weep bitterly, and said, ' What can a poor girl like me do now ? I do not know how to get out of the forest, no human being lives in it, so I must certainly starve.' She roamed about looking for a way out, but could find none. In the evening she seated herself under a tree, gave herself into God's keeping, and resolved to sit waiting there and not go away, let what might happen. But when she had sat there for a while, a white dove came flying to her with a little golden key in its beak.

It put the little key in her hand, and said, ' Dost thou see

that great tree, therein is a little lock, it opens with the tiny key, and there thou wilt find food enough, and suffer no more hunger.' So she went to the tree and opened it, and found milk in a little dish, and white bread to break into it, so that she could eat her fill. When she had had enough, she said, 'It is now the time when the hens at home go to roost, and I am so tired I could well go to bed too.'

Then the dove flew to her again, and brought another golden key in its bill, and said, 'Open that tree there, and thou wilt find a bed.' So she opened it, and found a beautiful white bed, and she prayed God to protect her during the night, and lay down and slept.

In the morning the dove came for the third time, and again brought a little key, and said, 'Open that tree there, and thou wilt find clothes.' And when she opened it, she found garments beset with gold and with jewels, more splendid than those of any king's daughter. So she lived there for some time, and the dove came every day and provided her with all she needed, and it was a quiet good life.

Once, however, the dove came and said, 'Wilt thou do something for my sake?'

'With all my heart,' said the girl.

Then said the little dove, 'I will guide thee to a little hut. Go in, and inside will be an old woman sitting by the fire and she will say, "Good-day." But on thy life give her no answer, let her do what she will, but pass by her on the right side. Further on, there is a door, which thou must open, and thou wilt enter into a room where a number of rings of all kinds are lying, amongst which are some magnificent ones with shining stones. But leave those where they are and seek out a plain one, which must also be amongst them, and bring it here to me as quickly as thou canst.'

The girl went to the little house, and came to the door. There sat an old woman who stared when she saw her, and said, 'Good-day, my child.' The girl gave her no answer and opened the door. 'What art thou after?' cried the old

woman, and seized her by the gown, and tried to hold her fast, saying, 'This is my house. No one can go in there if I say not.' But the girl did not speak but got away from her,

The old woman seized her by the gown, and tried to hold her fast.

and went straight into the room. Now there lay on the table an enormous number of rings, which gleamed and glittered before her eyes. She turned them over and looked for the plain one, but could not find it. While she was seeking, she saw the old woman and how she was stealing away, and

wanting to get off with a bird-cage which she had in her hand. So she ran after her and took the cage out of her hand, and when she lifted it up and looked into it, there was a bird with the plain ring in its bill. Then she took the ring, and ran joyously home with it, and thought the little white dove would come and get the ring, but it did not.

Then she leant against a tree and determined to wait for the dove, and as she stood thus, it seemed just as if the tree became soft and pliant, and was letting its branches down. Suddenly the branches twined around her, and turned into two arms, and when she looked round, the tree was a handsome man, who embraced her and kissed her heartily, and said, 'Thou hast delivered me from the power of the old woman, who is a wicked witch. She had changed me into a tree, and every day for two hours I became a white dove, and so long as she possessed the ring I could not regain my human form.' Then his servants and his horses, who had also been changed into trees, were freed from the enchantment too, and stood beside him. And he led them out of the forest to his kingdom, for he was a King's son, and they were married, and lived happily ever after.

SUDDENLY THE BRANCHES TWINED ROUND HER AND TURNED INTO TWO ARMS.

Bearskin

THERE was once a young fellow who enlisted as a soldier, bore himself bravely, and was always the foremost when it rained bullets. So long as the war lasted, all went well, but when peace was made, he received his dismissal, and the captain said he might go where he liked. His parents were dead, and he had no longer a home, so he went to his brothers and begged them to take him in and keep him until war broke out again. The brothers, however, were hard-hearted and said, 'What can we do with thee? thou art of no use to us; go and make a living for thyself.'

The soldier had nothing left but his gun. He took that on his shoulder, and went forth into the world. He came to a wide heath, on which nothing was to be seen but a circle of trees. In the shade of these he sat sorrowfully down, and began to think over his fate. 'I have no money,' thought he; 'I have learned no trade but that of fighting, and now that they have made peace they don't want me any longer, so I can see nothing before me but to die of hunger.' All at once he heard a rustling, and looked round, and there stood a strange man, who wore a green coat and appeared to be a person of consequence, but had a hideous cloven foot.

'I know already what thou art in need of,' said the man; 'gold and riches shalt thou have, as much as thou canst do with, but first I must know if thou art fearless, that I may not bestow my money in vain.'

'A soldier and cowardice! How can those two things go together?' was the answer. 'Just put me to the proof.'

'Very well, then,' said the man, 'look behind thee.'

The soldier turned round, and saw a large bear coming growling towards him.

'Oho!' cried the soldier, 'I'll tickle thy nose for thee, and thou shalt soon lose thy fancy for growling,' and he took aim at the bear and shot it right through the muzzle, and it fell dead on the spot.

'I see quite well,' answered Greencoat, 'that thou art not wanting in courage, but there is still another condition thou wilt have to fulfil. For the next seven years neither shalt thou wash thyself, nor comb thy beard, nor thy hair, nor cut thy nails, nor say one paternoster. I will give thee a coat and a cloak, which thou must wear all this time. If thou diest during these seven years, thou art mine. If thou remainest alive, thou art free, and rich to boot for all the rest of thy life.'

The soldier thought of the great need in which he now found himself, and as he so often had gone to meet death, he resolved to risk it now also, and agreed to the terms. The stranger took off his green coat, gave it to the soldier, and said, 'If thou hast this coat on thy back and puttest thy hand into the pocket, thou wilt always find it full of money.' Then he pulled the skin off the bear and said, 'This shall be thy cloak, and thy bed also, for thereon shalt thou sleep, and in no other bed shalt thou lie, and because of this clothing thou shalt be called Bearskin.' And as he said this, he vanished.

The soldier put the coat on, felt at once in the pocket, and found he had been told the truth. Then he threw the bearskin on and went forth into the world and enjoyed himself, denying himself nothing that money could buy. For the first year his appearance was passable, but during the second he began to look like a monster. His hair covered nearly the whole of his face, his beard was matted like a piece of felt, his fingers had claws, and his face was so covered with dirt that if cress had been sown on it, it would have come up. Whoever saw him, ran away. But as he everywhere gave money

to the poor to pray that he might not die during the seven years, and as he paid well for all he needed he could still

Whoever saw him, ran away.

always find shelter. In the fourth year, he entered an inn where the landlord would not receive him, and would not even give him a place in the stable for fear he should frighten the horses. But as Bearskin thrust his hand into his pocket and pulled out a handful of ducats, the host let himself be persuaded and gave him a room in an outhouse on condition

not to let himself be seen lest the inn should get a bad name.

As Bearskin was sitting alone in the evening, and wishing from the bottom of his heart that the seven years were over, he heard some one lamenting aloud in the next room. He had a compassionate heart so he opened the door, and there he saw an old man weeping bitterly, and wringing his hands. Bearskin went nearer, but the man sprang to his feet in terror and tried to escape from him. At last when the man perceived that Bearskin's voice was human he let himself be prevailed on, and by kind words Bearskin succeeded so far that the old man revealed the cause of his grief. His property had dwindled away by degrees, he and his daughters would have to starve, and he was so poor that he could not pay the innkeeper, and was to be put in prison.

'If that is your only trouble,' said Bearskin, 'I have plenty of money.' And he sent for the innkeeper, paid him what was due, and put a purse full of gold into the poor old man's pocket besides.

When the old man saw himself set free from all his troubles he did not know how to be grateful enough. 'Come with me,' said he to Bearskin; 'my daughters are all marvels of beauty, choose one of them for thyself as a wife. When she hears what thou hast done for me, she will not refuse thee. Thou dost in truth look a little strange, but she will soon put thee to rights again.'

This pleased Bearskin well, and he went with him. When the eldest girl saw him she was so terribly frightened that she screamed and ran away. The second stood where she was and looked at him from head to foot, but then she said, 'How can I accept a husband who no longer has a human form? The shaven bear that once was here and pretended to be a man pleased me far better, for at any rate it wore a hussar's dress and white gloves. If it were nothing but ugliness, I might get used to that.'

But the youngest daughter said, 'Dear father, that must

be a good man to have helped you out of your trouble, so if you have promised him a bride for doing it, your promise must be kept.'

It was a pity that Bearskin's face was covered with dirt and hair, or else they might have seen how delighted he was when he heard these words. He took a ring from his finger, broke it in two and gave her one half, while he kept the other for himself. And he wrote his name on her half, and hers on his, and begged her to keep her part carefully. Then he took his leave and said, 'I must still wander about for three years and if I do not return then, thou art free, for I shall be dead. But pray to God to guard my life.'

The poor betrothed bride dressed herself entirely in black, and when she thought of her future bridegroom, tears came into her eyes. Nothing but contempt and mockery fell to her lot from her sisters.

'Take care,' said the eldest, 'if thou givest him thy hand, he will stick his claws into it.'

'Beware!' said the second. 'Bears like sweet things, and if he takes a fancy to thee, he will eat thee up.'

'Thou must always do as he likes,' began the elder again, 'or else he will growl.'

And the second continued, 'But the wedding will be a merry one, for bears dance well.'

The maiden was silent, and did not let them vex her.

As for Bearskin, he travelled about the world from one place to another, did good where he was able, and gave generously to the poor that they might pray for him.

At length, as the last day of the seven years dawned, he went once more out on to the heath, and seated himself in the circle of trees. It was not long before the wind whistled, and the stranger stood before him and looked angrily at him. Then he threw Bearskin his old coat, and asked for his own green one back.

'We have not got so far as that yet,' answered Bearskin, 'thou must first make me clean.'

And whether he liked it or not, the stranger had to fetch water, and wash Bearskin, comb his hair, and cut his nails. After this, he looked like a brave soldier again, much handsomer than he had ever been before.

When Greencoat had gone away, Bearskin was quite lighthearted. He went into the town, put on a magnificent velvet coat, seated himself in a carriage drawn by four white horses, and drove to his bride's house. No one recognised him, the father took him for a distinguished general, and led him into the room where his daughters were sitting. He was made to sit between the two eldest, and they helped him to wine, gave him the best from every dish, and thought that in all the world they had never seen a handsomer man. The bride, however, sat opposite to him in her black dress, and never raised her eyes nor spoke a word. When at length he asked the father if he would give him one of his daughters to wife, the two eldest jumped up and ran to their bedrooms to put on splendid dresses, for each of them fancied she was the chosen one. As soon as he was alone with his bride, the stranger brought out his half of the ring, and threw it in a glass of wine which he handed across the table to her. She took the wine, but when she had drunk it and found the half ring lying at the bottom, her heart began to beat. She got the other half, which she wore on a ribbon round her neck, and joined the two halves, and saw that they fitted together exactly. Then said he, 'I am thy betrothed bridegroom, whom thou sawest as Bearskin, but through the grace of Heaven I have again received my human form, and have once more become clean.' And he took her in his arms and kissed her. Just then the two sisters came back dressed in their best. And when they saw that the handsome man had fallen to the share of the youngest and heard that he was Bearskin, they ran out wild with rage. One of them drowned herself in the well and the other hanged herself on a tree.

One-eye, Two-eyes, and Three-eyes

THERE was once a woman who had three daughters, the eldest of whom was called One-eye, because she had only one eye in the middle of her forehead, and the second, Two-eyes, because she had two eyes like other folks, and the youngest, Three-eyes, because she had three eyes. And her third eye, also, was in the middle of her forehead. However, as Two-eyes saw just as other human beings did, her sisters and her mother could not endure her.

They said to her, 'Thou, with thy two eyes, art no better than the common people. Thou dost not belong to us!' They pushed her about, and threw old clothes to her, and gave her nothing to eat but what they left, and did everything that they could to make her unhappy.

It came to pass that Two-eyes had to go out into the fields and tend the goat, but she was still quite hungry, because her sisters had given her so little to eat. So she sat down on a bank and began to weep, and she wept so bitterly that two streams ran down from her eyes. And once in the midst of her grief she looked up and there stood a woman beside her, who said, 'Why art thou weeping, little Two-eyes?'

Two-eyes answered, 'Have I not reason to weep, when I have two eyes like other people, and my sisters and mother hate me for it, and push me from one corner to another, and throw old clothes at me, and give me nothing to eat but the scraps they leave? To-day they have given me so little that I am still very hungry.'

Then the wise woman said, 'Wipe away thy tears, Two-eyes, and I will tell thee something to stop thee suffering from hunger ever again. Just say to thy goat,

'Little goat, bleat!
Little table, spread!

and then a clean well-spread little table will stand before thee, with the most delicious food upon it of which thou mayst eat as much as ever thou wishest, and when thou hast had enough, and hast no more need of the little table, just say,

'Little goat, bleat!
Little table, go!'

and then it will vanish again from thy sight.' Hereupon the wise woman departed.

But Two-eyes thought, 'I must try this at once, and see if what she said is true, for I am too hungry to bear it,' so she said,

'Little goat, bleat!
Little table, spread!'

and scarcely had she spoken the words than a little table covered with a white cloth was standing there, and on it was a plate with a knife and fork and a silver spoon, and the most delicious food was there also, warm and smoking as if it had just come out of the kitchen. Then Two-eyes said the shortest prayer she knew, 'Lord God, be with us always, Amen,' and helped herself, and enjoyed it very much. And when she was satisfied, she said, as the wise woman had taught her,

'Little goat, bleat!
Little table, spread!'

and immediately the little table and everything on it was gone again. 'That is a delightful way of keeping house!' thought Two-eyes, and was quite glad and happy.

In the evening, when she went home with her goat, she found a small earthenware dish with something to eat, which her sisters had set ready for her, but she did not touch it. Next day again she went out with her goat, and the few crusts of bread which had been given her, she left untouched. The first and second time that she did this, her sisters did not notice it at all, but as it happened every time, they soon did observe it, and said, 'There is something wrong about Two-eyes, she always leaves her food untasted, and she used to eat up every-

thing that was given her. She must have found other ways of getting her food.'

In order that they might learn the truth, they resolved to send One-eye with Two-eyes when she went to drive her goat to the pasture, to watch what Two-eyes did when she was there, and whether any one brought her anything to eat and drink. So when Two-eyes set out the next time, One-eye went to her and said, 'I will go with you to the pasture, and see that the goat is well taken care of, and driven where there is food.' But Two-eyes knew what was in One-eye's mind, and after she had driven the goat into long grass, she said, 'Come, One-eye, we will sit down, and I will sing something to you.' One-eye sat down, tired with the unaccustomed walk and the heat of the sun, and Two-eyes sang constantly,

'One eye, wakest thou?
One eye, sleepest thou?'

until One-eye shut her one eye, and fell asleep, and as soon as Two-eyes saw that One-eye was fast asleep, and could discover nothing, she said,

'Little goat, bleat!
Little table, spread!'

and seated herself at her table, and ate and drank until she had had enough, and then she said,

'Little goat, bleat!
Little table, go!'

and in an instant all was gone. Two-eyes now awakened One-eye, and said, 'One-eye, you set out to take care of the goat, and go to sleep while you are doing it. In the meantime the goat might run all over the world. Come, let us go home again.' So they went home, and again Two-eyes let her little dish stand untouched, and One-eye could not tell her mother why she would not eat it, and to excuse herself said, 'I fell asleep when I was out.'

Next day the mother said to Three-eyes, 'This time thou shalt go and watch if Two-eyes eats anything when she is out,

and if any one fetches her food and drink, for she must eat and drink in secret.' So Three-eyes went to Two-eyes, and said, 'I will go with you and see if the goat is taken proper care of, and driven where there is food.' But Two-eyes knew what was in Three-eyes' mind, and drove the goat into long grass, and said, 'We will sit down, and I will sing something to you, Three-eyes.'

'Now I know why that stuck-up thing there does not eat.'

Three-eyes sat down, tired with the walk and the heat of the sun, and Two-eyes began the same song as before, and sang,

'Three-eyes, are you waking?'

but then, instead of singing,

'Three-eyes, are you sleeping?'

as she ought to have done, she thoughtlessly sang,

'Two-eyes, are you sleeping?'

and sang all the time,

'Three-eyes, are you waking?
Two-eyes, are you sleeping?'

Then two of the eyes which Three-eyes had, shut and fell asleep, but the third, as it had not been named in the song, did not sleep. It is true that Three-eyes shut it, but only in her cunning, to pretend it was asleep too, but it blinked and could see everything very well. And when Two-eyes thought that Three-eyes was fast asleep, she used her little charm,

'Little goat, bleat!
Little table, spread!'

and ate and drank as much as her heart desired, and then ordered the table to go away again,

'Little goat, bleat!
Little table, go!'

and Three-eyes had seen everything. Then Two-eyes came to her, waked her and said, 'Have you been asleep, Three-eyes? You are a good caretaker! Come, we will go home.' And when they got home, Two-eyes again did not eat, and Three-eyes said to the mother, 'Now I know why that stuck-up thing there does not eat. When she is out, she says to the goat,

'Little goat, bleat!
Little table, spread!'

and then a little table appears before her covered with the best of food, much better than any we have here, and when she has eaten all she wants, she says,

'Little goat, bleat!
Little table, go!'

and all disappears. I watched everything closely. She put two of my eyes to sleep by using a certain form of words, but luckily the one in my forehead kept awake.' Then the envious mother cried, 'Dost thou want to fare better than we do? The desire shall pass away,' and she took a butcher's knife, and thrust it into the heart of the goat, and it fell down dead.

When Two-eyes saw that, she went out full of trouble, seated herself on the grass bank at the edge of the field, and wept bitter tears. Suddenly the wise woman once more stood by her side, and said, 'Two-eyes, why art thou weeping?'

'Have I not reason to weep?' she answered. 'The goat that spread the table for me every day when I spoke your charm, has been killed by my mother, and now I shall again have to bear hunger and want.'

The wise woman said, 'Two-eyes, I will give thee a piece of good advice. Ask thy sisters to give thee the entrails of the slaughtered goat, and bury them in the ground in front of the house, and thy fortune will be made.'

Then she vanished, and Two-eyes went home and said to her sisters, 'Dear sisters, do give me some part of my goat. I don't wish for what is good, but give me the entrails.'

Then they laughed and said, 'If that's all you want, you can have it.'

So Two-eyes took the entrails and buried them quietly in the evening, in front of the house-door, as the wise woman had counselled her to do.

Next morning, when they all awoke, and went to the house-door, there stood a strange and beautiful tree with leaves of silver, and fruit of gold hanging among them, so that in all the wide world there was nothing more beautiful or precious.

They did not know how the tree could have come there during the night, but Two-eyes saw that it had grown up out of the entrails of the goat, for it was standing on the exact spot where she had buried them.

Then the mother said to One-eye, 'Climb up, my child, and gather some of the fruit of the tree for us.'

One-eye climbed up, but just when she was about to take hold of one of the golden apples, the branch escaped from her hands, and that happened each time, so that she could not pluck a single apple, do what she might.

Then said the mother, 'Three-eyes, do you climb up; you with your three eyes can look about you better than One-eye.'

One-eye slipped down, and Three-eyes climbed up. Three-eyes was not more skilful, and might try as she liked, but the golden apples always escaped her. At length the mother grew impatient, and climbed up herself, but could get hold of the fruit no better than One-eye and Three-eyes, for she always clutched empty air.

Then said Two-eyes, 'I will just go up, perhaps I may succeed better.'

The sisters cried, 'You indeed, with your two eyes, what can you do?'

But Two-eyes climbed up, and the golden apples did not get out of her way, but came into her hand of their own accord, so that she could pick them one after the other, and brought a whole apronful down with her. The mother took them away from her, and instead of treating poor Two-eyes any better for this, she and One-eye and Three-eyes were only envious, because Two-eyes alone had been able to get the fruit, and so they treated her still more cruelly.

It so befell that once when they were all standing together by the tree, a young knight came along.

'Quick, Two-eyes,' cried the two sisters, 'creep under this, and don't disgrace us!' and with all speed they turned an empty barrel which was standing close by the tree over poor

Two-eyes, and they pushed the golden apples that she had been gathering under it too. When the knight came nearer it could be seen that he was a fine lord, and handsome too, and he stopped to admire the magnificent gold and silver tree, and said to the two sisters, ' To whom does this fine tree belong ? Any one who would give a branch of it to me might in return ask whatever he desired.'

Then One-eye and Three-eyes replied that the tree belonged to them, and that they would give him a branch. And they both tried hard, but they were not able to do it, for the branches and fruit slipped away from them every time.

Then said the knight, ' It is very strange that the tree should belong to you, and yet you are not able to break a branch off.'

Again they asserted that the tree was theirs. And whilst they were saying so, Two-eyes rolled out a couple of golden apples from under the barrel to the feet of the knight, for she was vexed with One-eye and Three-eyes for not speaking the truth. When the knight saw the apples he was astonished, and asked where they came from. One-eye and Three-eyes answered that they had another sister, who was not allowed to show herself, for she had only two eyes like any common person. But the knight desired to see her, and cried, ' Two-eyes, come forth.'

Then Two-eyes, quite comforted, came from beneath the barrel, and the knight was surprised at her great beauty, and said, ' Thou, Two-eyes, canst certainly break off a branch from the tree for me.'

' Yes,' replied Two-eyes, ' that I certainly shall be able to do, for the tree belongs to me.'

And she climbed up, and with the greatest ease broke off a branch with beautiful silver leaves and golden fruit, and gave it to the knight.

Then said the knight, ' Two-eyes, what shall I give thee for it ? '

' Alas ! ' answered Two-eyes, ' I suffer from hunger and

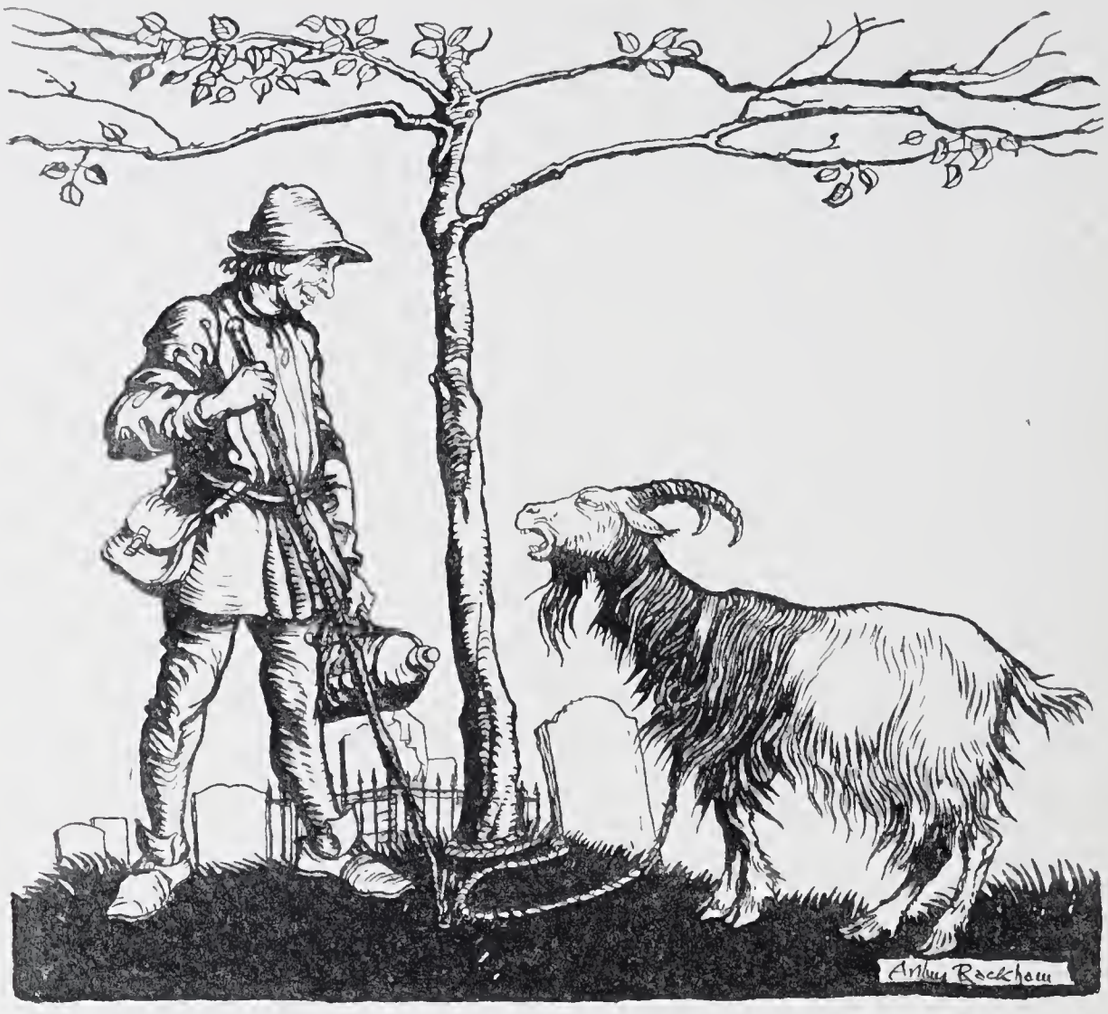
thirst, grief and want, from early morning till late night. If only you would take me with you, and deliver me from these things, I should be happy.'

So the knight lifted Two-eyes on to his horse, and took her home with him to his father's castle, and there he gave her beautiful clothes, and meat and drink to her heart's content, and as he loved her so much he married her, and their wedding took place with great rejoicing.

When Two-eyes was carried away by the handsome knight, her two sisters grudged her her good fortune in real earnest.

'The wonderful tree, however, still remains with us,' thought they, 'and even if we can gather no fruit from it, still every one will stand still and look at it, and come to us and admire it. Who knows what good things may not be in store for us?' But next morning the tree had vanished, and all their hopes were at an end. And when Two-eyes looked out of the window of her own little room, to her great delight it was standing in front of it, and so it had followed her.

Two-eyes lived a long time in happiness. Once two poor women came to her in her castle, and begged for alms. She looked in their faces, and recognised her sisters, One-eye and Three-eyes, who had fallen into such poverty that they had to wander about and beg their bread from door to door. Two-eyes, however, made them welcome, and was kind to them, and took care of them, so that they both with all their hearts repented the evil that they had done their sister in their youth.



The Wishing-Table, the Gold-Ass, and the Cudgel in the Knapsack

ONCE upon a time there was a tailor who had three sons, and only one goat. But as the goat supported the whole of them with her milk, she was obliged to have good food, and had to be taken every day to pasture. So the sons did this in turn. Once the eldest took her to the churchyard, where the finest grass was to be found, and let her eat and run about there. At night when it was time to

go home he asked, 'Goat, hast thou had enough?' The goat answered,

'I have eaten so much,
Not a leaf more I'll touch, meh! meh!'

'Come along home, then,' said the youth, and took hold of the cord round her neck, led her back to the stable and tied her up for the night.

'Well,' said the old tailor, 'has the goat had as much food as she ought?'

'Oh,' answered the son, 'she has eaten so much, not a leaf more she 'll touch.'

But the father wished to satisfy himself, so he went down to the stable, stroked the dear animal and asked, 'Nannie, art thou full?' The goat answered,

'And how should I be full?
Among the graves I leapt about,
But found no food, so went without, maa! maa!'

'What 's this I hear?' cried the tailor, and ran upstairs and said to the youth, 'Hullo, thou liar; thou saidst the goat had had enough, and hast let her starve!' and in his anger he took the yard-measure from the wall, and beat him out of the house.

Next day it was the turn of the second son, who looked out for a place near the fence of the garden, where nothing but good herbs grew, and the goat cleared them all off. At night when he wanted to go home, he asked, 'Goat, art thou full?' The goat answered,

'I have eaten so much,
Not a leaf more I'll touch, meh! meh!'

'Come along home, then,' said the youth, and led her home, and tied her up in the stable.

'Well,' said the old tailor, 'has the goat had as much food as she ought?'

'Oh,' answered the son, 'she has eaten so much, not a leaf more she 'll touch.'

The tailor would not rely on this, but went down to the stable and said, 'Nannie, hast thou had enough?' The goat answered,

'And how should I be full?
Among the graves I leapt about,
But found no food, so went without, maa! maa!'

'The wicked rascal!' cried the tailor, 'to let such a good animal hunger,' and he ran up and drove the youth out of doors with the yard-measure.

Now came the turn of the third son, who was determined to do his best, and sought out the bushes with the finest leaves, and let the goat browse there. In the evening when he wanted to go home, he asked, 'Goat, hast thou had enough?' The goat answered,

'I have eaten so much,
Not a leaf more I'll touch, meh! meh!'

'Come along home, then,' said the youth, and led her back to the stable, and tied her up.

'Well,' said the old tailor, 'has the goat really had enough this time?'

'She has eaten so much, not a leaf more she 'll touch.'

The tailor did not trust to that, but went down and asked, 'Nannie, hast thou had enough?' The wicked beast answered,

'And how should I have had enough?
Among the graves I leapt about,
But found no leaves, so went without, maa! maa!'

'Oh, what a pack of liars!' cried the tailor, 'each as wicked and forgetful as the other! Ye shall no longer make a fool of me,' and, quite beside himself with anger, he ran upstairs and belaboured the poor young fellow so vigorously with the yard-measure that he darted out of the house and away.

The old tailor was now alone with his goat. Next morning he went down into the stable, caressed the goat and said, 'Come, my dear little animal, I will take thee to feed myself.' He took her by the rope and conducted her where there were green hedges, and clover, and whatever else goats like to eat. 'There thou mayest for once eat to thy heart's content,' said he to her, and let her browse till evening. Then he asked, 'Goat, art thou full?' she replied,

'I have eaten so much,
Not a leaf more I'll touch, meh! meh!'

'Come along home, then,' said the tailor, and led her into the stable, and tied her fast. When he was going away, he turned round again and said, 'Well, art thou full for once?' But the goat did not behave any better to him, and cried,

'And how should I be full?
Among the graves I leapt about,
But found no leaves, so went without, maa! maa!'

When the tailor heard that, he was shocked, and saw clearly that he had driven away his three sons without cause. 'Wait, thou ungrateful creature!' cried he. 'It is not enough to drive thee forth; I will mark thee so that thou wilt no more dare to show thyself amongst honest tailors.' In great haste he ran upstairs, fetched his razor, lathered the goat's head, and shaved her as clean as the palm of his hand. And as the yard-measure would have been too good for her, he went and fetched to her the horsewhip, and gave her such a thrashing that she ran away as fast as she could go.

When the tailor was thus left quite alone in his house he fell into great grief, and would gladly have had his sons back again, but no one knew whither they were gone.

Now the eldest had apprenticed himself to a joiner, and learned industriously and untiringly, and when the time came for him to go travelling, his master presented him with a little table which was in no way remarkable to look at, and

was made of common wood, but it had one good property; if any one set it down anywhere and said, 'Little table, spread thyself,' the good little table was at once covered with a clean little cloth, and a plate was there, and a knife and fork beside it, and dishes with boiled meat, and roasted meat, as many as there was room for, and a great bumper of red wine shone so that it made the heart glad. The young journeyman thought, 'With this thou hast enough for thy whole life,' and wandered joyously about the world never troubling himself whether an inn was good or bad, or if anything was to be had there or not. When it suited him he did not enter an inn at all, but either in the open country, or in a wood, or a meadow, or wherever he fancied, he took his little table off his back, set it down before him, and said, 'Cover thyself,' and everything appeared that his heart desired. At length he took it into his head to go back to his father, whose anger would now be appeased, and who would now willingly receive him with his wishing-table.

It came to pass that on his way home, he came one evening to an inn which was filled with guests. They bade him welcome, and invited him to sit and eat with them, for otherwise he would have had difficulty in getting anything.

'No indeed,' answered the joiner, 'I wouldn't rob you of a mouthful; rather than that, you shall do me the honour of being my guests.'

They laughed, and thought he was jesting with them; but he placed his wooden table in the middle of the room, and said, 'Little table, cover thyself.' Instantly it was covered with good things, better far than the host could have provided, and the smell alone would have been too tempting to resist. 'Fall to, dear friends,' said the joiner; and the guests when they saw that he meant it, did not need to be asked twice, but drew their chairs up, pulled out their knives and attacked it valiantly. And what surprised them the most was that when a dish became empty, a full one instantly took its place of its own accord. The innkeeper stood in a corner and watched;

he did not at all know what to say, but he thought, 'Thou couldst easily find a use for such a cook as that in thy kitchen.' The joiner and his comrades made merry until late into the night. At length they all lay down to sleep, the young apprentice setting his magic table against the wall before he went to bed. The host's thoughts, however, let him have no rest; it occurred to him that there was a little old table in his lumber-room, which looked just like the apprentice's, and he brought it out quite softly, and exchanged it for the wishing-table. Next morning, the joiner paid for his bed, took up his table, never thinking that he had got a false one, and went his way. At midday he reached the house of his father, who received him with great joy.

'Well, my dear son, what hast thou learned?' said he to him.

'Father, I have become a joiner.'

'A good trade,' replied the old man; 'but what hast thou brought back with thee from thy apprenticeship?'

'Father, the best thing that I have brought back with me is this little table.'

The tailor inspected it on all sides and said, 'Thou didst not make a masterpiece when thou madest that; it is a wretched old table that.'

'But it is a table which furnishes itself,' replied the son. 'When I set it down, and tell it to cover itself, the most beautiful dishes stand on it, and a wine also, which gladdens the heart. Just invite all our relations and friends; they shall refresh and enjoy themselves for once, for the table will give them all they can desire.'

When the company was assembled, he put his table in the middle of the room and said, 'Little table, cover thyself,' but the little table did not bestir itself, and remained just as bare as any other table which did not understand when it was spoken to. Then the poor apprentice became aware that his table had been changed, and was ashamed at having to stand there like a liar. And his relations all mocked him, and were

forced to go home without having eaten or drunk. His father brought out his patches again, and went on tailoring, but the son went off to find a new master.

The second son had gone to a miller and had apprenticed himself to him. When his years were over, the master said, ' As thou hast conducted thyself so well, I give thee this ass of a very unusual kind, which neither draws a cart nor carries a sack.'

' To what use is he put, then ? ' asked the young apprentice.

' He lets gold drop from his mouth,' answered the miller. ' Set him on a cloth and say, " Bricklebrit " to him and the good animal will drop gold pieces for thee.'

' That is a fine thing,' said the apprentice, and thanked the master, and went out into the world. When he had need of gold, he had only to say ' Bricklebrit ' to his ass, and it rained gold pieces, and he had nothing to do but to pick them up from the ground. Wherever he went, the best of everything was good enough for him, and the dearer the better, for he had always a full purse. When he had looked about the world for some time, he thought to himself, ' Thou must seek out thy father; if thou goest to him with the gold-ass he will forget his anger, and receive thee well.'

It came to pass that he came to the same public-house in which his brother's table had been exchanged. He led his ass by the bridle, and the host was about to take the animal from him and tie him up, but the young apprentice said, ' Don't trouble yourself, I will take my grey horse into the stable, and tie him up myself too, for I must know just where he is.' This struck the host as odd, and he thought that a man who was forced to look after his ass himself could not have much to spend; but when the stranger put his hand in his pocket and brought out two gold pieces, and said he was to provide something good for him, the host opened his eyes wide, and ran and sought out the best he could muster. After dinner the guest asked what he owed. The host did not see why he should not double the reckoning, and said the apprentice must

give two more gold pieces. He felt in his pocket, but his gold had just come to an end.

'Wait an instant, sir host,' said he, 'I will go and fetch some money,' and he took the table-cloth with him. The host could not imagine what this could mean, and being curious, he stole after him, and as the guest bolted the stable door, he peeped through a hole left by a knot in the wood. The stranger spread out the cloth under the animal and cried, 'Bricklebrit,' and immediately the beast began to let gold pieces fall, so that it fairly rained down money on the ground.

'Eh, my word,' thought the host, 'ducats are quickly coined there! A purse like that is not amiss.' The guest paid his score, and went to bed, but in the night the host stole down into the stable, led away the master of the mint, and tied up another ass in his place.

Early next morning the apprentice travelled away with the ass, thinking all the time that he had his gold-ass. At midday he reached the house of his father, who rejoiced to see him again, and gladly took him in.

'What hast thou made of thyself, my son?' asked the old man.

'A miller, dear father,' he answered.

'What hast thou brought back with thee from thy travels?'

'Nothing else but an ass.'

'There are asses enough here,' said the father; 'I would rather have had a good goat.'

'Yes,' replied the son, 'but mine is no common ass, but a gold-ass. When I say "Bricklebrit," the good beast opens its mouth and drops a whole sheetful of gold pieces. Just summon all our relations hither, and I will make them rich people.'

'That suits me well,' said the tailor, 'for then I shall have no need to torment myself any longer with the needle,' and ran out himself and called the relations together.

As soon as they were assembled, the miller bade them

make way, spread out his cloth, and brought the ass into the room. 'Now watch,' said he, and cried, 'Bricklebrit,' but no gold pieces fell, and it was clear that the animal knew nothing of the art, for every ass does not attain such perfection. Then the poor miller pulled a long face, saw that he was betrayed, and begged pardon of the relatives, who went home as poor as they came. There was no help for it, the old man had to betake him to his needle once more, and the youth hired himself to a miller.

The third brother had apprenticed himself to a turner, and as that is skilled labour, he was the longest in learning. His brothers, however, told him in a letter how badly things had gone with them, and how the inn-keeper had cheated them of their wonderful wishing-gifts on the last evening before they reached home. When the turner had served his time, and had to set out on his travels, as he had conducted himself so well, his master presented him with a knapsack and said, 'There is a cudgel in it.'

'I can put on the knapsack,' said he, 'and it may be of good service to me, but why should the cudgel be in it? It only makes it heavy.'

'I will tell thee why,' replied the master; 'if any one has done anything to injure thee, do but say, "Out of the sack, Cudgel!" and the cudgel will leap forth among the people, and play such a dance on their backs that they will not be able to stir or move for a week, and it will not leave off until thou sayest, "Into the sack, Cudgel!"'

The apprentice thanked him, put the sack on his back, and when any one came too near him, and threatened to attack him, he said, 'Out of the sack, Cudgel!' and instantly the cudgel sprang out, and gave the coat of the evil-doer such a dusting that he soon wished that he had never tried to interfere. In the evening the young turner reached the inn where his brothers had been cheated. He laid his knapsack on the table before him, and began to talk of all the wonderful things which he had seen in the world.

'Yes,' said he, 'people may easily find a table which will cover itself, a gold-ass, and things of that kind—extremely good things which I by no means despise—but these are nothing in comparison with the treasure which I have won for myself, and am carrying about with me in my knapsack there.'

The inn-keeper pricked up his ears. 'What in the world can that be?' thought he. 'The knapsack must be filled with nothing but jewels; I ought to get them cheap too, for all good things go in threes.' When it was time for sleep, the guest stretched himself on the bench, and laid his knapsack beneath him for a pillow. When the inn-keeper thought his guest was lying in a sound sleep, he went to him and pushed and pulled quite gently and carefully at the knapsack to see if he could possibly draw it away and lay another in its place. The turner had, however, been waiting for this for a long time, and now just as the inn-keeper was about to give a hearty tug, he cried, 'Out of the sack, Cudgel!' Instantly the little cudgel came forth, and fell on the inn-keeper, and gave him a sound thrashing.

The host cried for mercy; but the louder he cried, the heavier the cudgel beat the time on his back, until at length he fell to the ground exhausted. Then the turner said, 'If thou dost not give back the table which covers itself, and the gold-ass too, the dance shall begin afresh.'

'Oh no,' cried the host in terror, 'I will gladly produce everything, only make that dreadful little goblin creep back into the sack.'

Then said the apprentice, 'I will have mercy instead of giving thee thy deserts, but beware of getting into mischief again!' So he cried, 'Into the sack, Cudgel!' and let him have rest.

Next morning the turner went home to his father with the wishing-table and the gold-ass. The tailor rejoiced when he saw him once more, and asked him likewise what he had learned in foreign parts.

'Dear father,' said he, 'I have become a turner.'

'A skilled trade,' said the father. 'What hast thou brought back with thee from thy travels?'

'A precious thing, dear father,' replied the son, 'a cudgel in the knapsack.'

'What!' cried the father, 'a cudgel! That 's worth thy trouble, indeed! From every tree thou canst cut thyself one.'

'But not one like this, dear father. If I say "Out of the sack, Cudgel!" the cudgel springs out and leads any one who means ill with me such a dance, I can tell you, and never stops until he lies on the ground and prays for fair weather. Look you, with this cudgel I have got back the wishing-table and the gold-ass which the thievish inn-keeper stole from my brothers. Now let them both be sent for, and invite all our kinsmen. I will give them the best to eat and to drink, and will fill their pockets with gold into the bargain.' The old tailor would not quite believe, but nevertheless got the relatives together. Then the turner spread a cloth in the room and led in the gold-ass, and said to his brother, 'Now, dear brother, speak to him.' The miller said, 'Bricklebrit,' and instantly the gold pieces fell down on the cloth like a thunder-shower, and the ass did not stop until every one of them had so much that he could carry no more. (I can see in thy face that thou also wouldst have liked to be there.)

Then the turner brought the little table, and said, 'Now, dear brother, speak to it.' And scarcely had the carpenter said, 'Table, cover thyself,' than it was spread and amply covered with the most savoury dishes.

Then such a meal took place as the good tailor had never yet known in his house, and the whole party of kinsmen stayed till far into the night, and were all merry and glad together. The tailor locked away in a cupboard needle and thread, yard-measure and goose, and lived with his three sons in plenty and happiness.

What, however, has become of the goat who was to blame for the tailor driving out his three sons? That I will tell

GOLD PIECES FELL DOWN ON THE CLOTH LIKE A THUNDER SHOWER.

thee. She was ashamed that she had a bald head, and ran to a fox's hole and crept into it. When the fox came home, he was met by two great eyes shining out of the darkness, and he was terrified and ran away.

A bear met him, and as the fox looked upset, he said, 'What is the matter with thee, brother Fox? Why dost thou look like that?'

'Ah,' answered Redskin, 'a fierce beast is in my cave and stared at me with its fiery eyes.'

'We will soon drive him out,' said the bear, and went with him to the cave and looked in, but when he saw the fiery eyes, fear seized on him too; he would have nothing to do with the fearful beast, and took to his heels.

The bee met him, and as she saw that he was ill at ease, she said, 'Bear, thou art really pulling a very pitiful face; what has become of all thy gaiety?'

'It is all very well for thee to talk,' replied the bear; 'a furious beast with staring eyes is in Redskin's house, and we can't drive him out.'

The bee said, 'Bear, I pity thee. I am a poor weak creature whom thou wouldst not turn aside to look at, but still I believe I can help thee.' And she flew into the fox's cave, settled on the goat's shaven head, and stung her so sharply that she sprang up, crying 'Meh, meh,' and ran forth into the world like mad, and to this hour no one knows where she has gone.

The Wonderful Musician

THERE was once a wonderful musician, who was going all alone through a forest thinking of all manner of things, and when nothing was left for him to think about, he said to himself, ' Time is beginning to pass heavily with me here in the forest, I 'll call hither some one to keep me company.' Then he took his fiddle from his back, and played so that it echoed through the trees. It was not long before a wolf came trotting through the thicket towards him.

' Ah, here 's a wolf coming ! I 've no desire for him ! ' said the musician.

But the wolf came nearer and said to him, ' Ah, dear musician, how beautifully thou dost play ! I should like to learn that, too.'

' It is soon learned,' the musician replied; ' thou hast only to do all that I bid thee.'

' O musician,' said the wolf, ' I will obey thee as a scholar obeys his master.'

The musician bade him follow him, and when they had gone a little way together, they came to an old oak-tree which was hollow, and cleft in the middle.

'Look,' said the musician, 'if thou wilt learn to fiddle, put thy fore paws into this crack.'

The wolf obeyed, but the musician quickly picked up a stone and with one blow wedged his two paws so fast that he was forced to stay there prisoner.

'Stay there until I come back again,' said the musician, and went his way.

After a while he said to himself again, 'Time is beginning to pass heavily with me here in the forest, I will call hither another companion,' and he took his fiddle again and played a tune. It was not long before a fox came creeping through the trees towards him.

'Ah, there 's a fox coming!' said the musician. 'I have no desire for him.'

The fox came up to him and said, 'Oh, dear musician, how beautifully thou dost play! I should like to learn that, too.'

'That is soon learned,' said the musician; 'thou hast only to do everything that I bid thee.'

'Oh, musician,' then said the fox, 'I will obey thee as a scholar obeys his master.'

'Follow me,' said the musician; and when they had walked a little way, they came to a footpath, with high bushes on both sides of it. There the musician stopped, and from one side bent a young hazel down to the ground, and put his foot on it, then he bent down a sapling from the other side as well, and said, 'Now, little fox, if thou wilt learn something, give me thy left fore paw.' The fox obeyed, and the musician fastened his paw to the left bough.

'Little fox,' said he, 'now give me thy right paw,' and he tied it to the right bough. He made sure they were safely tied, and then he let go; the bushes sprang up again, and up jerked the little fox, so that he hung struggling in the air.

'Wait there till I come back again,' said the musician, and went his way.

Again he said to himself, 'Time is beginning to pass heavily with me here in the forest, I will call hither another companion,' so he took his fiddle, and the sound echoed through the forest. This time a little hare came leaping towards him.

'Why, here 's a hare coming,' said he. 'I don't want her.'

'Ah, dear musician,' said the hare, 'how beautifully thou dost fiddle! I, too, should like to learn that.'

'That 's soon learned,' said the musician; 'thou hast only to do everything I bid thee.'

'Oh, musician,' replied the little hare, 'I will obey thee as a scholar obeys his master.' They went on a little way together until they came to an open space in the forest, where stood an aspen. The musician tied a long string round the little hare's neck, the other end of which he fastened to the tree.

'Now, briskly, little hare, run twenty times round the tree!' cried the musician, and the little hare obeyed, and when she had run round twenty times, she had twisted the string twenty times round the trunk of the tree, and the little hare was caught, and let her pull and tug as she liked, it only made the string cut into her tender neck.

'Wait there till I come back,' said the musician, and on he went.

The wolf, in the meantime, had pushed and tugged and bitten at the stone, until at last he had set his feet at liberty and had dragged them out of the cleft. Full of rage and fury he rushed after the musician and wanted to tear him to pieces.

When the fox saw him running past, he began to yelp and howl with all his might, 'Brother wolf, come to my help; the musician has betrayed me!' So the wolf drew down the little trees, bit the cords in two, and freed the fox, who went on with him to take revenge on the musician. They found the hare tied up too and delivered her, and then they all sought the enemy together.

Once more the musician had played his fiddle as he went on his way, and this time he had been more fortunate. The sound reached the ears of a poor woodcutter, who instantly had to give up his work, willy-nilly, and came with his hatchet under his arm to listen to the music.

'At last comes the right companion,' said the musician, 'for I was seeking a human being, not a wild beast.' And he began to play so sweetly and enchantingly that the poor man stood there as if bewitched, and his heart leaped with gladness. And as he stood thus, the wolf, the fox, and the hare came up, and he saw well that they meant no good. So he raised his glittering axe and placed himself before the musician, as if to say, 'Whoever wishes to touch him let him beware, for he will have to do with me!' And that frightened the beasts and they ran back into the forest. The musician, however, played once more to the man out of gratitude, and then went on.

The Cunning Little Tailor

ONCE upon a time there was a princess who was extremely proud. If a wooer came she gave him a riddle to guess, and if he could not find it out, he was made fun of and turned out. She had it made known also that he who solved her riddle should marry her, whoever he might be.

In time three tailors fell in with each other, the two eldest of whom thought they had done so many neat jobs before that they could not fail to succeed in this also. The third was a little useless vagrant, who did not even know his trade, but thought he might have some luck in this venture, for Heaven knows where else it was to come from. The two others told him to stay at home. What could he do, said they, with the little sense he possessed. The little tailor, however, did not let himself be discouraged, and said he had set his head to work about this for once, and he 'd do well enough, and out he went as if the whole world were his.

They all three presented themselves before the princess, and said she was to propound her riddle to them, for at last the right persons had come, who had wits so fine that they could be threaded in a needle.

Then said the princess, ' I have two kinds of hair on my head, of what colour is it ? '

' If that 's all,' said the first, ' it must be black and white, like the cloth which is called pepper and salt.'

' Wrong,' said the princess. ' Let the second answer.'

Then said the second, ' If it isn't black and white, then it 's brown and red, like my father's best Sunday coat.'

' Wrong,' said the princess. ' Let the third give the answer, for I see very well he knows it for certain.'

Then the little tailor stepped boldly forth and said, 'The princess has a silver and a golden hair on her head, and those are the two different colours.'

When the princess heard that, she turned pale and nearly fell down with terror, for the little tailor had guessed her riddle, and she had firmly believed that no man on earth could discover it. When her courage returned she said, 'But thou hast not won me yet, there is still something else that thou must do. Below, in the stable, is a bear with which thou shalt pass the night, and when I get up in the morning if thou art still alive, thou shalt marry me.' And she was quite sure she would thus get rid of the tailor, for the bear had never yet left any one alive who had fallen into his clutches.

The little tailor did not let himself be frightened away, but was quite delighted, and said, 'Boldly ventured is half won.'

So, when evening came, our little tailor was taken down to the bear. The bear was about to make for the little fellow at once, and give him a hearty welcome with his paws, but 'Softly, softly,' said the little tailor, 'I will soon make thee quiet.'

Then quite coolly, and as if he hadn't a care in the world, he took some nuts out of his pocket and cracked them, and ate the kernels. When the bear saw that, he was seized with a desire to have some nuts too. The tailor felt in his pockets, and held him out a handful. Really, however, they were not nuts at all, but pebbles. The bear put them in his mouth, but could make nothing of them, let him bite as he would.

'Eh!' thought he, 'what a stupid blockhead I am! I cannot even crack a nut!' and then he said to the tailor, 'Here, crack me the nuts.'

'There, see what a stupid fellow thou art!' said the little tailor, 'with such a great mouth, and not able to crack a little nut!' And he took the pebble and quickly put a nut in his mouth in the place of it, and crack, it was in two!

'I must try the thing again,' said the bear; 'when I watch you, it makes me think I ought to be able to do it too.'

So the tailor once more gave him a pebble, and the bear

tried and tried to get his teeth into it with all his might. But no one will imagine that he did it.

When the bear heard the music he could not help beginning to dance.

When that was over, the tailor took out a violin from under his coat, and played a tune on it to himself. When the bear heard the music he could not help beginning to dance, and

when he had danced a while, it pleased him so well that he said to the little tailor, 'Hark you, is the fiddle heavy?'

'Light enough for a child. Look, with the left hand I lay my fingers on it, and with the right I stroke it with the bow, and then it goes merrily, hop sa sa vivallalera!'

'So,' said the bear; 'fiddling is a thing I should like to master too, that I might dance whenever I had a fancy. What dost thou think of that? Wilt thou give me lessons?'

'With all my heart,' said the tailor, 'if thou hast a talent for it. But just let me see thy claws, they are terribly long. I must cut thy nails a little.' Then a vice was brought, and the bear put his claws in it, and the little tailor screwed it tight, and said, 'Now wait until I come with the scissors.' And the bear might growl as he liked, but the tailor lay down in the corner on a bundle of straw, and fell asleep.

When the princess heard the bear growling so fiercely during the night, she thought all the time that he was growling for joy, and had made an end of the tailor. In the morning she arose careless and happy, but when she peeped into the stable, the tailor stood gaily before her, as spry as a fish in the water. Now she could not say another word against the wedding because she had given her promise before every one, and the King ordered a carriage to be brought for her to drive to church with the tailor, and there she was to be married.

When they had got into the carriage, the two other tailors, who had false hearts and envied him his good fortune, went into the stable and set free the bear again. The bear in great fury ran after the carriage. The princess heard him snorting and growling; she was terrified, and she cried, 'Oh, oh, the bear is coming after us and wants to get thee!' The tailor was quick and stood on his head, stuck his legs out of the window, and cried, 'Dost thou see the vice? If thou dost not be off thou shalt be put into it again.' When the bear saw that, he turned round and ran away. The tailor drove quietly to church, and the princess was married to him at once, and he lived with her as happy as a woodlark. Whoever does not believe this must pay a thaler.

The Gnomes

ONCE upon a time there was a rich King who had three daughters, who used to walk every day in the palace garden. The King was a great lover of all kinds of fine trees, but there was one for which he had such an affection, that he wished a wish that if any one gathered an apple from it he might sink a hundred fathoms under the ground. And when harvest time came, the apples on this tree were all as red as blood.

The three daughters went every day and looked under the tree to see if the wind had not blown down an apple, but they never by any chance found one, yet the tree was so loaded with them that it was almost breaking and the branches hung down to the ground. Then the King's youngest child had a great longing for an apple, and said to her sisters, 'Our father loves us far too much to wish us underground; I am sure he would only do that to people who were strangers.' And while she was speaking, the girl plucked off a large apple, and ran to her sisters, saying, 'Just taste, my dear little sisters, for never in my life have I tasted anything so delightful.' Then the two other sisters also ate some of the apple, whereupon all three sank deep down into the earth where they could hear no cock crow.

When midday came the King wished to call them to come to dinner, but they were nowhere to be found. He sought them everywhere in the palace and garden, but could not find them. Then he was much troubled, and made known to the whole land that whosoever brought his daughters back again should have one of them to wife. Hereupon so many young men went about the country in search, that there was no

counting them, for every one loved the three princesses because they were so kind to all, and so pretty. Among the seekers were three young hunters, and when they had travelled about for eight days, they arrived at a great castle in which were beautiful apartments, and in one room a table was laid on which were delicate dishes which were still so warm that they were smoking, but in the whole of the castle no human being was either to be seen or heard. They waited there for half a day, and the food still remained warm and smoking, and at length they were so hungry that they sat down and ate, and they decided that they would stay and live in that castle, and that one of them, who should be chosen each day by casting lots, should remain in the house, and the two others seek the King's daughters. They cast lots, and the lot fell on the eldest, so next day the two younger went out to seek, and the eldest had to stay at home.

At midday came a small, small mannikin and begged for a piece of bread, so the hunter took the loaf which he had found there, and cut a round off it and was about to give it to him, when, as he did so, the mannikin let it fall, and asked the hunter to be so good as to give it to him again. The hunter was about to do so and stooped, on which the mannikin seized a stick, caught him by the hair, and gave him a good thrashing.

Next day, the second stayed at home, and he fared no better, and when the two others returned in the evening, the eldest asked, ' Well, how have you got on ? '

' Oh, very badly,' said he, and they bemoaned their misfortune together, but they said nothing about it to the youngest, for they did not like him at all, and always called him Stupid Hans, because he did not rightly belong to the forest.

On the third day, the youngest stayed at home, and again the little mannikin came and begged for a piece of bread. When the youth gave it to him, he let it fall as before, and asked him to be so good as to give it him again. Then said

Hans to the little mannikin, 'What! canst thou not pick up that piece thyself? If thou wilt not take as much trouble as that for thy daily bread, thou dost not deserve to have it.' Then the mannikin grew very angry and said he was to do it, but the hunter would not, and takes my dear little mannikin, and gives him a thorough good beating. At that the mannikin screamed terribly, and cried, 'Stop, stop, and let me go, and I will tell thee where the King's daughters are.' When Hans heard that, he left off beating him and the mannikin told him that he was a gnome, and that there were more than a thousand like him, and that if he would go with him he would show him where the King's daughters were. Then he took him to a deep well, but there was no water in it. And the mannikin told him how he well knew that the companions Hans had with him did not intend to deal honourably with him, therefore if he wished to deliver the King's children, he must do it alone. He said that the two other brothers would also be very glad to recover the King's daughters, but they did not want to have any trouble or danger. Hans was therefore to get a large basket to sit in, taking with him his hunting-knife and a bell, and be let down by a rope. Below were three rooms, and in each of them was a princess, with a many-headed dragon, whose heads she had to comb and trim, but he must cut them off. And having said all this, the little man vanished.

When it was evening the two brothers came and asked how he had got on, and he said, 'Pretty well so far,' and that he had seen no one except at midday when a little mannikin had come who had begged for a piece of bread, that he had given some to him, but that the mannikin had let it fall and had asked him to pick it up again. But as he did not choose to do that, the mannikin had begun to lose his temper, and that he had done what he ought not, and had given the little man a beating, on which he had told him where the King's daughters were. When they heard this the two were so angry that they grew green and yellow.

Next morning they went to the well together, and drew lots who should first seat himself in the basket, and again the lot fell on the eldest, and he sat himself in it, and took the bell with him. Then he said, ' If I ring, you must draw me up again immediately.' When he had gone down a short distance, he rang, and they at once drew him up again. Then the second seated himself in the basket, but he did just the same as the first, and then it was the turn of the youngest, but he let himself be lowered quite to the bottom.

When he had got out of the basket, he took his hunting-knife and went and stood outside the first door and listened, and heard the dragon snoring loudly. He opened the door slowly, and one of the princesses was sitting there, and had nine dragon's heads lying upon her lap, and was combing them. Then he took his hunting-knife and hacked at them till all nine heads fell to the ground. The princess jumped up, threw her arms round his neck, embraced and kissed him over and over again, and took her necklace, which was made of red gold, and hung it round his neck. Then he went to the second princess, who had a dragon with five heads to comb, and delivered her, and last to the youngest, who had a dragon with four heads. And they all rejoiced, and embraced him and kissed him without stopping. Then he rang his bell very loud, so that those above could hear him, and he placed the princesses one after the other in the basket, and had them all drawn up, but when it came to his own turn he remembered the words of the little man, who had told him that his comrades did not mean well by him. So he took a great stone which was lying there, and placed that in the basket, and when it was about half way up, his false brothers cut the rope, so that the basket with the stone fell to the ground, and they thought that he was killed. When they had done that they made off with the three princesses, making them promise to tell their father that it was they who had delivered them, and they went to the King, and each demanded a princess in marriage.

In the meantime the youngest hunter was wandering about

HE PLAYED UNTIL THE ROOM WAS ENTIRELY FILLED WITH GNOMES.

the three chambers in great perplexity, fully expecting to have to end his days there, when he saw hanging on the wall, a flute. 'Why dost thou hang there?' said he; 'no one can be merry here.' He looked at the dragon's heads also and said, 'You too cannot help me now.' And he walked backwards and forwards for such a long time that he made the surface of the ground quite smooth. But at last other thoughts came to his mind, and he took the flute from the wall, and played a few notes on it, and suddenly a number of gnomes appeared, and with every note that he sounded one more came. Then he played until the room was entirely filled with them. They asked him what he desired, so he said he wished to get above ground back to daylight, on which they seized him by every hair that grew on his head, and flew up with him to the earth again.

When he was safely out of the well, he went off at once to the King's palace, just as the wedding of one of the princesses was about to be celebrated, and he went straight to the room where the King was sitting with his three daughters, and directly the princesses saw him they fainted. The King was very angry, and ordered him to be put in prison at once, because he thought he must have done some injury to his children. But when the princesses came to themselves, they begged the King to set him free again. The King in surprise asked them why, and when they said that they were not allowed to tell him, their father said they must tell it to the stove then. And he went out, and listened at the door, and heard all about it.

The two brothers he caused to be hanged on the gallows, and to the third he gave his youngest daughter, and they lived happily ever after.

Hans the Hedgehog

THERE was once a countryman who had money and land in plenty, but however rich he might be, there was still one thing wanting to his happiness, for he had no children. Often when he went into the town with the other peasants they mocked him, asking him why he had no children. At last one day he became angry, and when he got home he said, 'Wife, I will have a child, even if it be but a hedgehog.'

And in time they did have a child, and it was like a hedgehog in the upper part of his body, and a boy in the lower, and when the wife saw the child, she was terrified, and said, 'See there, thou hast brought ill-luck on us.'

Then said the man, 'What can be done now? The boy must be christened, but we shall never be able to find a godfather for him.'

And the woman said, 'Nor can we call him anything else but Hans the Hedgehog.'

When he was christened, the parson said, 'You cannot put him into any ordinary bed because of his spikes.' So a little straw was placed behind the stove, and Hans the Hedge-

hog was laid on it. His mother could not nurse him, for his quills would have pricked her. So he lay there behind the stove for eight years, and his father grew tired of him and wished, 'If he would but die!' He did not die, however, but went on lying there.

Now it happened that there was a fair in the town, and the peasant was about to go to it, and he asked his wife what he should bring back for her.

'A little meat and a couple of white rolls which are wanted for the house,' said she.

Then he asked the servant, and she wanted a pair of slippers and some stockings with clocks.

Last of all he said, 'And what wilt thou have, Hans my Hedgehog?'

'Dear father,' he said, 'do bring me some bagpipes.'

When the father came home again, he gave his wife what he had bought for her, meat and white rolls. And then he gave the maid the slippers, and the stockings with clocks. And lastly he went behind the stove, and gave Hans the Hedgehog the bagpipes.

And when Hans the Hedgehog had the bagpipes, he said, 'Dear father, do go to the forge and get the cock shod, and then I'll ride away, and never come back again.' On hearing this, the father was delighted to think that he was going to get rid of him, and he had the cock shod for him, and when it was done, Hans the Hedgehog got on its back, and rode away, and he took some swine and asses with him which he intended to keep in the forest. When they got there he made the cock fly on to a high tree with him, and there he sat for many a long year, and watched his asses and swine until the herd was quite large. And all this time his father knew nothing about him. While he was sitting in the tree, however, he learned to play his bagpipes, and made music which was very beautiful.

Once a King came wandering by who had lost his way and he heard the music. He was astonished by it, and sent his servant to look about and find out where this music came from.

He spied about, but saw nothing but a little animal sitting up aloft on the tree, which looked like a cock with a hedgehog on it making music. The King told the servant to ask why he sat there, and if he knew the road which led to his kingdom. So Hans the Hedgehog came down from the tree, and said he would show him the way if the King would write a bond and promise him whatever he first met in the royal courtyard as soon as he arrived at home. Then the King thought, 'I can do that without any fear. Hans the Hedgehog can understand nothing, and I can write what I like.' So the King took pen and ink and wrote, and when he had done, Hans the Hedgehog showed him the way, and he got safely home. But his daughter, when she saw him from afar, was so overjoyed that she ran to meet him and kissed him. Then he remembered Hans the Hedgehog and told her what had happened, and that he had been forced to promise whatever first met him when he got home to a very strange animal which sat on a cock as if it were a horse, and made beautiful music, but that instead of writing that he should have what he wanted, he had written that he should not have it. Thereupon the princess was glad, and said he had done well, for she never would have gone away with the Hedgehog.

Hans the Hedgehog, however, looked after his asses and pigs, and was always merry and sat on the tree and played his bagpipes.

Now it came to pass that another King came journeying by with his servants and footmen, and he also had lost his way, and did not know how to get home again because the forest was so large. He too heard the beautiful music from a distance, and asked his footman what that could be, and told him to go and see. Then the footman went under the tree, and saw the cock sitting at the top of it, and Hans the Hedgehog on the cock. The footman asked him what he was about up there ?

'I am keeping my asses and my pigs, but what is it you want ? '

The messenger said that they had lost their way, and could not get back into their own kingdom, and asked if he would not show them the way. Then Hans the Hedgehog climbed down the tree with the cock, and told the old King that he would show him the way, if he would give him for his own whatsoever first met him in front of his royal palace.

The King said, 'Yes,' and wrote a promise to Hans the Hedgehog that he should have this.

That done, Hans rode on before him on the cock, and pointed out the way, and the King reached his kingdom again in safety. When he reached the courtyard, there were great rejoicings. Now he had an only daughter who was very beautiful. And she ran to meet him, threw her arms round his neck, and was delighted to have her old father back again. She asked him where in the world he had been so long. So he told her how he had lost his way, and had very nearly not come back at all, but that as he was travelling through a great forest, a creature, half hedgehog, half man, who was sitting astride a cock in a high tree, and making music, had shown him the way and helped him to get out, but that in return he had promised him whatsoever first met him in the royal courtyard, and how that was she herself, which made him unhappy now. But she promised at once, that for love of her father, she would willingly go with this Hans if he came.

Hans the Hedgehog, however, took care of his pigs, and the pigs multiplied until they became so many that the whole forest was full of them. Then Hans the Hedgehog resolved not to live in the forest any longer, and sent word to his father to have every stye in the village emptied, for he was coming with such a great herd that all might kill pigs who wished to do so. When his father heard that he was troubled, for he thought Hans the Hedgehog had died long ago. But Hans the Hedgehog seated himself on the cock, drove the pigs before him into the village, and ordered the slaughter to begin. Ho!—but then there was a killing and a chopping that might have been heard two miles off!

After this Hans the Hedghog said, ' Father, let me have the cock shod once more at the forge, and then I will ride away and never come back as long as I live.' Then the father had the cock shod once more, and was pleased that Hans the Hedgehog would never return again.

Hans the Hedgehog rode away to the first kingdom. There the King had commanded that whosoever came mounted on a cock and had bagpipes with him should be shot at or cut down, or stabbed by every one, so that he might not enter the palace. When, therefore, Hans the Hedgehog came riding up, all came running to stop him with their pikes, but he spurred the cock and it flew up over the gate in front of the King's window and lighted there, and Hans cried that the King must give him what he had promised, or he would take both his life and his daughter's. At that the King began to speak his daughter fair, and beg her to go away with Hans in order to save her own life and her father's. So she dressed herself in white, and her father gave her a carriage with six horses and magnificent attendants together with gold and possessions. She seated herself in the carriage, and placed Hans the Hedgehog beside her with the cock and the bagpipes, and then they took leave and drove away, and the King thought he should never see her again. He was, however, deceived in his expectation, for when they were a short distance from the town, Hans the Hedgehog tore her pretty clothes off and scratched her with his hedgehog's prickles until she was all over blood.

' That 's the reward for your falseness,' said he. ' Go, get you gone, I won't have you ! ' and he chased her back home, and she was disgraced for the rest of her life.

Hans the Hedgehog rode on further on the cock, with his bagpipes, till he got to the dominions of the second King to whom he had shown the way. This one, however, had arranged that if any one like Hans the Hedgehog should come, they were to present arms, bring him safely in, cry long life to him, and lead him to the royal palace.

But when the King's daughter saw him she was terrified,

for he looked quite too extraordinary. Still she remembered that she could not change her mind, for she had given her promise to her father. So Hans the Hedgehog was welcomed by her, and married to her, and had to go with her to the royal table, and she seated herself by his side, and they ate and drank.

When the evening came and they wanted to go to sleep, she was afraid of his quills, but he told her she was not to fear, for no harm would befall her, and he told the old King that he was to appoint four men to watch by the door of the chamber, and light a great fire, and when he entered the room and was about to get into bed, he would creep out of his hedgehog's skin and leave it lying there by the bedside, and that the men were to spring swiftly to it, throw it in the fire, and stay by until it was consumed. When the clock struck eleven, he went into the chamber, stripped off the hedgehog's skin, and left it lying by the bed. In came the men and seized it instantly, and threw it in the fire. And when the fire had consumed it, he was delivered, and lay there in bed in human form, but he was coal-black as if he had been burnt. The King sent for his physician who washed him with precious salves, and anointed him, and he became white, and was a handsome young man. When the King's daughter saw that she was glad, and the next morning they arose joyfully, ate and drank, and then the marriage was properly solemnised, and Hans the Hedgehog received the kingdom from the aged King.

When several years had passed he went with his wife to his father, and said that he was his son. The father, however, declared he had no son—he had never had but one, and he had been born like a hedgehog with spikes, and had gone out into the world. Then Hans made himself known, and the old father rejoiced and went with him to his kingdom.

The Nose Tree

A LONG time ago there were three old soldiers who, when they were no longer able to fight for the King, were dismissed from the army without a penny in their pockets, and they had to beg their bread from door to door.

Their way once led through a great forest where night overtook them. And two of them lay down to rest while the third kept watch lest they should be seized in their sleep by wild beasts.

As he stood there in the dark, watching, a little red dwarf came up.

'Who 's there?' cried the dwarf.

'Friend,' replied the soldier.

'And who are you?' said the dwarf.

'We are three poor old discharged soldiers with scarcely a tooth among us, and yet teeth too many for the fare that has fallen to us this day.' And he told the dwarf how hardly they had been treated.

The dwarf in pity produced a queer old cloak, which looked as if it was fit for nothing but the rag-bag. This he gave to the soldier telling him that he must keep it secret from the others till morning, for it was a wishing cloak, and whatever its wearer might wish, his wish was instantly fulfilled.

The next watch was kept by the second soldier. And he, too, received a visit from the little red man, who gave him a wonderful purse that was always full of money.

During the last watch of the night when the third soldier was on guard, the little man came yet again, and this time his gift was of a horn at whose sound all men near and far were bound to come running to follow its magic music.

At sunrise each showed his wonderful possession to the others, and you may be sure they wasted no time before they were living in comfort and riches, with a coach and three white horses when they wished to travel and a splendid great castle to live in.

After a time, so fine had they become, that they must needs pay the King a visit. And they were welcomed and entertained as befitted the great lords they now appeared to be.

The King had an only daughter, and once, while she was playing cards with one of the soldiers, she discovered that it mattered not to him whether he won or lost, for his purse never failed to have money in it, no matter how much he had to pay. It was not long before she guessed that it could only be a wishing-purse. This she must have. So, waiting her opportunity, she slyly mixed a sleeping-draught in a cup of wine that she gave him, and while he slept she changed his purse for another one which was just the same to look at.

Next morning their visit came to an end, and the soldiers drove away. And they soon found out the trick that had been played upon them.

'Alas!' cried one, 'now we are beggars again.'

'Oh! don't be in such a hurry about that,' said the first. 'I 'll warrant we 've no cause yet to grow grey with trouble. I 'll soon have it back again.' And throwing on his magic old cloak, he wished himself in the princess's room.

There he was at once. And there she sat at her table counting out gold from the purse as fast as she could count.

'Help! Help!' screamed the princess at the top of her voice. 'Robbers! Robbers! Help!'

In an instant the alarm was raised, and the guard rushed into the room followed by the whole court.

Startled out of his wits, the soldier forgot the magic power of his cloak, dashed for the window and escaped. But he left the cloak behind him, caught fast to the curtain hook as he leaped.

And then he, too, had lost the little red dwarf's gift!

Now they had nothing left but the horn. And this time

they would indeed be wise. So they agreed upon a plan to recover the cloak and the purse.

They marched through the country blowing the horn, till they had raised an enormous army. And then they went to the King's city and demanded that the lost gifts should be given back to them or else not one stone of the King's palace would they leave standing on another.

The King consulted his daughter, but she wasn't going to give up her treasures as readily as all that. And she disguised herself as a poor girl, selling drinks to the soldiers of the camp, whither she went with a basket on her arm.

When she was there she began to sing. And so beautifully, that the whole army ran out of their tents and gathered round to hear her, the soldier who had the horn among them. At this her waiting-maid, who had also been disguised, stole into his tent, hid the horn under her apron and ran away with it to the palace.

And now the King's daughter had all three wishing-gifts. For, of course, with the help of the horn she had easily been able to overcome the three soldiers and their men.

Once more the old soldiers found themselves in poverty.

'We must separate,' one said. 'Do you two go that way and I'll go this.' And with that he went off alone, lying down beneath a tree in the forest when night came. At daybreak he saw that he was under an apple-tree covered with beautiful ripe fruit and he was so hungry that he picked one apple after another and ate them. What then did he find but that his nose was growing longer and longer and longer! And it grew, and grew, until it reached the ground!

There was nothing he could do to stop it, and so there he sat, while his nose kept on growing along the ground till it went right out of sight among the trees, miles away.

By this time, however, his companions had decided to rejoin him and were wandering through the forest in search. Suddenly one of them stumbled against something soft that was lying across the path.

THEY CAME AT LAST TO THEIR POOR OLD FRIEND.

'What the mischief is this?' cried he. And as he looked at it, it moved a little. 'A nose? Upon my word it 's a nose, neither more nor less!'

'We 'll follow this nose,' said they, and up and down through the wood they went, through bushes and briars, till they came at last to their poor old friend, lying on the ground where he had slept, unable to stir a step.

Try as they could, the great long nose was too heavy for them to lift. So they hunted about till they found a donkey, and put their friend upon it, with his nose wound round a couple of poles which they helped to carry. But even the ass could bear the weight only a very short way, so they set him down again in despair.

But it happened that they had stopped by a pear-tree, and who should step from behind it but their little friend, the red dwarf.

Said he to Brother Long-Nose, 'Eat just one of these pears, and your nose will fall off.'

And so it came about. The long nose fell right off, leaving exactly the same amount as the man had had before.

Again the little man spoke and said, 'Prepare a powder from the apples, and prepare another powder from the pears. Then if any one eats of the first his nose will grow, and if he eats the pear-powder, it will fall off again.'

'With these two powders,' he went on, 'go back to the princess and give her, first, two of the apples. Then give her some of the powder made from the apples, and her nose will grow even twenty times as long as yours. But be firm.' With these words he vanished.

The soldier followed the dwarf's advice, and went in the guise of a costermonger to the King's palace, saying he came with apples to sell, sweeter and finer than had ever been seen there before. The princess bought some, and two she ate with very great pleasure.

And now her nose began to grow! And it grew so quickly that she couldn't lift herself out of her chair. And it grew

round and round the table, and round and round the wardrobe, and out of the window, and round the castle, and down the street, and out about the town till there were twenty miles or so of princess's nose in the kingdom.

Rich for life the King said he would make him who eased the princess of her terrible burden. And he caused a proclamation to be made throughout the land.

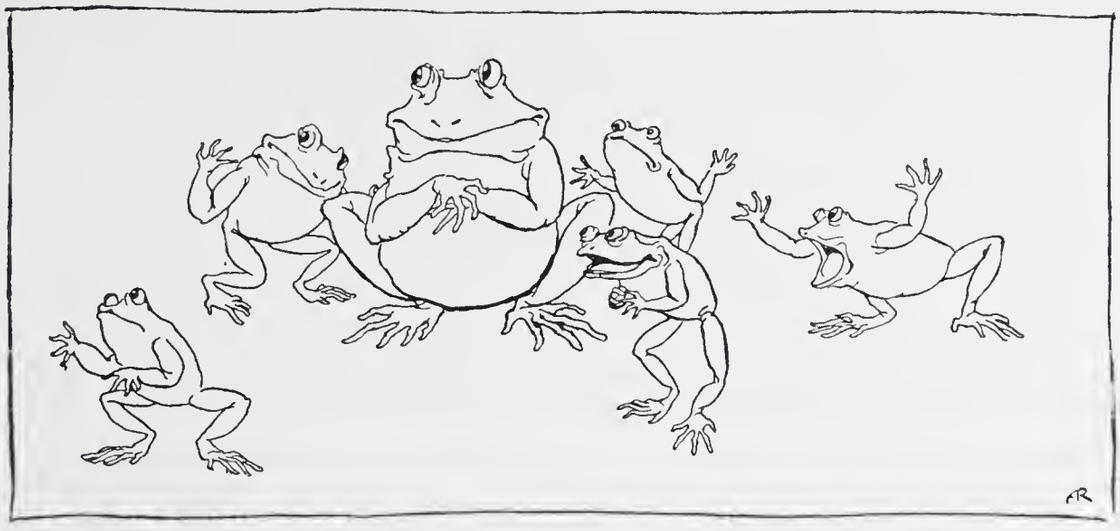
After a while, the old soldier presented himself dressed like a learned doctor, and he gave her some of the apple-powder, as the dwarf had advised. And her nose grew more and more and more, twenty times more. He waited until she could bear her distress no longer and then he gave her a little pear-powder, but not very much, and her nose perceptibly shortened. But he wasn't going to let her off yet, so next morning he gave her another dose of apple-powder, so that her nose started growing again and gained more than it had lost the day before.

At that he told her she must have something on her conscience. She must have robbed some one. No, she said, she hadn't. ' Well,' said he, ' you 'll lose your life then. There 's nothing I can do to save you.' And he went out of the room.

This added to her terror, and after the King had urged her to give up the purse, the horn, and the cloak, to be restored to their rightful owners, she sent after the physician and told him all. Then she bade her waiting-maid get all three things out of the cupboard and handed them over to him.

When he had them all safe, he measured out to the princess the right quantity of pear-powder, the nose fell off immediately, to the great delight of every one, and two hundred and fifty men had to come and cut it in pieces before it could be cleared away.

As for the old soldier, he joyfully went back home to his two friends, and they spent the rest of their lives together in the enjoyment of their three magic possessions.



The Three Feathers

THERE was once on a time a King who had three sons, of whom two were clever and wise, but the third did not talk much, and was simple, and was called the Duffer. When the King had become old and weak, and began to think of his end, he did not know which of his sons ought to inherit the kingdom after him.

So he said to them, 'Go forth, and he who brings me the most beautiful carpet shall be King after my death.' And that there should be no dispute amongst them, he took them outside his castle, blew three feathers in the air, and said, 'You shall go as they fly.'

One feather flew to the east, the other to the west, but the third flew straight up and did not fly far, but soon fell to the ground. So one brother went to the right, and the other to the left, mocking at the Duffer who was forced to stay where the third feather had fallen. He sat down feeling very sad, when all at once he saw that there was a trap-door in the ground close by the feather. He lifted it up, and found some

steps, which he went down. Then he came to a door, and knocked at it, and heard somebody inside call out,

'Little green maiden,
Hop, hop about!
Hop to the door,
And see who's without.'

The door opened, and there he saw a great fat toad sitting surrounded by a crowd of little toads. The fat toad asked what he wanted? He answered, 'I should like to have the prettiest and finest carpet in the world.' Then she called one of the little ones and said,

'Little green maiden,
Hopping all about,
Hop quick and get me
My great box out.'

The young toad brought the box, and the fat toad opened it, and gave the Duffer a carpet out, so beautiful and so fine, that on the earth above none could have been woven like it. Then he thanked her, and climbed the stairs again.

The two others, however, had looked on their youngest brother as so stupid that they never believed he would find or bring anything at all. 'Why should we give ourselves a great deal of trouble searching about?' said they, and they got some coarse kerchiefs from the first shepherds' wives they met, and carried them home to the King. At the same time also the Duffer came back, and brought his beautiful carpet, and when the King saw it he was astonished, and said, 'If justice be done, the kingdom must belong to the youngest.' But the two others let their father have no peace, saying that it was impossible that the Duffer, who lacked understanding in everything, should be King, and entreating him to make another trial.

'Then,' said the father, 'he who brings me the most beautiful ring shall inherit the kingdom,' and he led the three brothers out and blew into the air the three feathers which they were to follow.

Those of the two eldest again went east and west, and the Duffer's feather flew straight up, and fell down near the trap-door into the ground. Then he went down again to the fat toad, and told her that he wanted the most beautiful ring. She at once ordered her great box to be brought, and gave him a ring out of it, which sparkled with jewels, and was so beautiful that no goldsmith on earth would have been able to make it. The two eldest laughed at the idea of the Duffer seeking a golden ring. So they gave themselves no trouble, but picked up an old harness-ring, and took it to the King; but when the Duffer produced his golden ring, his father again, said, 'The kingdom belongs to him.' The two eldest did not cease from tormenting the King until he made a third condition, and declared that the one who brought the most beautiful woman home should have the kingdom. He again blew the three feathers into the air, and they flew as before.

The Duffer without more ado went down to the fat toad, and said, 'I am to take home the most beautiful woman!'

'Oh,' answered the toad, 'the most beautiful woman! She is not at hand at the moment, but still thou shalt have her.' She gave him a yellow turnip which had been hollowed out, to which six mice were harnessed. Then the Duffer said quite mournfully, 'What am I to do with that?' The toad answered, 'Just put one of my little toads into it.' Then he seized one at random out of the circle, and put her into the yellow coach, but hardly was she seated inside it than she turned into the most beautiful maiden, and the turnip into a coach, and the six mice into horses. So he kissed her, and drove off quickly back home to the King. His brothers came in soon afterwards. They had given themselves no trouble at all to seek beautiful girls, but had brought with them the first peasant women they chanced to meet.

When the King saw them he said, 'After my death the kingdom shall belong to my youngest son.'

But the two eldest deafened the King's ears afresh with their clamour. 'We cannot consent to the Duffer being King,' and demanded that the one whose wife could leap through a hoop which hung in the centre of the hall should have the preference. They thought, 'Our peasant women can do that easily; they are strong enough, but this delicate maiden will kill herself in the attempt.' The aged King agreed to this plan too. Then the two peasant women jumped, and jumped through the hoop, but were so stout and heavy that they fell and broke their coarse arms and legs. And then the pretty maiden whom the Duffer had brought with him took her turn and skipped through the hoop as lightly as a deer, and then there was no more to be said. So the Duffer received the crown, and has ruled wisely and well for many a long year.

The Goose-girl at the Well

ONCE upon a time there was a very old woman, who lived with her flock of geese in a waste place among the mountains, where she had a little hut. The waste was surrounded by a large forest, and there every morning the old woman hobbled with her crutch. The dame was quite active, more so than one would have thought, considering her age, and she gathered fodder for her geese, and picked all the wild fruit she could reach, and carried everything home on her back. Any one would have thought that such a heavy load would have weighed her to the ground, but she always brought it safely home.

If any one met her, she greeted him quite courteously. 'Good day, dear countryman, it is a fine day. Ah! you

The pretty maiden skipped through the hoop as lightly as a deer.

wonder I drag all this about, but every one must take his burden on his back.'

Nevertheless, people did not like meeting her if they could help it, and went out of their way to avoid her, and when a father passed her with his boys, he whispered to them, 'Beware of that old woman. She has claws beneath her gloves; she is a witch.'

One morning, a handsome young man was going through the forest. The sun shone bright, the birds sang, a cool breeze stole through the leaves, and he was full of joy and gladness. He had as yet met no one, when he suddenly perceived the old witch kneeling on the ground cutting grass with a sickle. She had already thrust a whole load into her bundle, and near it stood two baskets, which were filled with wild apples and pears.

'What, Motherkins,' said he, 'how canst thou carry all that?'

'I must carry it, dear sir,' answered she; 'rich folk's children have no need to do such things, but we peasant folk have no choice. With us the saying goes, Don't look behind you; you will only see how bent your back is!'

'Will you help me?' she said, as he remained standing by her. 'You have still a straight back and young legs; it would be a trifle to you. Besides, my house is not so very far from here; it stands there on the heath behind the hill. How quickly you could bound up thither!'

The young man took compassion on the old woman. 'In truth my father is no peasant,' replied he, 'but a rich count. Nevertheless, that you may see that it is not only peasants who can bear burdens, I will take your bundle.'

'If you will but try,' said she, 'I shall be very glad. It will take you an hour, to be sure, but what will that matter to you. Only you must carry the apples and pears as well.'

It now seemed to the young man just a little serious when he heard of an hour's walk, but the old woman would not let

him off, packed the bundle on his back, and hung the two baskets on his arm.

'See, it 's quite light,' said she.

'No, it is not light,' answered the count, and he pulled a rueful face. 'Verily, the bundle is as heavy as if it were full of cobble-stones, and the apples and pears are as heavy as lead! I can scarcely breathe.' He had a mind to put everything down again, but the old crone would not let him.

'Just look,' said she mockingly, 'the young gentleman will not carry what an old woman like me has so often dragged along. You are ready enough with your fine words, but when it comes to the point, you want to take to your heels. Why are you standing there?' she went on. 'Step out. No one will take the bundle off again.'

As long as the path followed level ground, it was bearable, but when they came to the hill and had to climb, and the stones rolled under his feet as if they were alive, it was beyond his strength. Drops of sweat stood on his forehead, and ran, hot and cold, down his back. 'Mother,' said he, 'I can go no further. I must have a rest.'

'Not here,' answered the old woman. 'When we reach our journey's end you can rest, but now you must go on. Who knows what good it may do you?'

'Old woman, thou art becoming shameless!' said the count, and tried to throw off the bundle, but he laboured in vain, it stuck as fast to his back as if it grew there. He turned and twisted, but he could not get rid of it. The old woman laughed and sprang about on her crutch quite delighted.

'Don't get angry, dear sir,' said she; 'you are growing as red in the face as a turkey-cock! Carry your bundle patiently. I will give you a good present when we get home.'

What could he do? He was obliged to submit to his fate, and crawl along patiently behind the old woman. She seemed to grow more and more nimble, and his burden still heavier. All at once she gave a spring, jumped on to the bundle and sat herself on the top of it. And however withered she might

be, she was yet heavier than the stoutest country lass. The youth's knees trembled, but when he halted the old woman hit him about the legs with a switch and with stinging-nettles. Groaning continually, he climbed the mountain, and at length reached the old woman's house when he was just about to drop. When the geese caught sight of the old woman, they flapped their wings, stretched out their necks, and ran cackling to meet her. Behind the flock with a stick in her hand came an old wench, strong and big, but ugly as night.

'Good mother,' said she to the old woman, 'has anything happened to you, you have stayed away so long?'

'Not at all, my little daughter,' answered she; 'I have met with nothing bad, but, on the contrary, with this kind gentleman, who has carried my burden for me. Only think, he even took me on his back too when I was tired. Nor has the way seemed long to us. We have been merry, and have been cracking jokes with each other all the time.' Then the old woman slid down, took the bundle off the young man's back, and the baskets from his arm, looked at him quite kindly, and said, 'Now seat yourself on the bench before the door, and rest. You have fairly earned your wages, and they shall not be wanting.' Then she said to the goose-girl, 'Go into the house, my dear daughter; it won't do for thee to be alone with a young gentleman. One must not pour oil on to the fire; he might fall in love with thee.'

The count knew not whether to laugh or to cry. 'Such a sweetheart as that,' thought he, 'could not touch my heart, even if she were thirty years younger.'

In the meantime the old woman stroked and fondled her geese as if they were children, and then went into the house with her daughter. The youth lay down on the bench under a wild apple-tree. The air was warm and mild. On all sides stretched a green meadow, which was gay with cowslips, wild thyme, and a thousand other flowers. Through the midst of it rippled a clear brook sparkling in the sun, and the white geese wandered to and fro, or paddled in the water.

Groaning continually, he climbed the mountain.

'It is quite delightful here,' said he, 'but I am so tired that I cannot keep my eyes open. I 'll sleep a little. If only a gust of wind does not come and blow my legs off my body, for they are as rotten as tinder.'

When he had slept a while, the old woman came and shook him till he awoke.

'Sit up,' said she, 'thou canst not stay here. I have certainly treated thee hardly, still it has not cost thee thy life. Of money and land thou hast no need, here is something else for thee.' Thereupon she thrust a little box into his hand, which was cut out of a single emerald. 'Take great care of it,' said she, 'it will bring thee good fortune.' The count sprang up, and as he felt that he was quite fresh, and had recovered his vigour, he thanked the old woman for her present, and set off without even once looking back at the beautiful daughter. And for some distance he still heard the noisy cry of the geese.

For three days the count had to wander in the wilderness before he could find his way out. He then reached a large town, and as no one knew him, he was led to the royal palace, where the King and Queen were sitting on their throne. The count fell on one knee, drew the emerald box out of his pocket, and laid it at the Queen's feet. She bade him rise and hand her the little box. Hardly, however, had she opened it, and looked inside, than she fell as if dead to the ground. The count was seized by the King's servants, and was being led to prison, when the Queen opened her eyes, and ordered them to release him, and every one was to go out, as she wished to speak with him in private.

When they were alone, the Queen began to weep bitterly, and said, 'Of what use to me are the splendours and honours with which I am surrounded. Every morning I wake in pain and sorrow. I had three daughters, the youngest of whom was so beautiful that the whole world looked on her as a wonder. She was as white as snow, as rosy as apple-blossom, and her hair as radiant as sunbeams. When she cried, not

tears fell from her eyes, but pearls and jewels. When she was fifteen years old, the King summoned all three sisters to come before his throne. You should have seen how all the people gazed when the youngest entered, it was just as if the sun was rising! Then the King spoke, "My daughters, I know not when my last day may come; to-day I will decide what each of you shall receive at my death. You all love me, but the one of you who loves me best, shall fare the best." Each of them said she loved him best. "Can you not express to me," said the King, "how much you love me, that I may judge between you?" The eldest spoke. "I love my father as dearly as the sweetest sugar." The second, "I love my father as dearly as my prettiest dress." But the youngest was silent. Then their father said, "And thou, my dearest child, how much dost thou love me?" "I do not know. I can compare my love with nothing." But her father insisted that she should name something. So she said at last, "The best food does not please me without salt, therefore I love my father like salt." When the King heard that, he fell into a passion, and said, "If thou lovest me like salt, thy love shall also be repaid thee with salt." And he divided the kingdom between the two elder, but caused a sack of salt to be bound on the back of the youngest, and two servants had to lead her forth into the wild forest. We all begged and prayed for her,' said the Queen, 'but the King's anger was not to be appeased. How she cried when she had to leave us! the whole road was strewn with the pearls which flowed from her eyes. The King soon afterwards repented of his great severity, and had the whole forest searched for the poor child, but no one could find her. When I think that the wild beasts have devoured her, I know not how to contain myself for sorrow. Many a time I console myself with the hope that she is still alive, and may have hidden herself in a cave, or has found shelter with compassionate people. But picture to yourself, when I opened your little emerald box, a pearl lay there, of exactly the same kind as those which used to fall from my

daughter's eyes. And you can imagine how the sight of it stirred my heart. Tell me, you must, how you came by that pearl.'

The count told her how he had received it from the old woman in the forest, who had appeared very strange to him and must be a witch, but he had neither seen nor heard anything of the Queen's child. Thereupon the King and the Queen resolved to seek out the old woman. They thought that there where the pearl had been, they would obtain news of their daughter.

In her lonely cottage the old woman was sitting at her spinning-wheel. It was already dusk, and a log which was burning on the hearth gave a scanty light. All at once there was a noise outside, the geese were coming home from the pasture, and uttering their hoarse cries. Soon afterwards in came the daughter. The old woman scarcely noticed her, but only shook her head a little. The daughter sat down beside her, took her spinning-wheel, and twisted the threads as nimbly as a young girl. Thus they both sat for two hours, and exchanged never a word. At last something rustled at the window, and two fiery eyes peered in. It was an old night-owl, which cried, 'Uhu!' three times.

The old woman glanced up and she said, 'Now, my little daughter, it is time for thee to go out and do thy work.'

She rose and went out, and where did she go? Over the meadows on and on into the valley. At last she came to a well, with three old oak-trees standing beside it. Meanwhile the moon had risen large and round over the mountain, and it was so light that one could have found a needle. She removed a skin which covered her face, bent down to the well, and began to wash herself. When she had finished, she dipped the skin also in the water, and then laid it on the grass to dry in the moonlight. But how the maiden was changed! Such a change as that was never seen before! When the grey mask fell off, her golden hair broke forth like sunbeams, and spread like a mantle over her whole form. Her eyes shone

out as brightly as the stars in heaven, and her cheeks bloomed a soft red like apple-blossom.

But the fair maiden was sad. She sat down and wept bitterly. One tear after another escaped from her eyes, and rolled through her long hair to the ground. There she sat, and would have remained sitting a long time, if there had not been a rustling and cracking in the boughs of the nearest tree. She sprang up like a roe which has been surprised by the shot of the hunter. Just then the moon was hidden by a dark cloud, and in an instant the maiden had slipped on the old skin and vanished, like a light blown out by the wind.

She ran back home, trembling like an aspen leaf. The old woman was standing on the threshold, and the girl was about to relate what had befallen her, but the old woman laughed kindly, and said, 'I already know all.' She led her into the room and threw a fresh log on the fire. She did not, however, sit down to her spinning again, but fetched a broom and began to sweep and scour, 'All must be clean and sweet,' she said to the girl.

'But, mother,' said the maiden, 'why do you begin work at so late an hour? What is it you expect?'

'Dost thou know then what time it is?' asked the old woman.

'Not yet midnight,' answered the maiden, 'but already past eleven o'clock.'

'Dost thou not remember,' continued the old woman, 'that it is three years to-day since thou camest to me? Thy time is up, we can no longer remain together.'

The girl was terrified, and said, 'Alas! dear mother, will you cast me off? Where shall I go? I have no friends, and no home to which I can go. I have always done as you bade me, and you have always been satisfied with me; do not send me away.'

The old woman would not tell the maiden what lay before her. 'My stay here is over,' she said to her, 'but when I depart, house and parlour must be clean. Therefore do not

hinder me in my work. Have no care for thyself, thou shalt find a roof to shelter thee, and the wages which I will give thee shall content thee also.'

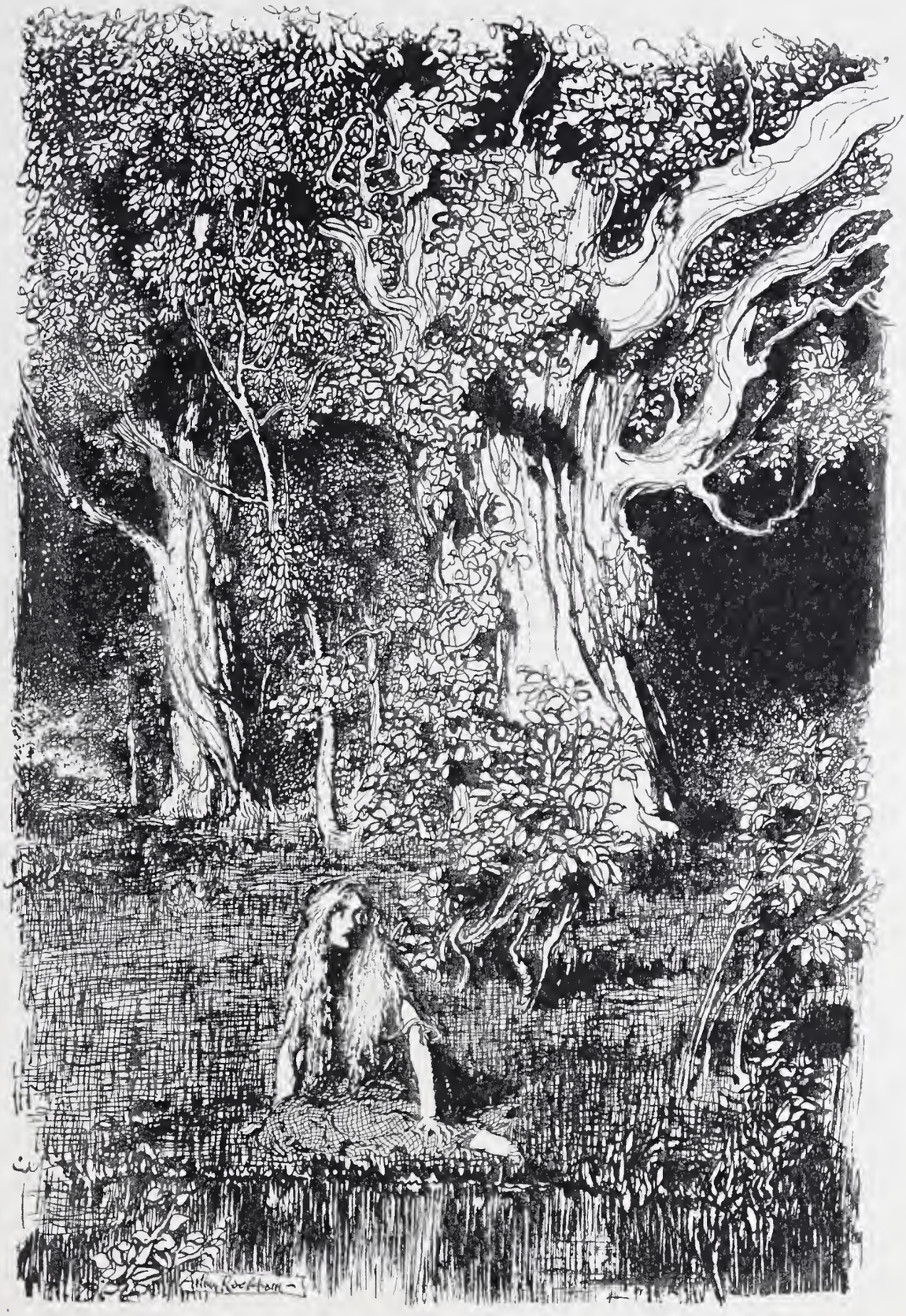
'But tell me what is about to happen,' the maiden continued to entreat.

'I tell thee again, do not hinder me in my work. Do not say a word more, go to thy chamber, take the skin off thy face, and put on the silken gown which thou hadst on when thou camest, and then wait in thy chamber until I call thee.'

But I must once more tell of the King and Queen, who had journeyed forth with the count to seek out the old woman in the wilderness. By chance the count had become separated from them in the dark wood, and had had to go on alone. Next day it seemed to him that he was on the right track, so he still went forward, until darkness came on, then he climbed a tree, intending to pass the night there, for fear he might lose his way. When the moon illumined the surrounding country he saw a figure coming down the mountain. She had no stick in her hand, but he could see that it was the goose-girl, whom he had seen before in the house of the old woman.

'Oho,' cried he, 'there she comes, and if I once get hold of one of the witches, the other shall not escape me!'

But how astonished he was, when she went to the well, took off the skin and washed herself, and when her golden hair fell all about her, and she was more beautiful than any one he had ever seen in the whole world. He hardly dared to breathe, but stretched his head as far forward through the leaves as he dared, and gazed at her. Either he bent over too far, or whatever the cause might be, the bough suddenly cracked, and that very moment the maiden slipped into the skin, sprang away like a roe, and as the moon was suddenly covered, disappeared from his eyes. Hardly had she disappeared, before the young count descended from the tree, and hastened after her with nimble steps. He had not been gone long before he saw in the moonlight two figures coming over the meadow. It was the King and Queen, who had per-



There she sat, and would have remained sitting a long time, if there had not been a rustling and cracking in the boughs of the nearest tree.

ceived from a distance the light shining in the old woman's little house, and were going to it. The count told them what marvels he had seen by the well, and they did not doubt that it had been their lost daughter. They walked on full of joy, and soon came to the little house. The geese were sitting all round it, fast asleep with their heads under their wings, and not one of them moved. The King and Queen looked in at the window. The old woman was sitting there quietly spinning, nodding her head and never looking round. The room was perfectly clean, as if the little mist men, who carry no dust on their feet, lived there. Their daughter, however, they did not see. They gazed at all this for a long time, and at last they took heart, and knocked softly at the window.

The old woman appeared to have been expecting them. She rose, and called out in a friendly voice, ' Come in, I know already who you are.' When they had entered the room, the old woman said, ' You might have spared yourselves this long journey, if three years ago you had not unjustly driven away your child, who is so good and lovable. No harm has come to her. For three years she has had to tend the geese, and with them she has learned no evil, but has preserved her purity of heart. You, however, have been punished enough by the misery in which you have lived.' Then she went to the bedroom door and called, ' Come out, my little daughter.'

Thereupon the door opened, and the princess stepped out in her silken garments, with her golden hair and her shining eyes, and it was as if an angel from heaven had entered.

She went up to her father and mother, fell on their necks and kissed them. There was no help for it, they all had to weep for joy. The young count stood near them, and when she saw him she blushed as red as a moss-rose, she herself did not know why.

The King said, ' My dear child, I have given away my kingdom, what have I to give thee ? '

' She needs nothing,' said the old woman. ' I give her the tears that she has wept on your account. They are precious

pearls, finer than those that are found in the sea, and worth more than your whole kingdom, and as payment for her services I give her my little house.' When the old woman had said that, she disappeared from their sight.

The walls creaked, and when the King and Queen looked round, the little hut had changed into a splendid palace, a royal table had been spread, and the servants were running hither and thither.

The story goes still further, but my grandmother, who related it to me, had partly lost her memory and had forgotten the rest. I shall always believe that the beautiful princess married the count, and that they remained together in the palace, and lived there in all happiness so long as God willed it. Whether the snow-white geese, which were kept near the little hut, were verily young maidens (no one need take offence), whom the old woman had taken under her protection, and whether they now received their human form again, and stayed as handmaids to the young Queen, I do not exactly know, but I suspect it. This much is certain, that the old woman was no wicked witch, as people thought, but a Wise Woman, who meant well. Very likely it was she who, at the princess's birth, gave her the gift of weeping pearls instead of tears. That does not happen nowadays, or else the poor would soon become rich.

The Little People's Presents

A TAILOR and a goldsmith were travelling together. And one evening when the sun had sunk behind the mountains, they heard the sound of music far away, which became more and more distinct as they went on. It sounded strange, but so sweet that they forgot all their weariness and stepped quickly on.

The moon had already risen when they reached a hill on which they saw a crowd of little men and women, who had taken each other's hands, and were whirling round in the dance with the greatest gaiety and delight. And they sang to it most charmingly, and that was the music which the travellers had heard. In the midst of them sat an old man who was rather taller than the rest. He wore a coat of many colours, and his iron-grey beard hung down over his breast.

The two remained standing full of astonishment, and watched the dance. The old man made a sign that they should enter, and the little folks willingly opened their circle. The goldsmith, who had a hump, and like all hunchbacks was brave enough, stepped in at once. The tailor felt a little afraid at first, and held back, but when he saw how merrily all was going, he too plucked up courage and followed. The circle closed again directly, and the little folks went on singing and dancing with the wildest leaps. The old man, however, took a large knife which hung to his girdle, and whetted it, and when it was sharp enough, he looked round at the strangers. They were terrified, but they had not much time to think, for the old man seized the goldsmith, and with the greatest speed shaved the hair of his head clean off, and then the same thing happened to the tailor. But their fear left them when, after

When it was sharp enough, he looked round at the strangers.

he had finished his work, the old man clapped them both on the shoulder in a friendly manner, as much as to say that they had behaved well to let all that be done to them willingly, and without struggle. He pointed with his finger to a heap of coals that lay at one side, and made signs to the travellers that they were to fill their pockets with them. Both of them obeyed, although they did not know of what use the coals would be to them, and then they went on their way to seek a shelter for the night. When they reached the valley, the clock of the neighbouring monastery struck twelve, and the song ceased. In a moment all had vanished, and the hill lay deserted in the moonlight.

The two travellers found an inn, and covered themselves up on their straw beds with their coats, but in their weariness they forgot to take the coals out of their pockets before doing so. A heavy weight on their limbs woke them up earlier than usual. They felt in the pockets, and could not believe their eyes when they saw that they were not filled with coals, but with pure gold. And they were glad to find, too, the hair of their heads and beards was again as thick as ever.

They had now become rich folk, but the goldsmith, who, in accordance with his greedy disposition, had filled his pockets better, was as rich again as the tailor. A greedy man, even if he has much, still wishes to have more, so the goldsmith proposed to the tailor that they should wait another day, and go out again in the evening in order to bring back still greater treasures from the old man on the hill. The tailor refused, and said, ' I have enough and am content. Now I shall be a master, and marry my dear object (for so he called his sweetheart), and I am a happy man.' But he stayed another day to please him.

In the evening the goldsmith hung a couple of bags over his shoulders that he might be able to stow away a great deal, and took the road to the hill. He found, as on the night before, the little folks at their singing and dancing, and the old man again shaved him clean, and signed to him to take

some coal away with him. He was not slow about sticking as much into his bags as would go, and he went back quite delighted, and covered himself over with his coat. 'Even if the gold does weigh heavily,' said he, 'I will gladly bear that,' and at last he fell asleep with the sweet anticipation of waking in the morning an enormously rich man.

When he opened his eyes, he got up in haste to examine his pockets, but how amazed he was when he drew nothing out of them but black coals, and that no matter how often he put his hands in them. 'The gold I got the night before is still there for me,' thought he, and went and brought it out, but how shocked he was when he saw that it likewise had again turned into coal. He smote his forehead with his dusty black hand, and then he felt that his whole head was bald and smooth, as was also the place where his beard should have been. But his misfortunes were not yet over. He now remarked for the first time that in addition to the hump on his back, a second, just as large, had grown in front on his breast. Then he recognised the punishment of his greediness, and began to weep aloud. The good tailor, who was awakened by this, comforted the unhappy fellow as well as he could, and said, 'Thou hast been my comrade in my travelling time. Thou shalt stay with me and share in my wealth.' He kept his word, but the poor goldsmith was obliged to carry the two humps as long as he lived, and to cover his bald head with a cap.

The Three Little Men in the Wood

THERE was once a man whose wife had died, and a woman whose husband had died. And the man had a daughter, and the woman also had a daughter. The girls knew each other, and used often to take walks together, and afterwards come back to the woman's house.

One day said she to the man's daughter, 'Listen. Tell thy father that I would like to marry him, and then thou shalt wash thyself in milk every morning, and drink wine, while my own daughter shall wash herself in water and only have water to drink.' The girl went home, and told her father what the woman had said.

'What shall I do?' said the man. 'Marriage is a joy, but it is also a torment.' At length as he could come to no decision, he pulled off his boot, and said, 'Here, take this boot, it has a hole in the sole. Go up to the loft with it and hang it on the big nail, and then pour water into it. If it holds the water, I will again take a wife, but if it runs through, I won't.'

The girl did as she was ordered, but the water drew the hole together, and the boot became full to the top. She informed her father what had happened, and he went up to look for himself. When he saw that she was right, he went to the widow and wooed her, and the wedding took place.

Next morning, when the two girls got up, before the man's daughter there stood milk for her to wash in and wine for her to drink, but before the woman's daughter stood water to wash herself with and water for drinking. On the second morning there stood water for washing and water for drinking before the man's daughter as well as before the woman's daughter. But on the third morning there stood water for washing and

water for drinking before the man's daughter, and milk for washing and wine for drinking before the woman's daughter, and that 's how it went on. The woman became bitterly unkind to her step-daughter, and day by day did her utmost to treat her still worse. She was envious too because her step-daughter was beautiful and lovable, and her own daughter ugly and repulsive.

Once, in winter, when everything was frozen as hard as a stone, and hill and vale lay covered with snow, the woman made a frock of paper, called her step-daughter, and said, 'Here, put on this dress and go out into the wood, and fetch me a little basketful of strawberries—I have a fancy for some.'

'Good heavens!' said the girl, 'no strawberries grow in winter! The ground is frozen, and besides the snow has covered everything up. And why am I to go in this paper frock? It is so cold outside that one's very breath freezes! The wind will blow through the frock, and the thorns will tear it off my back.'

'Wilt thou dare to contradict me?' said the step-mother. 'Go thou at once and don't show thy face again until thou hast filled the basket with strawberries!' Then she gave her a little slice of stale bread, and said, 'This 'll last thee the day,' thinking 'Out there she 'll die of cold and hunger, and I shall never see her again.'

The maiden obeyed, and put on the paper frock, and went out with the basket. Far and wide there was nothing but snow, and not a green blade to be seen. In the wood she came upon a small house out of which peeped three little dwarfs. She wished them good day, and knocked modestly at the door. 'Come in,' they cried, and in she went and sat down on the bench by the stove, where she began to warm herself and to eat her breakfast.

'Give us some too,' said the little men.

'Willingly,' said she, and broke her bit of bread in two, and gave them half.

'What dost thou here,' they asked her, 'in the forest in winter time, in thy thin dress?'

'Ah,' she answered, 'I have to pick a basketful of strawberries, and mustn't go home till I can take them with me.'

When she had eaten her bread, they gave her a broom and said, 'Sweep away the snow at the back door.' And when she had gone outside, the three little men asked each other, 'What shall we give her as she is so good, and has shared her bread with us?'

Then said the first, 'My gift is, that she shall grow more beautiful every day.'

The second said, 'My gift is, that gold pieces shall fall out of her mouth every time she speaks.'

The third said, 'My gift is, that a king shall come and take her to wife.'

Meanwhile the girl did as the little men had bidden her, and swept away the snow behind the little house with the broom, and what did she find there but real ripe strawberries, which came up quite dark red out of the snow! In haste she joyfully gathered her basket full, thanked the little men, shook hands with each of them, and ran home to take her step-mother what she had longed for so much. When she went in and said good evening, at once there fell out of her mouth a piece of gold! Thereupon she related what had happened to her in the wood. And with every word she spoke, gold pieces fell from her mouth, until very soon the whole room was covered with them.

'Now look how proud she is,' cried the step-sister, 'throwing gold about in that way!' but secretly she was envious of it, and she too wanted to go into the forest to seek strawberries.

Her mother said, 'No, my dear little daughter, it is too cold, thou mightest die of cold.' However, as her daughter let her have no peace, the mother gave way at last, made her put on a fine warm coat of fur, and gave her bread and butter and cake to take with her.

The girl went into the forest, straight to the little house.

WHAT DID SHE FIND THERE BUT REAL RIPE STRAWBERRIES.

The three little mannikins peeped out again, but she did not greet them, and without glancing at them or speaking to them, she went awkwardly into the room, sat herself down by the stove, and began to eat her bread and butter and cake.

'Give us some,' cried the little men.

But she replied, 'There isn't enough for myself, so how can I give any to any one else?'

When she had done eating, they said, 'There is a broom for thee, sweep the snow clear for us outside by the back door.'

'Humph! Sweep for yourselves,' she answered; 'I'm not your servant.' When she saw that they were not going to give her anything, she went out by the door.

Then the little men said to each other, 'What shall we give her as she is so naughty, and has a wicked envious heart that will never let her do a good turn to any one?'

The first said, 'It is my wish that she may grow uglier every day.'

The second said, 'It is my wish that at every word she says, a toad shall spring out of her mouth.'

The third said, 'It is my wish that she may die a miserable death.'

Out in the snow the maiden hunted for the strawberries, but she found none, so she went home in a temper. And when she opened her mouth, and was about to tell her mother what had happened to her in the wood, with every word she said out of her mouth jumped a toad, so that every one was seized with horror of her.

Then the step-mother was still more enraged, and thought of nothing but how to do every possible harm to the man's daughter, whose beauty, however, grew daily greater. After a time she took a cauldron, set it on the fire, and boiled some yarn in it. When it was boiled, she flung it over the poor girl's shoulder, and gave her an axe to go to the frozen river, and cut a hole in the ice to rinse the yarn. Her step-daughter obeyed and went and cut a hole in the ice; and while she was doing it a splendid coach came driving up, in which sat the King.

The coach drew up, and the King put his head out of the window and asked, 'My child, who art thou, and what art thou doing here?'

'I am a poor girl, and I am rinsing yarn.'

The King felt sorry for her, and when he saw that she was so lovely, he said to her, 'Wilt thou go away with me?'

With every word she said, out of her mouth jumped a toad.

'Oh yes, with all my heart,' she answered, for she was glad to get away from the mother and sister.

So she got into the carriage and drove away with the King, and when they arrived at his palace they were married with great pomp, just as the little men had wished for her. When a year was over the young Queen bore a son, and as the step-mother had heard of her great good fortune, she came with her daughter to the palace and pretended that she wanted to pay her a visit. Once, however, when the King had gone out,

and no one was by, the wicked woman seized the Queen by the head, and her daughter seized her by the feet, and they lifted her out of bed, and threw her out of the window into the stream which flowed by. Then the ugly daughter laid herself in the bed, and the old woman covered her up over her head.

When the King came home again and wanted to speak to his wife, the old woman cried, 'Hush, hush, that can't be now; to-day she is very feverish and must be kept quiet.' The King suspected no evil, and did not come again till next morning; then, as he talked with his wife and she answered him, with every word a toad leaped out, whereas formerly it had been a piece of gold. He asked what the cause could be, and the old woman said that she had got that from the fever, and would soon lose it again. During the night, however, the scullion saw a duck come swimming up the gutter, and it said,

'King, what art thou doing now?
Sleepest thou, or wakest thou?'

And as he returned no answer it said,

'And my guests, What may they do?'

The scullion said,

'They are sleeping soundly, too.'

Then it asked again,

'What does little baby mine?'

He answered,

'He sleepeth in his cradle fine.'

Then she went upstairs in the form of the Queen, nursed the baby, shook up its little bed, and tucked it in again, and then swam away down the ditch in the shape of a duck.

She came thus for two nights; on the third, she said to the scullion, 'Go and tell the King to take his sword and swing it three times over me on the threshold.' Then the scullion

ran and told this to the King, who came with his sword and swung it thrice over her, and at the third time his wife stood before him alive, strong and healthy as she had been before. Thereupon the King was full of great joy, but he kept the Queen hidden until the Sunday when the baby was to be christened. After the christening he said, 'What does a person deserve who drags another out of bed and throws him in the water?'

'Such a wretch deserves no better,' answered the old woman, 'than to be taken and put in a barrel stuck full of nails, and rolled downhill into the water.'

'Then,' said the King, 'thou hast pronounced thine own sentence'; and he ordered such a barrel to be brought, and the old woman to be put into it with her daughter, and then the top was hammered on, and the barrel was rolled down the hill into the river.

The Spirit in the Bottle

THERE was once a poor woodcutter who toiled from early morning till late at night. When at last he had put by some money he said to his boy, 'You are my only child, I will spend the money which I have earned with the sweat of my brow on your education. If you learn some honest trade you can support me in my old age, when my limbs have grown stiff and I am obliged to stay at home.'

Then the boy went to school and learned so diligently that his masters praised him, and he remained there a long time. When he had worked through two classes, but was still not yet perfect in everything, the little money that his father had saved was all spent, and the boy was obliged to return home.

'Ah,' said his father sorrowfully, 'I can give you no more, and in these hard times I cannot earn a farthing more than is enough for our daily bread.'

'Dear father,' answered the son, 'don't trouble yourself about it, if it is God's will it will turn to my advantage. I shall soon be reconciled to it.'

When the father next went into the forest to earn money by helping to pile and stack wood and to chop it, his son said, 'I will go with you and help you.'

'Nay, my son,' said the father, 'that would be too hard for you. You are not used to rough work and will not be able to stand it, besides I have only one axe and no money left wherewith to buy another.'

'Just go to our neighbour,' answered the son; 'he will lend you his axe until I have earned one for myself.'

So the father borrowed an axe of the neighbour and next

morning at break of day they went out into the forest together. The son helped his father and was quite merry and brisk about his work. But when the sun was right over their heads, the father said, 'We will rest and have our dinner, and then we shall work as well again.'

The son took his bread in his hands, and said, 'Just you rest, father, I am not tired. I will walk up and down among the trees and look for birds' nests.'

'Oh, that 's foolish of you,' said his father. 'Why should you want to be running about? Afterwards you will be tired and no longer able to raise your arm. Stay here and sit down beside me.'

The son, however, went into the forest, ate his bread, was very merry and peered in among the green branches to see if he could discover a bird's nest anywhere. He wandered up and down until at last he came to a great dangerous-looking oak, which certainly was already many hundred years old, and which five men could not have spanned. He stood still and looked at it, and thought, 'Many a bird must have built its nest in that.' Then all at once it seemed to him that he heard a voice. He listened and became aware that some one was crying in a very smothered voice, 'Let me out, let me out!' He looked around, but could discover nothing. Nevertheless, he fancied that the voice came out of the ground.

Then he cried, 'Where art thou?'

The voice answered, 'I am here down amongst the roots of the oak-tree. Let me out! Let me out!'

The scholar began to loosen the earth under the tree, and search among the roots, until at last he found a glass bottle in a little hollow. He lifted it up and held it against the light, and then saw a creature shaped like a frog, springing up and down in it. 'Let me out! Let me out!' it cried anew, and the scholar, suspecting no danger, drew the cork out of the bottle.

Immediately a spirit ascended from it and began to grow, and grew so fast that in a very few moments he stood before

the scholar, a terrible fellow half as big as the tree by which he was standing.

'Knowest thou,' he cried in an awful voice, 'what thy wages are for having let me out?'

'No,' replied the scholar fearlessly. 'How should I know that?'

'Then I will tell thee,' cried the spirit: 'I must strangle thee for it.'

'Thou shouldst have told me that sooner,' said the scholar, 'for I should then have left thee shut up. But I'll keep my head on my shoulders for all thou canst do. More persons than one must be consulted about that.'

'That's neither here nor there,' said the spirit. 'Thou shalt have the wages thou hast earned. Dost thou think that I was shut up there for such a long time as a favour? No, it was a punishment for me. I am the mighty Mercurius. Whoever releases me, him must I strangle.'

'Softly,' answered the scholar, 'not so fast. I must first know that thou really wert shut up in that little bottle, and that thou art the right spirit. If, indeed, thou canst get in again, I will believe, and then thou mayst do as thou wilt with me.'

The spirit said haughtily, 'That is a very trifling feat,' drew himself together, and made himself as small and slender as he had been at first, then he crept into the mouth of the bottle, and through the neck right in again. Scarcely was he within than the scholar thrust the cork back into the bottle, and threw it among the roots of the oak where it was before, and the spirit was trapped again.

Then the scholar was about to return to his father, when the spirit cried piteously, 'Ah, do let me out! ah, do let me out!'

'No,' answered the scholar, 'not a second time! He who has once tried to take my life shall not be set free by me, now that I have caught him again.'

'If thou wilt set me free,' said the spirit, 'I will give thee so much that thou wilt have plenty all the days of thy life.'

'No,' answered the scholar, 'thou wouldst cheat me as thou didst the first time.'

'Thou art driving away thy own good luck,' said the spirit; 'I will do thee no harm, I promise, but I will reward thee richly.'

The scholar thought, 'I 'll venture it, perhaps he 'll keep his word, and anyhow he shall not get the better of me.' Then he took out the cork, and the spirit rose up from the bottle as he had done before, stretched himself out and became as big as a giant.

'Now thou shalt have thy reward,' said he, and he handed the scholar a little bag just like a plaster, and said, 'If thou spreadest one end of this over a wound it will heal, and if thou rubbest steel or iron with the other end it will be changed into silver.'

'I must just try that,' said the scholar, and went to a tree, chipped off some bark with his axe, and rubbed it with one end of the plaster. It immediately grew together again and was healed. 'It 's all right now,' he said to the spirit, 'and we can part.' The spirit thanked him for his release, and the scholar thanked the spirit for his present, and went back to his father.

'Where hast thou been wandering about?' said the father; 'why hast thou forgotten thy work? I said at once that thou wouldst never get on with anything.'

'Be easy, father, I will make it up.'

'Make it up indeed,' said the father angrily, 'there 's no way of doing that.'

'Wait a bit, father. See me fell that tree there. I 'll soon make the chips fly.' Then he took his plaster, rubbed the axe with it, and dealt a mighty blow, but as the iron had changed into silver, it turned the edge.

'Hollo, father, just look what a bad axe you 've given me; it has become quite bent.'

The father was dismayed, and said, 'Ah, what hast thou done? Now I shall have to pay for that, and what with, I

A terrible fellow half as big as the tree by which he was standing.

should like to know? That 's all the good I 've got by thy work.'

'Don't get angry,' said his son, 'I will soon pay for the axe.'

'Oh, thou blockhead!' cried the father; 'wherewith wilt thou pay for it? Thou hast nothing but what I give thee. These are students' tricks that are sticking in thy head—thou hast no idea of woodcutting.'

After a while the scholar said, 'Father, I can really work no more; we had better take a holiday.'

'Eh, what!' answered he. 'Dost thou think I will sit with my hands lying in my lap like thee? I must go on working, but thou mayst take thyself off home.'

'Father, I am here in this wood for the first time: I don't know my way alone. Do go with me.'

As his anger had now abated, the father at last let himself be persuaded and went home with him. Then he said to the son, 'Go and sell thy damaged axe, and see what thou canst get for it, and I must earn the difference, in order to pay the neighbour.'

The son took the axe, and carried it into town to a goldsmith, who tested it, laid it in the scales, and said, 'It is worth four hundred thalers, I have not so much as that by me.'

The son said, 'Give me what you have, I will lend you the rest.' The goldsmith gave him three hundred thalers, and remained a hundred in his debt.

The son thereupon went home and said, 'Father, I have got the money. Go and ask the neighbour what he wants for the axe.'

'I know that already,' answered the old man: 'one thaler six groschen.'

'Then give him two thalers, twelve groschen, that is double and enough. See, I have money in plenty,' and he gave his father a hundred thalers, and said, 'You shall never know want, live as comfortably as you like.'

'Good heavens!' said the father, 'how hast thou come by these riches?'

The scholar then told how all had come to pass, and how he, trusting in his luck, had made such a good hit. But with the money that was left he took himself back to school and went on learning, and as he could heal all wounds with his plaster, he became the most famous doctor in the whole world.

The Three Army Surgeons

THREE army surgeons, who considered they were perfect masters of their art, were travelling about the world, and they came to an inn where they wanted to pass the night. The host asked whence they came, and where they were going to?

'We are roaming about the world and practising our art.'

'Just show me for once in a way what you can do,' said the host.

Then the first said he would cut off his hand, and put it on again early next morning. The second said he would tear out his heart, and replace it next morning. The third said he would cut out his eyes and put them back again next morning.

'Well,' said the innkeeper, 'if you can do that, you have learned everything.'

They, however, had a salve, with which they rubbed themselves, which joined parts together, and they carried the little bottle in which it was, constantly with them. Then they cut the hand, heart and eyes from their bodies as they had said they would, and laid them all together on a plate, and gave

it to the innkeeper. The innkeeper gave it to a servant who was to put it in the cupboard, and take good care of it. The girl, however, had a lover in secret, who was a soldier. So when the innkeeper, the three army surgeons, and every one else in the house had gone to bed, in came the soldier and wanted something to eat. The girl opened the cupboard and brought him some food, and in her love forgot to shut the cup-

The cat came creeping in.

board-door again. She seated herself at the table by her lover, and they chattered away together. While she sat there so contentedly thinking of no ill luck, the cat came creeping in, found the cupboard open, took the hand and heart and eyes of the three army surgeons, and ran off with them. When the soldier had finished his supper, and the girl was taking away the things and going to shut the cupboard she saw that the plate which the innkeeper had given her to take care of, was empty. Then she said in a fright to her lover, ' Oh, miserable girl that I am, what shall I do ? The hand is gone, and the

THE THREE ARMY-SURGEONS.

heart and the eyes are gone too! What will become of me in the morning?'

'Be easy,' said he, 'I will help thee out of thy trouble. There is a thief hanging outside on the gallows, I will cut off his hand. Which hand was it?'

'The right one.'

Then the girl gave him a sharp knife, and he went and cut the dead robber's right hand off, and brought it to her. After this he caught the cat and cut its eyes out, and now nothing but the heart was wanting. 'Have you not just been killing, and are not the dead pigs in the cellar?' said he.

'Yes,' said the girl.

'That 's well,' said the soldier, and he went down and fetched a pig's heart. The girl placed all together on the plate, and put it in the cupboard, and when after this her lover took leave of her, she went quietly to bed.

In the morning when the three army surgeons got up, they told the girl to bring them the plate on which the hand, heart, and eyes were lying. Then she brought it out of the cupboard, and the first fixed the thief's hand on and smeared it with his salve, and it grew on to his arm at once. The second took the cat's eyes and put them in his own head. The third fixed the pig's heart firm in the place where his own had been, and the innkeeper stood by, admired their skill, and said he had never yet seen such a thing as that done, and would sing their praises and recommend them to every one. Then they paid their bill, and travelled farther.

As they were on their way, the one with the pig's heart could never keep with them at all, but wherever there was a corner he ran to it, and rooted about in it with his nose as pigs do. The others wanted to hold him back by the tail of his coat, but that did no good, he tore himself loose, and ran wherever the dirt was thickest. The second also behaved very strangely. He rubbed his eyes, and said to the others, 'Comrades, what is the matter? I can't see at all. Will one of you lead me, so that I don't fall.' With difficulty they

travelled on till evening, when they reached another inn. They went into the bar together, and there at a table in the corner sat a rich man counting his money. The one with the thief's hand walked round about him, made a sudden movement twice with his arm, and at last when the stranger turned away, he snatched at the pile of money, and took a handful from it. One of the others saw this, and said, 'Comrade, what art thou about? Thou must not steal! Shame on thee!' 'Eh,' said he, 'but how can I stop myself? My hand twitches, and I am forced to snatch things whether I will or not.'

After this, they lay down to sleep and as they were lying there it was so dark that no one could see his own hand. All at once the one with the cat's eyes awoke, aroused the others, and said, 'Brothers, look up! Do you see the white mice running about there?' The two sat up, but could see nothing. Then said he, 'Things are not right with us, we have not got back again what is ours. We must return to the innkeeper, he has deceived us.' So they went back next morning, and told the host they had not got what was their own again. That the first had a thief's hand, the second cat's eyes, and the third a pig's heart. The innkeeper said that the girl must be to blame for that, and was going to call her, but she had seen the three coming, and had run out by the backdoor and not come back. Then the three said he must give them a great deal of money, or they would set his house on fire. He gave them all he had, and all he could get together, and the three went away with it. It was enough for the rest of their lives, but they would rather have had their own proper organs.

The Hare and the Hedgehog

THIS story, youngsters, might well seem nonsense, but it really is true, for I had it from my grandfather, and when he told it he always used to say, 'It must be true, my son, or else no one could tell it to you.'

The story is as follows. One Sunday morning about harvest time, just as the buckwheat was in bloom, the sun was shining brightly in the sky, the east wind was blowing warmly over the stubble-fields, the larks were singing in the air, the bees buzzing among the buckwheat, the people all going in their Sunday clothes to church, and all creatures were happy. And the hedgehog was happy too.

Well, he was standing by his door with his arms akimbo, enjoying the morning breezes, and slowly humming a little song to himself, which was neither better nor worse than the songs that hedgehogs usually do sing on a blessed Sunday morning. As thus he was singing half aloud to himself, it suddenly occurred to him that, while his wife was washing and drying the children, he might very well take a walk into the field and see how his turnips were going on. Really, the turnips were not his at all, but they grew just round the corner, and he and his family were in the habit of helping themselves, so he looked upon them as his own. No sooner said than done.

The hedgehog shut the house-door behind him, and took the path to the field. He had not gone very far from home, and was just turning round the sloe-bush to go up into the turnip-field, when he came across the hare, who had gone out on business of the same kind, namely, to visit his cabbages. When the hedgehog caught sight of the hare, he bade him a friendly good morning. But the hare, who was in his own way a distinguished gentleman, and exceedingly haughty, did not return the hedgehog's greeting, but said to him, assuming at the same time a very contemptuous manner, 'How do you happen to be running about here in the field so early in the morning?'

'I am taking a walk,' said the hedgehog.

'A walk!' said the hare, with a smile. 'It seems to me that you might use your legs for a better purpose.'

This answer made the hedgehog furiously angry, for he can bear anything but a remark about his legs, because they are crooked by nature. So he replied, 'You seem to imagine that you can do more with your legs than I can with mine.'

'That is just what I do think,' said the hare.

'That can be put to the test,' said the hedgehog. 'I wager that if we run a race, I will beat you.'

'Oh, nonsense! You, with your short legs!' said the hare, 'though for my part I 'm willing, if you 've such a monstrous fancy for it. What shall we wager?'

'A golden louis-d'or and a bottle of brandy,' said the hedgehog.

'Done,' said the hare. 'Shake hands on it, and it may as well come off at once.'

'Nay,' said the hedgehog, 'there is no such great hurry! I am still fasting. I will go home first and have a little breakfast. In half an hour I 'll be back again at this place.'

Hereupon the hedgehog departed, for the hare was quite satisfied with this. On his way the hedgehog thought to himself, 'The hare relies on his long legs, but I will contrive to get the better of him. He may be a great man, but he is a

very silly fellow, and he shall pay for what he has said.' So when the hedgehog reached home, he said to his wife, 'Wife, dress thyself quickly; thou must go out to the field with me.'

'What 's going on now, then?' said his wife.

'I 've made a wager with the hare, for a gold louis-d'or and a bottle of brandy. I am to run a race with him, and thou must be present.'

'Good heavens, husband,' the wife now cried, 'art thou not right in thy mind? hast thou completely lost thy wits? What can make thee want to run a race with the hare?'

'Hold thy tongue, woman,' said the hedgehog; 'that is my affair. Don't begin to discuss things which are matters for men. Be off, and get ready to come with me.' What could the hedgehog's wife do? She had to obey him, whether she liked it or not.

So when they had set out on their way together, the hedgehog said to his wife, 'Now pay attention to what I am going to say. Look you, I will make the long field our race-course. The hare shall run in one furrow, and I in another, and we will begin the race from the top. Now all that thou hast to do is to place thyself here, at the bottom, in the furrow, and when the hare reaches the end of his furrow alongside of thee, thou must cry out to him, "Here I am already!"'

They reached the field, and the hedgehog showed his wife her place, and then walked up the field. When he reached the top, the hare was already there.

'Shall we start?' said the hare.

'Certainly,' said the hedgehog.

'Then both together.' So saying, each placed himself in his own furrow.

The hare counted, 'Once, twice, thrice, and away!' and went off like a whirlwind down the field. The hedgehog, however, only ran about three paces, and then he stooped down in the furrow, and stayed quietly where he was.

So when the hare at top speed reached the lower end of the

field, the hedgehog's wife met him with the cry, ' Here I am already ! '

The hare was overcome with astonishment, for he thought it could but be the hedgehog himself who was calling to him, for the hedgehog's wife looked just like her husband.

The hare, however, thought to himself, ' It can't have been done fairly,' and cried, ' It must be run again, let us have it again.'

And once more he went off like the wind in a storm, so that he seemed to fly. But the hedgehog's wife stayed quietly in her place. So when the hare reached the top of the field, the hedgehog himself cried out to him, ' Here I am already ! '

The hare was quite beside himself with anger, and cried, ' It must be run again, we must have it again.'

' All right,' answered the hedgehog, ' I don't mind, we 'll run as often as you like.'

So the hare ran seventy-three times more, and the hedgehog always had the best of it. Every time the hare reached either the top or the bottom, either the hedgehog or his wife said, ' Here I am already ! '

The seventy-fourth time, however, the hare could no longer reach the end. In the middle of the field he fell to the ground, the blood streamed from his mouth, and he lay dead on the spot. So the hedgehog took the louis-d'or which he had won and the bottle of brandy, called his wife out of the furrow, and both went home together in great delight, and if they are not dead, they are living there still.

But there is a moral to this story, and it is, firstly, that no one, however great he may be, should permit himself to jest at any one beneath him, even if he be only a hedgehog. And, secondly, it teaches, that when a man marries, he should take a wife in his own station, who looks just as he himself looks. So whoever is a hedgehog let him see to it that his wife is a hedgehog also, and so forth.

The Griffin

ONCE upon a time there was a King, but where he reigned and what he was called, I do not know. He had no son, but an only daughter who had always been ill, and no doctor had been able to cure her. Then it was foretold to the King that his daughter should be cured by eating an apple. So he ordered it to be proclaimed throughout his kingdom, that whosoever brought his daughter an apple which would make her well, should have her to wife, and be King.

This became known to a peasant who had three sons, and he said to the eldest, 'Go out into the garden and take a basketful of those beautiful apples with the red cheeks and carry them to the court; perhaps the King's daughter will be able to cure herself with them, and then thou wilt marry her and be King.'

The lad did so, and set out. When he had gone a short way he met a little iron man who asked him what he had there in the basket, to which replied Uele, for so was he named, 'Frogs' legs.'

On this the little man said, 'Well, so shall it be, and so shall it remain,' and went away.

At length Uele arrived at the palace, and made it known that he had brought apples which would cure the King's daughter if she ate them. This delighted the King hugely, and he caused Uele to be brought before him. But alas! when he opened the basket, instead of having apples in it he had frogs' legs which were still kicking about. On this the King grew angry, and had him driven out of the house. When he got home he told his father how it had fared with him.

Then the father sent the next son, who was called Seame,

but all went with him just as it had gone with Uele. He also met the little iron man, who asked what he had there in the basket.

Seame said, 'Hogs' bristles,' and the iron man said, 'Well, so shall it be, and so shall it remain.'

When Seame got to the King's palace and said he brought apples with which the King's daughter might be cured, they did not want to let him go in, and said that one fellow had already been there, and had treated them as if they were fools. Seame, however, maintained that he certainly had the apples, and that they ought to let him go in. At length they believed him, and led him to the King. But when he uncovered the basket, he had but hogs' bristles. This enraged the King most terribly, so he caused Seame to be whipped out of the house.

When he got home he related all that had befallen him, and then the youngest boy, whose name was Hans, but who was always called Stupid Hans, came and asked his father if he might go with some apples.

'Oh!' said the father, 'thou wouldst be just the right fellow for such a thing! If the clever ones can't manage it, what canst thou do?'

The boy, however, did not believe him, and said, 'Indeed, father, I wish to go.'

'Oh! get away, thou stupid fellow! thou must wait till thou art wiser,' said the father, and turned his back.

Hans, however, pulled at the tail of his smock-frock and said, 'Indeed, father, I wish to go.'

'Well, then, so far as I am concerned thou mayest go, but thou 'lt soon come home again!' replied the old man impatiently.

The boy, however, was tremendously delighted and jumped for joy.

'Well, act like a fool! thou growest more stupid every day!' said the father again. Hans, however, did not care about that, and did not let it spoil his pleasure, but as it was then night, he thought he might as well wait until the morrow,

for he could not get to court that day. All night long he could not sleep in his bed, and if he did doze for a moment, he dreamt of beautiful maidens, of palaces of gold, and of silver, and all kinds of things of that sort. Early in the morning he went forth on his way, and directly afterwards the little shabby-looking man in his iron clothes came to him and asked what he was carrying in the basket. Hans gave him the answer that he was carrying apples with which the King's daughter was to make herself well.

'Then,' said the little man, 'so shall they be, and so shall they remain.'

But at the court they would none of them let Hans go in for they said two had been there already who had told them that they were bringing apples, and one of them had frogs' legs, and the other hogs' bristles. But Hans stuck to it that he most certainly had no frogs' legs, but some of the most beautiful apples in the whole kingdom. As he spoke so pleasantly, the door-keeper thought he could not be telling a lie, and asked him to go in, and he was right, for when Hans uncovered his basket in the King's presence, golden-yellow apples came tumbling out. The King was delighted, and caused some of them to be taken to his daughter, and then waited in anxious expectation until news should be brought to him of the effect they had. And before much time had passed, news came to him. But who do you think it was who brought it? it was his daughter herself! As soon as she had eaten of those apples she was cured, and sprang out of bed. The joy the King felt cannot be described! But now he did not want to give his daughter in marriage to Hans, and said he must first make him a boat which would go quicker on dry land than on water. Hans agreed to the conditions, and went home, and related how it had fared with him. Then the father sent Uele into the forest to make a boat of that kind. He worked diligently, and whistled all the time. At midday, when the sun was at the highest, came the little iron man and asked what he was making.

Uele gave him for answer, ' Wooden bowls for the kitchen.'

The iron man said, ' So it shall be, and so it shall remain.'

By evening Uele thought he had now made the boat, but when he wanted to get into it, he found he had nothing but wooden bowls.

The next day Seame went into the forest, but everything went with him just as it had done with Uele.

On the third day Stupid Hans went. He worked away most industriously, so that the whole forest resounded with the heavy strokes, and all the while he sang and whistled right merrily. At midday, when it was hottest, the little man came again, and asked what he was making.

' A boat which will go quicker on dry land than on the water,' replied Hans, ' and when I have finished it, I am to have the King's daughter for my wife.'

' Well,' said the little man, ' so shall it be, and so shall it remain.'

In the evening, when the sun had turned into gold, Hans finished his boat, and all that was wanted for it. He got into it and rowed to the palace. The boat went as swiftly as the wind. The King saw it from afar, but would not give his daughter to Hans yet, and said he must first take a hundred hares out to pasture from early morning until late evening, and if one of them got away, he should not have his daughter. Hans was contented with this, and the next day went with his flock to the pasture, and took great care that none of them ran away.

Before many hours had passed came a servant from the palace, and told Hans that he must give her a hare instantly, for some visitors had come unexpectedly. Hans, however, was very well aware what that meant, and said he would not give her one—the King might set some hare soup before his guests next day. The maid, however, would not believe in his refusal, and at last she began to get angry with him. Then Hans said that if the King's daughter came herself, he would give her a hare. The maid told this in the palace, and the

daughter did go herself. In the meantime, however, the little man came again to Hans, and asked him what he was doing there. He said he had to watch over a hundred hares and see that none of them ran away, and then he might marry the King's daughter and be King.

'Good,' said the little man. 'There is a whistle for thee, and if one of them runs away, just whistle with it, and then it will come back again.'

When the King's daughter came, Hans gave her a hare into her apron. But when she had gone about a hundred steps with it, he whistled, and the hare jumped out of the apron, and before she could turn round was back in the flock again. When the evening came the hare-herd whistled once more, and looked to see if all were there, and then drove them to the palace. The King wondered how Hans had been able to take a hundred hares to graze without losing any of them, but he wouldn't give him his daughter yet, and said he must now bring him a feather from the Griffin's tail. Hans set out at once, and walked straight forward. In the evening he came to a castle, and there he asked for a night's lodging, for at that time there were no inns. The lord of the castle promised him that with much pleasure, and asked where he was going.

Hans answered, 'To the Griffin.'

'Oh! to the Griffin! They tell me he knows everything, and I have lost the key of an iron money-chest, so you might be so good as to ask him where it is.'

'Yes, indeed,' said Hans, 'I will soon do that.'

Early the next morning he went on, and on his way arrived at another castle in which he again stayed the night. When the people who lived there learned that he was going to the Griffin, they said they had in the house a daughter who was ill, and that they had already tried every means to cure her, but none of them had done her any good, and he might be so kind as to ask the Griffin what would make their daughter healthy again. Hans said he would willingly do that, and went on. Then he came to a lake, and instead of a ferry-boat,

a tall, tall man was there who had to carry everybody across. The man asked Hans whither he was journeying.

'To the Griffin,' said Hans.

'Then when you get to him,' said the man, 'just ask him why I am forced to carry everybody over the lake.'

'Yes, indeed, most certainly I 'll do that,' said Hans.

Then the man took him up on his shoulders, and carried him across. At length Hans arrived at the Griffin's house, but his wife only was at home, and not the Griffin himself. The woman asked him what he wanted. Thereupon he told her everything. That he had to get a feather out of the Griffin's tail, and that there was a castle where they had lost the key of their money-chest, and he was to ask the Griffin where it was. That in another castle the daughter was ill, and he was to learn what would cure her. And then not far from thence there was a lake and a man beside it, who was forced to carry people across it, and he was very anxious to learn why the man was obliged to do it.

Then said the woman, 'But look here, my good friend, no Christian can speak to the Griffin, he devours them all. But if you like, you can lie down under his bed, and in the night, when he is quite fast asleep, you can reach out and pull a feather out of his tail, and as for those things which you are to learn, I 'll ask about them myself.'

Hans was quite satisfied with this, and got under the bed.

In the evening, the Griffin came home, and as soon as he entered the room he sniffed and said, 'Wife, I smell a Christian.'

'Yes,' said the woman, 'one was here to-day, but he went away again.' And on that the Griffin said no more.

In the middle of the night when the Griffin was snoring loudly, Hans reached out and plucked a feather from his tail.

The Griffin woke up instantly, and said, 'Wife, I smell a Christian, and it seems to me that somebody was pulling my tail.'

His wife said, 'Thou hast certainly been dreaming, and I told thee before that a Christian was here to-day, but that he

went away again. He told me all kinds of things—that in one castle they had lost the key of their money-chest, and could find it nowhere.'

'Oh, the fools!' said the Griffin; 'the key lies in the wood-house under a log of wood behind the door.'

'And then he said that in another castle the daughter was ill, and they knew no remedy that would cure her.'

'Oh, the fools! said the Griffin; 'under the cellar-steps a toad has made its nest of her hair, and if she got her hair back she would be well.'

'And then he also said that there was a place where there was a lake and a man beside it who was forced to carry everybody across.'

'Oh, the fool!' said the Griffin; 'if he only let one man down in the middle, he would never have to carry another across.'

He sniffed and said, 'Wife, I smell a Christian.'

Early the next morning the Griffin got up and went out. Then Hans came forth from under the bed, and he had a beautiful feather, and had heard what the Griffin had said about the key, and the daughter, and the ferry-man. The Griffin's wife repeated it all once more to him that he mightn't forget it, and then he went home again. First he came to the man by the lake, who asked him what the Griffin had said, but Hans replied that he must first carry him across, and then he would tell him. So the man carried him across, and when he was over, Hans told him that all he had to do was to set one person down in the middle of the lake, and then he would never have to carry over any more. The man was hugely

delighted, and told Hans that out of gratitude he would take him once more across, and back again. But Hans said no, he 'd save him that trouble, he was quite satisfied already, and pursued his way. Then he came to the castle where the daughter was ill. He took her on his shoulders, for she could not walk, and carried her down the cellar-steps and pulled out the toad's nest from beneath the lowest step and gave it into her hand, and she jumped off his shoulder and up the steps before him, and was quite cured. Then the father and mother rejoiced beyond measure, and they gave Hans gifts of gold and of silver, and whatever else he wished for, they gave it him. And when he got to the other castle he went at once into the wood-house, and found the key under the log of wood behind the door, and took it to the lord of the castle. He also was not a little pleased, and gave Hans as a reward much of the gold that was in the chest, and all kinds of things besides, such as cows, and sheep, and goats. When Hans arrived before the King with all these things, the money, and the gold, and the silver, and the cows, sheep, and goats, the King asked him how he had come by them. Then Hans told him that the Griffin gave every one whatever he wanted. So the King thought he, too, could make such things useful, and off he went himself to the Griffin. But when he got to the lake, it happened that he was the very first to arrive there after Hans, and the man let him down in the middle of it and went away, and the King was drowned. Hans, however, married the princess, and became King.

The Spindle, the Shuttle, and the Needle

THERE was once a girl whose father and mother died while she was still a little child. All alone, in a cottage at the end of the village, dwelt her godmother, who supported herself by spinning, weaving, and sewing. The old woman took the forlorn child to live with her, kept her to her work, and brought her up in all that is good.

When the girl was fifteen years old, the old woman fell ill and called her to her bedside, and said, ' Dear daughter, I feel my end drawing near. To thee I leave my little house, which will protect thee from wind and weather, and my spindle, shuttle, and needle, with which thou canst earn thy bread.' Then she laid her hands on the girl's head, and blessed her, and said, ' Only keep the love of God in thy heart, and all will go well with thee.' Thereupon she closed her eyes, and when she was laid in the earth, the maiden followed the coffin, weeping bitterly, and paid her the last mark of respect.

And now the maiden lived quite alone in the little cottage, and worked hard, spinning, weaving, and sewing, and the blessing of the good old woman was on all that she did. It seemed as if the flax in the room increased of its own accord, and whenever she wove a piece of cloth or a carpet, or had made a shirt, she found a buyer at once, who paid her well for it, so that she was in want of nothing, and even had something to spare for others.

About this time the son of the King was travelling about the country looking for a bride. He was not to choose a poor one, nor did he want a rich one. So he said, ' She shall be my

wife who is the poorest and the richest both at the same time.' When he came to the village where the maiden dwelt, he inquired, as he did wherever he went, who was the richest and also who was the poorest girl in the place. They first named the richest. The poorest, they said, was the girl who lived in the cottage right at the end of the village. The rich girl was sitting in all her splendour before the door of her house, and when the prince approached her, she got up, went to meet him, and made him a low curtsy. He looked at her, said nothing, and rode on. When he came to the house of the poor girl, she was not standing at the door, but sitting in her little room. He stopped his horse, and through the window, on which the sun was shining brightly, he saw the girl sitting at her spinning-wheel, busy spinning. She looked up, and when she saw that the prince was watching her, she blushed all over her face, dropped her eyes, and went on spinning. I do not know whether, just at that moment, the thread was quite even, but she went on spinning until the King's son had ridden away again. Then she went to the window, and opened it, saying, 'It is so warm in this room!' but she looked after him as long as she could distinguish the white feathers in his hat.

Then she sat down to work again in her own little room and went on with her spinning, and a saying which the old woman had often repeated as she sat at her work, came into her mind, and she sang these words to herself,

> 'Spindle, spindle, haste away,
> Here to my house bring a wooer, I pray.'

And what do you think happened? The spindle jumped out of her hand in an instant, and out of the door, and when, in her astonishment, she got up and looked after it, she saw that it was dancing out merrily into the open country, and drawing a shining golden thread after it. Before long, it had entirely vanished out of sight. As she had now no spindle, the girl took the weaver's shuttle in her hand, sat down to her loom, and began to weave.

The spindle, however, danced on and on, and just as the thread came to an end, it reached the prince.

'What 's this I see?' he cried; 'I 'm sure the spindle wants to show me the way somewhere!' and he turned his horse about, and followed the golden thread back.

Meanwhile the girl was sitting at her work singing,

'Shuttle, shuttle, weave well to-day,
And guide a wooer to me, I pray.'

Immediately the shuttle sprang out of her hand and went out by the door. Before the threshold, however, it began to weave a carpet which was more beautiful than the eyes of man had ever yet beheld. Lilies and roses blossomed on both sides of it, and on a golden ground in the middle green branches ascended, under which bounded hares and rabbits, stags and does stretched their heads in between them, and brightly coloured birds were sitting in the branches above, and they lacked nothing but the gift of song. The shuttle leapt hither and thither, and everything seemed to grow of its own accord.

There stood the maiden in her poor garments.

As the shuttle had run away, the girl sat down to sew. With the needle in her hand, she sang,

'Needle, needle, sharp and fine,
Prepare for a wooer this house of mine.'

Then the needle leapt out of her fingers, and flew everywhere about the room as quick as lightning. It was just as if invisible spirits were working. They covered tables and benches with green cloth in no time, and the

chairs with velvet, and hung the windows with silken curtains.

Hardly had the needle put in the last stitch than the maiden saw through the window the white feathers of the prince, whom the spindle had brought back again by the golden thread. He dismounted, and stepped over the carpet into the cottage, and when he entered the room, there stood the maiden in her poor garments, but she shone out from among them like a rose surrounded by leaves.

'Thou art the poorest and also the richest,' said he to her. 'Come with me, thou shalt be my bride.'

She did not speak, but she gave him her hand. Then he kissed her and led her out, lifted her on to his horse, and took her to the royal castle, where their wedding took place with great rejoicings. The spindle, shuttle, and needle were preserved in the treasure-chamber, and held in great honour.

Maid Maleen

THERE was once a King who had a son who asked in marriage the daughter of a mighty King. She was called Maid Maleen, and was very beautiful. As her father wished to give her to another, the prince was rejected. But as they both loved each other deeply, they would not give each other up, and Maid Maleen said to her father, 'I can and will take no other for my husband.'

Then the King flew into a passion, and ordered a dark tower to be built, into which no ray from sun or moon should enter. When it was finished, he said, 'Therein shalt thou be imprisoned for seven years, and then I will come and see if thy perverse spirit is broken.' Meat and drink for the seven years were carried into the tower, and then she and her waiting-woman were led into it and walled up, and thus cut off from the sky and from the earth. There they sat in the darkness,

THE WAITING MAID SPRANG DOWN FIRST AND MAID MALEEN FOLLOWED.

and knew not when day or night began. The King's son often went round and round the tower, and called their names, but no sound from without pierced through the thick walls. What else could they do but lament and complain ?

Meanwhile the time passed, and by the lessening of the food and drink they knew that the seven years were coming to an end. They thought the moment of their deliverance was come, but no stroke of the hammer was heard, no stone fell out of the wall, and it seemed to Maid Maleen that her father had forgotten her. As they only had food for a short time longer, and saw a miserable death awaiting them, Maid Maleen said, ' We must try our last chance, and see if we can break through the wall.' She took the bread-knife, and picked and bored at the mortar between the stones, and when she was tired, the waiting-maid took her turn. With great labour they succeeded in getting out one stone, and then a second, and third, and when three days were over the first ray of light fell on their darkness, and at last the opening was so large that they could look out. The sky was blue, and a fresh breeze played on their faces. Oh ! but how melancholy everything looked all around ! Her father's castle lay in ruins, the town and the villages were destroyed by fire as far as eye could see, the fields far and wide laid to waste, and no human being was visible.

When the opening in the wall was large enough for them to slip through, the waiting-maid sprang down first, and then Maid Maleen followed. But where were they to go ? The enemy had ravaged the whole kingdom, driven away the King, and slain all the inhabitants. They wandered forth to seek another country, but nowhere did they find a shelter, or a human being to give them a mouthful of bread, and their need was so great that they were forced to appease their hunger with nettles. When, after long journeying, they came into another country, they tried to get work, but wherever they knocked they were turned away, and no one would have pity on them. At last they arrived in a large city and went to the royal palace.

There also they were ordered to go away, but at last the cook said that they might stay in the kitchen and be scullions.

The son of the King in whose kingdom they were, was, however, the very man who had been betrothed to Maid Maleen. And his father had chosen another bride for him whose face was as ugly as her heart was wicked. The wedding was fixed, and the maiden had already arrived, but she was so ugly that she shut herself in her room, and allowed no one to see her, and Maid Maleen had to take her her meals from the kitchen. When the day came for the bride and the bridegroom to go to church, she was ashamed of her ugliness, and afraid that if she showed herself in the streets, she would be mocked and laughed at by the people. Then said she to Maid Maleen, 'A great piece of luck has befallen thee. I have sprained my foot, and cannot well walk through the streets. Thou shalt put on my wedding-clothes and take my place. A greater honour than that thou canst not have!'

Maid Maleen, however, refused it, and said, 'I wish for no honour which is not suitable for me.'

It was in vain, too, that the bride offered her gold. At last she said angrily, 'If thou dost not obey me, it shall cost thee thy life. I have but to speak the word, and thy head will lie at thy feet.'

Then she was forced to obey and put on the bride's magnificent clothes and all her jewels. When she entered the royal hall, every one was amazed at her great beauty, and the King said to his son, 'This is the bride whom I have chosen for thee, and whom thou must lead to church.'

The bridegroom was astonished, and thought, 'She is like my own Maid Maleen, and I should believe that it was she herself, but she has long been shut up in the tower, or dead.' He took her by the hand and led her to church. On the way was a stinging-nettle, and she said,

'Nettle, growing here alone,
A time of sorrow I have known;
Nought to eat was there for me,
Hunger drove me to eat thee.'

'What art thou saying?' asked the King's son.

'Nothing,' she replied; 'I was only thinking of Maid Maleen.'

He wondered that she knew about her, but kept silent. When they came to the stile into the churchyard, she said,

'Church-stile, break not,
The true bride, I am not.'

'What art thou saying?' asked the King's son.

'Nothing,' she replied; 'I was only thinking of Maid Maleen.'

'Dost thou know Maid Maleen?'

'No,' she answered. 'How should I know her? I have only heard of her.'

When they came to the church-door, she said once more,

'Kirk-door, break not,
The true bride, I am not.'

'What art thou saying now?' asked he.

'Ah,' she answered, 'I was only thinking of Maid Maleen.'

Then he took out a precious chain, put it round her neck, and fastened the clasp. Thereupon they entered the church, and the priest joined their hands together before the altar, and married them. He led her home, but she did not speak a single word the whole way. When they got back to the royal palace, she hurried into the bride's chamber, put off the magnificent clothes and the jewels, dressed herself in her grey gown, and kept nothing but the jewel on her neck, which she had received from the bridegroom.

When the night came, and the bride was to be led into the prince's chamber, she let her veil fall over her face, that he might not know of the deception. As soon as every one had gone away, he said to her, 'What didst thou say to the stinging-nettle which was growing by the wayside?'

'What stinging-nettle?' asked she. 'I don't talk to stinging-nettles.'

'If thou didst not do it, then thou art not the true bride,' said he. So she bethought herself, and said,

'I must go out unto my maid,
Who keeps my thoughts for me.'

She went out and sought Maid Maleen.

'Girl,' said she, 'what hast thou been saying to the nettle?'

'I said nothing but,

'Nettle, growing here alone,
A time of sorrow I have known;
Nought to eat was there for me,
Hunger drove me to eat thee.'

The bride ran back into the chamber, and said, 'I know now what I said to the nettle,' and she repeated the words which she had just heard.

'But what didst thou say to the stile when we went over it?' asked the King's son.

'To the stile?' she answered. 'I don't talk to stiles.'

'Then thou art not the true bride.'

Again she said,

'I must go out unto my maid,'
Who keeps my thoughts for me,'

and ran out and found Maid Maleen. 'Girl, what didst thou say to the stile?'

'I said nothing but,

'Church-stile, break not,
The true bride, I am not.'

'That shall cost thee thy life!' cried the bride, but she hurried back into the room, and said, 'I know now what I said to the stile,' and she repeated the words.

'But what didst thou say to the church-door?'

'To the church-door?' she replied. 'I don't talk to church-doors.'

'Then thou art not the true bride.'

She went out and found Maid Maleen, and said, 'Girl, what didst thou say to the church-door?'

'I said nothing but,

'Kirk-door, break not,
The true bride, I am not.'

'For that thy neck shall be broken!' cried the bride, and flew into a terrible passion, but she hastened back into the room and said, 'I know now what I said to the church-door,' and she repeated the words.

'But where hast thou the jewel which I gave thee at the church-door?'

'What jewel?' she answered. 'Thou didst not give me any jewel.'

'I myself put it round thy neck, and I myself fastened it. If thou dost not know that, thou art not the true bride.' He drew the veil from her face, and when he saw her hideous ugliness, he sprang back terrified, and said, 'How comest thou here? Who art thou?'

'I am thy betrothed bride, but because I feared lest the people should mock me when they saw me out of doors, I commanded the scullery-maid to dress herself in my clothes, and to go to church instead of me.'

'Where is the girl?' said he; 'I want to see her. Go and bring her here.' She went out and told the servants that the scullery-maid was an impostor, and that they must take her out into the courtyard and cut off her head. The servants laid hold of Maid Maleen and wanted to drag her out, but she screamed so loudly for help, that the King's son heard her voice, and hurried out of his chamber and ordered them to set the maiden free instantly. Lights were brought, and then he saw on her neck the gold chain which he had given her at the church-door.

'Thou art the true bride,' said he, 'who went with me to church. Come with me now to my room.' When they were

alone he said, ' On the way to the church thou didst name Maid Maleen, who was my betrothed bride. If I could believe it possible, I should think she was standing before me. Thou art like her in every way.'

She answered, ' I am Maid Maleen, who for thy sake was imprisoned seven years in the darkness, who suffered hunger and thirst, and has lived so long in want and poverty. But to-day the sun is shining on me once more. I was married to thee in the church, and I am thy lawful wife.'

Then they kissed each other, and were happy all the days of their lives. The false bride was rewarded for what she had done by having her head cut off.

The tower in which Maid Maleen had been imprisoned remained standing for a long time, and when the children passed by it they sang,

' Kling, klang, gloria.
Who sits within the tower?
A King's daughter, she sits within,
A sight of her I cannot win,
The wall it will not break,
The stone it will not crack.
Little Hans, with your coat so gay,
Follow me, follow me, fast as you may.'

The Young Giant

ONCE upon a time a countryman had a son who was as big as a thumb, and did not become any bigger; even during several years he did not grow one hair's-breadth.

Once when the father was going out to plough, the little one said, 'Father, I 'll go with you.'

'Thou wouldst go out with me?' said his father. 'Stay here. Thou wilt be of no use out there; besides, thou mightst get lost!'

Then Thumbling began to cry, and for the sake of peace his father put him in his pocket, and took him with him. When he was in the field, he took him out again, and set him in a furrow. Whilst he was there, a great giant came over the hill. 'Dost thou see that great bogy?' said his father, for he wanted to frighten the little fellow to make him good; 'he is coming to fetch thee.'

The giant, however, had scarcely taken two steps with his long legs before he reached them. He took up little Thumbling carefully with two fingers, had a good look at him, and carried him off without saying one word. His father stood by dumb with terror, and he could only think that his child was lost, and that as long as he lived he should never set eyes on him again.

The giant carried him home and fed him on giant's food, and Thumbling grew and became tall and strong after the manner of giants. When two years had passed, the old giant took him into the forest to see what he was good for, and said, 'Pull up a stick for thyself.' The boy was already so strong that he tore up a young tree out of the earth by the roots. But the giant thought, 'We must do better than that,' took him

back again, and fed him on giant's food for two years longer. At the next trial his strength had increased so much that he could tear an old tree out of the ground. That was still not enough for the giant; and he fed him for yet another two years, and then when he went with him into the forest and said, 'Now, just tear up a proper stick for me,' the boy tore up the strongest oak-tree he could find from the earth, and that was a mere trifle to him. 'Now that will do,' said the giant, 'thou art perfect,' and he took him back to the field from whence he had brought him. His father was there following the plough.

The young giant went up to him and said, 'Does my father see what a fine man his son has grown into?'

The farmer was alarmed, and said, 'No, thou art not my son. I don't want thee. Go away!'

'Truly I am your son. Let me do your work. I can plough as well as you can, nay, better.'

'No, no, thou art not my son, and thou canst not plough. Go away!'

However, as he was afraid of this great man, he let go of the plough, and stepped back. Then the youth took the plough, and just leant on it with one hand, but his grasp was so strong that the plough went deep into the earth.

The farmer could not bear to see that, and called to him, 'If thou art determined to plough, thou must not lean so hard. It 's no good doing it that way.' The youth, however, unharnessed the horses, and drew the plough himself, saying, 'Just go home, father, and bid my mother make ready a large dish of food, and in the meantime I will go over the field.' Then the farmer went home, and ordered his wife to prepare his dinner.

The youth ploughed the field which was of two acres all by himself, and then he harnessed himself to the harrow, and harrowed the whole of the land, using two harrows at once. When he had done it, he went into the forest, and pulled up two oak-trees, took them upon his shoulders, and hung one harrow behind and one before, and then one of the horses

behind and the other before and carried them all like a bundle of straw to his parents' house.

When he entered the yard, his mother did not recognise him, and asked, 'Who is that horrible tall man?'

The farmer said, 'That is our son.'

'No, that cannot be our son,' she said. 'We never had such a tall one; ours was a little wee thing.'

She called to him, 'Go away, we do not want thee!'

The youth said nothing, but led his horses to the stable and gave them oats and hay and all they needed. When he had done this, he went into the parlour, sat down on the bench and said, 'Mother, now I should like something to eat. Will it soon be ready?'

Then she said, 'Yes,' and brought in two immense dishes full of food, which would have been enough to last herself and her husband for a week. The youth ate the whole of it himself, and asked if she had nothing more to set before him.

'No,' she replied, 'that is all we have.'

'But that was only a taste, I must have more.'

She did not dare to oppose him, and went and put a huge caldron full of food on the fire, and took it in when it was done.

'At length come a few crumbs,' said he, and ate all there was, but it was still not sufficient to appease his hunger.

Then said he, 'Father, I see well th t with you I shall never have food enough. If you will get me an iron staff, a good strong one that I cannot break across my knees, I will go off out into the world.'

The farmer was not sorry and put his two horses in his cart, and fetched from the smith a staff so large and thick that the two horses could only just bring it away. The youth laid it across his knees, and snap! he broke it in two like a bean-stick, and threw it away. The father then harnessed four horses, and brought a bar which was so long and thick, that the four horses could only just drag it. The son snapped this also in twain against his knees, threw it away, and said, 'Father,

this can be of no use to me; you must harness more horses, and bring a stronger staff.'

So the father harnessed eight horses, and brought one which was so long and thick, that the eight horses could only just carry it. When the son took it in his hand, he broke a bit off the top of that also, and said, ' Father, I see that you will not be able to procure me any such staff as I want, I will stay with you no longer.'

So he went away, and gave out that he was a smith's apprentice. He arrived at a village where lived a smith who was a greedy fellow, and who never did a kindness to any one, but wanted everything for himself. The youth went into the smithy to him, and asked if he needed a man. ' Yes,' said the smith, and looked at him, and thought, ' That is a strong fellow who will hit hard and earn his bread well.' So he asked, ' How much wages dost thou want ? '

' I don't want any at all,' he replied, ' only every fortnight, when the other men are paid, I will give thee two blows, and thou must bear them.' This just pleased the miserly smith, for he thought he would save much money this way.

Next morning, the new man was to begin to work, but when the master brought the glowing bar, and the youth struck his first blow, the iron flew asunder, and the anvil sank so deep into the earth, that there was no bringing it out again. That made the miser angry, and he said, ' Oh, but I can't make any use of you, you strike far too hard. What will you take for that one blow ? '

Then said he, ' I will only give you quite a little blow, that 's all.' And he raised his foot, and gave him such a kick that he flew away over four loads of hay. Then he sought out the thickest iron bar in the smithy for himself, took it as a stick in his hand, and went on his way.

When he had walked for some time, he came to a small farm, and asked the bailiff if he did not require a head servant.

' Yes,' said the bailiff, ' I can make use of one. You look

a strong fellow who can do something. How much a year do you want as wages ? '

He again replied that he wanted no wages at all, but that every year he would give him three blows, which he must bear. Then the bailiff was satisfied, for he, too, was a covetous fellow.

Next morning all the servants had to go to the wood, and the others were already up, but the head servant was still in bed. So one of them called to him, ' Get up, it is time. We are going to the wood, and thou must go with us.'

' Oh,' said he roughly, ' you may just go, then. I shall be back again before any of you.'

Then the others went to the bailiff, and told him that the foreman was still lying in bed, and would not go to the wood with them. The bailiff said they were to wake him again, and tell him to harness the horses. The foreman, however, said as before, ' Oh, you go on, I shall be back again before any of you.' And then he stayed in bed two hours longer.

At length he got up from his feather bed, but first he got himself two bushels of peas from the loft, made himself some broth and ate it at his leisure, and when that was done, went and harnessed the horses, and drove into the wood. Not far from the wood was a ravine through which the road passed, so he first drove the horses through and then stopped, and went back and took trees and brushwood and made a great barricade so that no horse could get through.

When he was entering the wood, the others were just driving out of it with their loaded carts to go home ; then said he, ' Drive on, I will still get home before you do.'

He did not drive far into the wood, but at once tore two of the very largest trees of all out of the earth, threw them on his cart, and turned back. When he came to the barricade, the others were still standing there not able to get through.

' Don't you see,' said he, ' that if you had stayed with me, you would have got home just as quickly, and would have had another hour's sleep ? ' He now wanted to drive on, but his horses could not get the cart through, so he unharnessed them

and laid them on the top of the cart, took the shafts in his own hands, and pulled it over just as easily as if it had been laden with feathers. When he was over, he said to the others, 'There, you see, I have got over quicker than you,' and drove on, and the others had to stay where they were.

In the yard, however, he took a tree in his hand, showed it to the bailiff, and said, 'Isn't that a fine bundle of wood?'

Then said the bailiff to his wife, 'This servant is a good one. Even if he does sleep it out, he is still home before the others.'

So he served the bailiff a year, and when that was over, and the other servants were getting their wages, he said it was time for him to have his too. The bailiff, however, was afraid of the blows which he was to receive, and earnestly entreated him to excuse him from having them. Rather than that, said he, he himself would be head servant, and the youth should be bailiff.

'No,' said he, 'I won't be a bailiff. I am a foreman and that I'll stay, but I will take the payment which we agreed on.'

The bailiff was willing to give him whatever he demanded, but it was of no use, the head servant said No to everything. Then the bailiff did not know what to do, and begged for a fortnight's delay, for he wanted to find some way of escape. The head servant consented to this and the bailiff summoned all his clerks together, and asked them to think the matter over, and give him advice. The clerks pondered for a long time, but at last they said that no one was sure of his life with the head servant, for he could kill a man as easily as a gnat, and that the bailiff ought to make him get into the well and clean it, and when he was down below, they would roll up one of the mill-stones which was lying there, and throw it on his head; and then he'd never see daylight again. The advice pleased the bailiff, and the head servant was quite willing to go down the well. So when he was standing down

below at the bottom, they rolled the largest mill-stone down on to him and were quite sure they must have broken his skull, but he cried out, ' Chase away those hens from the well, they are scratching in the sand up there, and throwing the dust into my eyes, so that I can't see.' So the bailiff shouted out, ' Shoo ! shoo ! ' and pretended to frighten the hens away. When the head servant had finished his work, he climbed up and said, ' Just look what a beautiful collar I have on,' and behold it was the mill-stone which he was wearing round his neck.

The head servant now wanted to take his reward, but the bailiff again begged for a fortnight's delay. The clerks met together and advised him to send the head servant to the haunted mill to grind corn by night, for from thence as yet no man had ever returned alive. The proposal pleased the bailiff. He called the head servant that very evening, and ordered him to take eight bushels of corn to the mill, and grind it that night, for it was wanted at once. So the head servant went to the loft, and put two bushels in his right poeket, and two in his left, and took four in a sack that hung half on his back and half on his breast, and thus laden he went to the haunted mill. The miller told him that he could grind there very well by day, but not by night, for the mill was haunted, and that up to the present time whoever had gone into it at night had been found lying dead there in the morning.

He said, ' I 'll manage it, just you go away to bed.' Then he went into the mill, and poured out the corn. About eleven o'clock he went into the miller's room, and sat down on the bench. When he had sat there a while, a door suddenly opened and a large table came in, and on the table, wine and roast meat placed themselves, and more good things besides, but everything came of itself, for there was no one there to carry it. After this the chairs pushed themselves up, but no people came, until all at once he beheld fingers, which handled knives and forks and laid food on the plates, but with this exception he saw nothing. As he was hungry and saw the food, he, too,

placed himself at the table, ate with those who were eating and enjoyed it.

When he had had enough, and the others also had quite emptied their dishes, he distinctly heard all the candles being suddenly snuffed out, and as it was now pitch dark, he felt something like a box on the ear. Then he said, ' If anything of that kind comes again, I shall strike out in return.' And when he received a second box on the ear, he, too, struck out. And so it went on all night long. He took nothing without returning it, but repaid everything with interest and did not lay about him in vain. At daybreak everything became quiet again.

When the miller had got up, he came to look after him, wondering if he were still alive.

Then the youth said, ' I have eaten my fill and have received some boxes on the ear, but I have given some in return.' The miller rejoiced, and said that the mill was now released from the spell, and wanted to give him much money as a reward. But he said, ' Money, I will not have, I have enough of it.'

So he took his flour on his back and went home, telling the bailiff that he had done what he had been told to do and would now have the reward agreed on. When the bailiff heard that, he was quite beside himself with fear. He walked backwards and forwards in the room, and drops of perspiration ran down his forehead. Then he opened the window to get some fresh air, but before he was aware, the head servant had given him such a kick that he flew through the window out into the air, and so far away that no one ever saw him again.

Then said the head servant to the bailiff's wife, ' If he does not come back, you must take the other blow.'

She cried, ' No, no, I cannot bear it,' and opened the other window, because drops of perspiration were running down her forehead too. And he gave her such a kick that out she flew, and as she was lighter she went much higher than her husband. When her husband saw her, he shouted, ' Hi ! come to me here,' but she replied, ' Come thou to me, I cannot come to

thee.' And there they hovered about in the air, and could not get near each other, and whether they are still hovering

When her husband saw her, he shouted, 'Hi! come to me here.'

about or not, I do not know, but the young giant took up his iron bar and went on his way.

The Three Sons of Fortune

A FATHER once called his three sons before him, and he gave to the first a cock, to the second a scythe, and to the third a cat.

'I am already aged,' said he, 'and my death is nigh. Before it comes I have wished to take thought for your future. Money I have none, and these that I now give you may seem of little worth, but all depends on your making wise use of them. Only seek out a country where such things are still unknown, and your fortune is made.'

After the father's death the eldest set out with his cock, but wherever he came the cock was already known; in the towns he saw him from a long way off, sitting upon the steeples and turning round with the wind, and in every village he heard more than one crowing. No one would show any wonder at so well known a creature, so that it did not look as if he would make his fortune by it.

At last, however, it happened that he came to an island where the people knew nothing about cocks, and did not even understand how to reckon the time. They certainly knew when it was morning or evening, but at night, if they lay awake, not one of them knew how to find out the time.

'Look!' said he, 'at this proud creature of mine! he has a crown of rubies on his head, and wears spurs like a knight! He calls you three times during the night, at fixed hours, and when he calls for the last time, up comes the sun. But if he crows by broad daylight, then take notice, for there will certainly be a change of weather.'

The people were delighted. For a whole night they did not sleep, listening with wonder as the cock at two, at four, and at

six o'clock, loudly and clearly proclaimed the time. They asked if this splendid bird was for sale, and how much he wanted for it.

'About as much gold as an ass can carry,' answered he.

'A ridiculously small price for such a precious creature!' they all cried at once, and willingly gave him what he had asked.

When he came home with his wealth his brothers were astonished, and the second said, 'Well, I will go forth and see whether I cannot get rid of my scythe as profitably.' But it did not look as if he would, for labourers met him wherever he went, and they had scythes upon their shoulders as well as he.

At last, however, he chanced upon an island where the people knew nothing of scythes. When the corn was ripe there, they took cannon out to the fields and shot it down. Now this was rather an uncertain way of going to work. Often the shot went right over the corn, or sometimes hit the ears instead of the stalks, and shot them away, whereby much was lost. Besides, it made a terrible noise. So he set to work with his scythe and mowed the corn so quietly and quickly that the people gaped with astonishment. They agreed to give him what he wanted for the scythe, and he received a horse laden with as much gold as it could carry.

And now the third brother wanted to try his luck with his cat. He fared just like the others; so long as he stayed on the mainland she was worth nothing. Everywhere there were cats, and so many of them that the kittens were generally drowned as soon as they were born.

At last he sailed over to an island, and by luck it happened that no cats had ever yet been seen there, and the mice had got the upper hand so much that they danced over the tables and benches even whether the master were at home or not. The people complained bitterly of the plague. The King himself in his palace did not know how to secure himself against them. In every corner squeaked the mice, nibbling everything

they could get at. But now the cat began her chase, and she soon cleared a couple of rooms of them, and the people all begged the King to buy the wonderful beast for the country. The King readily gave what was asked, which was a mule laden with gold, and the third brother came home with the greatest treasure of all.

The cat made herself merry with the mice in the royal palace, and killed so many that they could not be counted. At last she grew warm with the work and thirsty, so she stopped, and held up her head crying, ' Miau ! Miau ! ' When they heard this strange cry, the King and all his people were frightened, and in their terror all ran out of the palace at once. The King took counsel what had best be done. At last it was

determined to send a herald to the cat, and demand that she should leave the palace, or if not, she must expect that force would be used against her. For the councillors said, 'Rather would we put up with the plague of mice, to which we are accustomed, than give up our lives to such a monster as this.' A noble youth, therefore, was sent to ask the cat whether she would peaceably quit the castle? But the cat, whose thirst had become still greater, could only answer, 'Miau! Miau!' The youth understood her to say, 'Most certainly not! most certainly not!' and took this answer to the King. 'Then,' said the councillors, 'she shall yield to force.' Cannon were brought out, and the palace was soon in flames. When the fire reached the room where the cat was sitting, she sprang safely out of the window, but the besiegers did not leave off until the whole palace was shot down to the ground.

Fitcher's Bird

THERE was once a wizard who used to take the form of a poor man, and went to houses and begged, and caught pretty girls. No one knew whither he carried them, for they were never seen more. One day he appeared before the door of a man who had three pretty daughters: he looked like a poor weak beggar, and carried a basket on his back, as if he meant to collect in it whatever might be given him in charity. He begged for a little food, and when the eldest daughter came out and was just giving him a piece of bread, he did but touch her, and she was forced to jump into his basket. Thereupon he hurried away with long strides, and carried her away into a dark forest to his house, which stood in the midst of it.

Everything in the house was magnificent. He gave her whatsoever she could possibly desire, and said, 'My darling, thou wilt certainly be happy with me, for thou hast everything thy heart can wish for.' This lasted a few days, and then he said, 'I must journey forth, and leave thee alone for a short time. There are the keys of the house; thou mayst go everywhere and look at everything except into one room, which this little key here opens, and there I forbid thee to go on pain of death.' He also gave her an egg and said, 'Preserve this egg carefully for me, and carry it continually about with thee, for a great misfortune would arise from the loss of it.'

She took the keys and the egg, and promised to obey him in everything. When he was gone, she went all round the house from the bottom to the top, and examined everything. The rooms shone with silver and gold, and she thought she had never seen such great splendour. At length she came to the

forbidden door. She wished to pass it by, but curiosity let her have no rest. She examined the key; it looked just like any other. She put it in the keyhole and turned it a little, and the door sprang open.

But what did she see when she went in? A great bloody basin stood in the middle of the room, and therein lay human beings, dead and hewn to pieces, and hard by was a block of wood, and a gleaming axe lay upon it. She was so terribly alarmed that the egg which she held in her hand fell into the basin. She got it out and washed the blood off, but in vain, it appeared again in a moment. She washed and scrubbed, but she could not get the stain out.

It was not long before the man came back from his journey, and the first things which he asked for were the key and the egg. She gave them to him, but she trembled as she did so, and he saw at once by the red spots that she had been in the bloody chamber. 'Since thou hast gone into the room against my will,' said he, 'thou shalt go back into it against thine own. Thy life is ended.'

He threw her down, dragged her there by her hair, cut her head off on the block, and chopped her in pieces so that her blood ran on the ground. Then he threw her into the basin with the rest.

'Now I will fetch myself the second,' said the wizard, and again he went to the house in the shape of a poor man, and begged. Then the second daughter brought him a piece of bread. He caught her like the first, by simply touching her, and carried her away. She did not fare better than her sister. She allowed herself to be led away by her curiosity, opened the door of the bloody chamber, looked in, and had to atone for it with her life on the wizard's return.

Then he went and brought the third sister, but she was clever and crafty. When he had given her the keys and the egg, and had left her, she first put the egg away with great care, and then she examined the house, and at last went into the forbidden room. Alas! what did she behold? Both her sisters

lay there in the basin, cruelly murdered, and cut in pieces. But she began to gather their limbs together and put them in order, head, body, arms and legs. And when nothing further was wanting the limbs began to move and join themselves together, and both the maidens opened their eyes and were alive once more. Then they rejoiced and kissed and caressed each other.

On his arrival, the man at once demanded the keys and the egg, and as he could perceive no trace of any blood on it, he said, 'Thou hast stood the test, thou shalt be my bride.' He now had no longer any power over her, and was forced to do whatsoever she desired.

'Oh, very well,' said she; 'thou shalt first take a basketful of gold to my father and mother, and carry it thyself on thy back; in the meantime I will prepare for the wedding.

Then she ran to her sisters, whom she had hidden in a little chamber and said, 'The moment has come when I can save you. The wretch himself shall carry you home again, but as soon as you are at home send help to me.' She put both of them in a basket and covered them quite over with gold, so that nothing of them was to be seen, then she called in the wizard and said to him, 'Now carry the basket away, but I shall look through my little window and watch to see if thou stoppest on the way to stand or to rest.'

The wizard raised the basket on his back and went away with it, but it weighed him down so heavily that the perspiration streamed from his face. Then he sat down and wanted to rest awhile, but immediately one of the girls in the basket cried, 'I am looking through my little window, and I see that thou art resting. Wilt thou go on at once?' He thought his bride was calling that to him, and got up on his legs again. Once more he was going to sit down, but instantly she cried, 'I am looking through my little window, and I see that thou art resting. Wilt thou go on directly?' And whenever he stood still she cried this, and then he was forced to go on, until at last, groaning and out of breath, he took the basket with the gold and the two maidens into their parents' house.

AT LAST SHE MET THE BRIDEGROOM WHO WAS COMING SLOWLY BACK.

At home, meanwhile, the bride prepared the marriage feast, and sent invitations to the friends of the wizard. Then she took a skull with grinning teeth, put some ornaments on it and a wreath of flowers, carried it upstairs to the garret window, and let it look out from thence. When all was ready, she got into a barrel of honey, and then cut the feather-bed open and rolled herself in it, until she looked like a wonderful bird, and no one could recognise her. Then she went out of the house, and on her way she met some of the wedding-guests, who asked,

'O, Fitcher's bird, how com'st thou here?'
'I come from Fitcher's house quite near.'
'And what may the young bride be doing?'
'From cellar to garret she's swept all clean,
And now from the window she's peeping, I ween.'

At last she met the bridegroom, who was coming slowly back. He, like the others, asked,

'O, Fitcher's bird, how com'st thou here?'
'I come from Fitcher's house quite near.'
'And what may the young bride be doing?'
'From cellar to garret she's swept all clean,
And now from the window she's peeping, I ween.'

The bridegroom looked up, saw the decked-out skull, thought it was his bride, and nodded to her, greeting her kindly. But when he and his guests had all gone into the house, the brothers and kinsmen of the bride, who had been sent to rescue her, arrived. They locked all the doors of the house, that no one might escape, set fire to it, and the wizard and all his crew were burned to death.

The Poor Miller's Boy and the Cat

IN a certain mill there lived an old miller who had neither wife nor child, and three apprentices served under him. As they had been with him several years, one day he said to them, 'I am old, and want to sit in the chimney-corner, go out, and whichever of you brings the best horse home to me, to him will I give the mill, and in return for it he shall take care of me till my death.'

The third boy, however, was the drudge, who was looked down upon by the others, and they begrudged the mill to him, and meant that he should not have it anyhow. They all three went out together, and when they came to the village, the two said to stupid Hans, 'Thou mayst just as well stay here; as long as thou livest thou wilt never get a horse.'

Nevertheless Hans went with them, and at night they came to a cave in which they all lay down to sleep. The two sharp ones waited until Hans was fast asleep, and then they got up and made off, leaving him where he was. And they thought they had done a very clever thing, though really it turned out very ill for them in the end.

When the sun rose, and Hans woke up, he was lying in a deep cavern. He looked round him on every side and exclaime , 'O heavens! where am I?' Then he got up and clambered out of the cave into the forest, and thought, 'Here I am quite alone and deserted. How shall I obtain a horse now?'

As he went walking along buried in thought, he met a little

tabby cat who said to him kindly, 'Hans, where are you going?'

'Alas! thou canst not help me.'

'I well know what you are seeking,' said the cat. 'You wish to have a beautiful horse. Come with me, and be my faithful servant for seven years long, and then I will give you one more beautiful than any you have ever seen in your whole life.'

'Well, this is a wonderful cat!' thought Hans, 'but I've a good mind to see if she is telling the truth.'

So she took him with her into her enchanted castle, where there were nothing but cats, who were her servants. They leapt nimbly upstairs and downstairs, and were all very merry and happy. In the evening when they sat down to dinner, three of them had to make music. One played the bassoon, the other the fiddle, and the third put the trumpet to his lips, and blew out his cheeks as much as ever he could. When they had dined, the table was cleared away, and the cat said, 'Now, Hans, come and dance with me.'

'No,' said he, 'I won't dance with a pussy cat. I have never done that yet.'

'Then take him off to bed,' said she to the cats.

So one of them lighted him to his bedroom, one pulled his shoes off, one his stockings, and at last one of them blew out the candle. Next morning they returned and helped him out of bed, one put his stockings on for him, one tied his garters, one brought his shoes, one washed him, and one dried his face with her tail.

'That's a very soft towel!' said Hans. He had to work for the cat, however, and chop wood every day, and for that he had an axe of silver, and the wedge and saw were of silver too and the mallet of copper. So he chopped up the wood, and lived there in the house and had good meat and drink, but never saw any one but the tabby cat and her servants.

Once she said to him, 'Go and mow my meadow, and make the hay,' and she gave him a scythe of silver, and a whetstone of gold, but bade him deliver them up again carefully. So

Hans went and did what he was bidden, and when he had finished, he carried the scythe and whetstone and the hay to the house, and asked if the time had not come for her to give him his reward.

'No,' said the cat; 'you must first do something more for me of the same kind. There are beams of silver, a carpenter's axe, a square, and everything that is needful, all of silver; with these build me a little house.'

Then Hans built the little house, and said that he had now done everything, and still he had no horse. Nevertheless, the seven years had gone by with him as if they were six months. The cat asked him if he would like to see her horses?

'Yes,' said Hans.

Then she opened the door of the little house, and there stood twelve horses—such horses, so sleek and well groomed, that his heart rejoiced at the sight of them.

And then she gave him something to eat and drink, and said, 'Go home. I will not give thee thy horse to take away with thee, but in three days' time I will follow thee and bring it.'

So Hans set out, and she showed him the way to the mill. She had, however, never once given him a new coat, and he had been obliged to keep on the dirty old smock-frock that he had brought with him, and that during the seven years had become ever so much too small for him.

When he reached home, the two other apprentices were there again as well, and each of them certainly had brought a horse with him, but one of them was a blind one, and the other lame. They asked Hans where his horse was?

'It will follow me in three days' time,' said he.

Then they laughed and said, 'Indeed, stupid Hans, and where wilt thou get a horse? It will be a fine one!'

Hans went into the parlour, but the miller said he should not sit down to table, for he was so ragged and torn that they would all be ashamed of him if any one came in. So they gave him a mouthful of food outside, and at night, when they went to rest, the two others would not let him have a bed, and at

last he was forced to creep into the goose-house, and lie down on a little hard straw.

In the morning when he awoke, the three days had passed, and a coach drove up with six horses and they shone so bright that it was delightful to see them ! And a servant led a seventh as well, and that one was for the poor miller's boy. Then a magnificent princess alighted from the coach and went into the mill, and who should this princess be but the little tabby cat whom poor Hans had served for seven years !

She asked the miller where the miller's boy and drudge was ? And the miller told her, ' We cannot have him here in the mill, he 's so ragged. He is lying in the goose-house.'

Then the King's daughter said that they were to fetch him immediately. So they brought him out, and he had to hold his little smock-frock together as best he could to cover himself. The servants unpacked splendid garments and washed him and dressed him, and when that was done, no king could have looked more handsome. Then the maiden desired to see the horses which the other apprentices had brought home with them, and one of them was blind and the other lame. So she ordered the servant to bring the seventh horse, and when the miller saw that, he said such a horse as that had never yet entered his yard.

' And that is for the miller's third boy,' said she.

' Then it 's he must have the mill,' said the miller, but the King's daughter said that the horse there was for him, and that he was to keep his mill too, and she took her faithful Hans and set him in the coach, and drove away with him. They drove straight to the little house which he had built with the silver tools, and behold it was now a great castle, and everything inside it was of silver and gold. And then she married him, and he was rich, so rich that he had enough for all the rest of his life.

After this, let no one ever say that any one who is silly can never become a person of importance.

How Six Men got on in the World

THERE was once a man who understood all kinds of arts; he served in war, and behaved well and bravely, but when the war was over he received his dismissal, and three farthings for his expenses on the way. 'Stop,' said he, 'I shall not be content with this. If I can only meet with the right people, the King will yet have to give me all the treasure of the country.' Then full of anger he went into the forest, and saw a man standing therein who had plucked up six trees as if they were blades of corn. He said to him, 'Wilt thou be my servant and go with me?' 'Yes,' he answered, 'but, first, I will take this little bundle of sticks home to my mother,' and he took one of the trees, and wrapped it round the five others, lifted the bundle on his back, and carried it away. Then he returned and went with his master, who said, 'We two ought to be able to get through the world very well,' and when they had walked on for a short while they found a huntsman who was kneeling, had shouldered his gun, and was about to fire. The master said to him, 'Huntsman, what art thou going to shoot?' He answered, 'Two miles from here a fly is sitting on the branch of an oak-tree, and I want to shoot its left eye out.' 'Oh, come with me,' said the man; 'if we three are together, we certainly ought to be able to get on in the world!' The huntsman was ready, and went with him, and they came to seven windmills whose sails were turning round with great speed, and yet no wind was blowing either on the right or the left, and no leaf was stirring. Then said the man, 'I know not what is driving the windmills, not a breath of air is stirring,' and he went onwards with his servants, and when they had walked two miles they saw a man sitting on a tree who was

shutting one nostril, and blowing out of the other. 'Good gracious! what are you doing up there?' He answered, 'Two miles from here are seven windmills; look, I am blowing them till they turn round.' 'Oh, come with me,' said the man; 'if we four are together, we shall carry the whole world before us!' Then the blower came down and went with him, and after a while they saw a man who was standing on one leg and had taken off the other, and laid it beside him. Then the master said, 'You have arranged things very comfortably to have a rest.' 'I am a runner,' he replied, 'and to stop myself running far too fast, I have taken off one of my legs, for if I run with both, I go quicker than any bird can fly.' 'Oh, go with me; if we five are together, we shall carry the whole world before us.' So he went with them, and it was not long before they met a man who wore a cap, but had put it quite on one ear. Then the master said to him, 'Gracefully, gracefully, don't stick your cap on one ear; you look just like a tom fool!' 'I must not wear it otherwise,' said he, 'for if I set my hat straight, a terrible frost comes on, and all the birds in the air are frozen, and drop dead on the ground.' 'Oh, come with me,' said the master; 'if we six are together, we can carry the whole world before us.'

Now the six came to a town where the King had proclaimed that whosoever ran a race with his daughter and won the victory, should be her husband, but whosoever lost it, must lose his head. Then the man presented himself and said, 'I will, however, let my servant run for me.' The King replied, 'Then his life also must be staked, so that his head and thine are both set on the victory.' When that was settled and made secure, the man buckled the other leg on the runner, and said to him, 'Now be nimble, and help us to win.' It was fixed that the one who was the first to bring some water from a far distant well, was to be the victor. The runner received a pitcher, and the King's daughter one too, and they began to run at the same time, but in an instant, when the King's daughter had got a very little way, the people who were looking

It was just as if the wind had whistled by.

on could see no more of the runner, and it was just as if the wind had whistled by. In a short time he reached the well, filled his pitcher with water, and turned back. Half-way home, however, he was overcome with fatigue, and set his pitcher down, lay down himself, and fell asleep. He had, however, made a pillow of a horse's skull which was lying on the ground, in order that he might lie uncomfortably, and soon wake up again. In the meantime the King's daughter, who could also run very well—quite as well as any ordinary mortal can—had reached the well, and was hurrying back with her pitcher full of water, and when she saw the runner lying there asleep, she was glad and said, 'My enemy is delivered over into my hands,' emptied his pitcher, and ran on. And now all would have been lost if by good luck the huntsman had not been standing at the top of the castle, and had not seen everything with his sharp eyes. Then said he, 'The King's daughter shall still not prevail against us'; and he loaded his gun, and shot so cleverly, that he shot the horse's skull away from under the runner's head without hurting him. Then the runner

awoke, leapt up, and saw that his pitcher was empty, and that the King's daughter was already far in advance. He did not lose heart, however, but ran back to the well with his pitcher, again drew some water, and was still at home again, ten minutes before the King's daughter. 'Behold!' said he, 'I have not bestirred myself till now; it did not deserve to be called running before.'

But it pained the King, and still more his daughter, that she should be carried off by a common disbanded soldier like that; so they took counsel with each other how to get rid of him and his companions. Then said the King to her, 'I have thought of a way. Don't be afraid; they shall not come back again.' And he said to them, 'You shall now make merry together, and eat and drink,' and he conducted them to a room which had a floor of iron, and the doors also were of iron, and the windows were guarded with iron bars. There was a table in the room covered with delicious food, and the King said to them, 'Go in, and enjoy yourselves.' And when they were inside, he ordered the doors to be shut and bolted. Then he sent for the cook, and commanded him to make a fire under the room until the iron became red-hot. This the cook did, and the six who were sitting at table began to feel quite warm, and they thought the heat was caused by the food; but as it became still greater, and they wanted to get out, and found that the doors and windows were bolted, they became aware that the King must have an evil intention, and wanted to suffocate them. 'He shall not succeed, however,' said the one with the cap. 'I will cause a frost to come, before which the fire shall be ashamed, and creep away.' Then he put his cap on straight, and immediately there came such a frost that all heat disappeared, and the food on the dishes began to freeze. When an hour or two had passed by, and the King believed that they had perished in the heat, he had the doors opened to behold them himself. But when the doors were opened, all six were standing there, alive and well, and said that they should very much like to get out to warm themselves, for the very food was

fast frozen to the dishes with the cold. Then, full of anger, the King went down to the cook, scolded him, and asked why he had not done what he had been ordered to do. But the cook replied, ' There is heat enough there, just look yourself.' Then the King saw that a fierce fire was burning under the iron room, and perceived that there was no getting the better of the six in this way.

Again the King considered how to get rid of his unpleasant guests, and caused their chief to be brought and said, ' If thou wilt take gold and renounce my daughter, thou shalt have as much as thou wilt.'

' Oh yes, Lord King,' he answered. ' Give me as much as my servant can carry, and I will not ask for your daughter.'

On this the King was satisfied, and the other continued, ' In fourteen days I will come and fetch it.' Thereupon he summoned together all the tailors in the whole kingdom, and they were to sit for fourteen days and sew a sack. And when it was ready, the strong one who could tear up trees had to take it on his back, and go with it to the King. Then said the King, ' Who can that strong fellow be who is carrying a bundle of linen on his back that is as big as a house ? ' and he was alarmed and said, ' What a lot of gold he can carry away ! ' Then he commanded a ton of gold to be brought ; it took sixteen of his strongest men to carry it, but the strong one snatched it up in one hand, put it in his sack, and said, ' Why don't you bring more at the same time !—that hardly covers the bottom ! ' Then, little by little, the King caused all his treasure to be brought thither, and the strong one pushed it into the sack, and still the sack was not half full with it. ' Bring more,' cried he ; ' these few crumbs don't fill it.' Then seven thousand carts with gold had to be gathered together in the whole kingdom, and the strong one thrust them and the oxen harnessed to them into his sack. ' I will examine it no longer,' said he, ' but will just take what comes, so long as the sack is but full.' When all that was inside, there was still room for a great deal more. Then he said, ' I will just make

an end of the thing; people do sometimes tie up a sack even when it is not full.' So he took it on his back, and went away with his comrades. When the King now saw how one single man was carrying away the entire wealth of the country, he became enraged, and bade his horsemen mount and pursue the six, and ordered them to take the sack away from the strong one. Two regiments speedily overtook the six, and called out, 'You are prisoners! Put down the sack with the gold, or you will all be cut to pieces!' 'What say you?' cried the blower, 'that we are prisoners! Rather than that should happen, all of you shall dance about in the air.' And he closed one nostril, and with the other blew on the two regiments. Then they were driven away from each other, and carried into the blue sky over all the mountains—one here, the other there. One sergeant cried for mercy; he had nine wounds, and was a brave fellow who did not deserve ill-treatment. The blower stopped a little so that he came down without injury, and then the blower said to him, 'Now go home to thy King, and tell him he had better send some more horsemen, and I will blow them all into the air.' When the King was informed of this he said, 'Let the rascals go. They have the best of it.' Then the six conveyed the riches home, divided it amongst them, and lived in content until their death.

The Two Travellers

HILL and vale do not come together, but the children of men do, good and bad. In this way a shoemaker and a tailor once met each other in their travels. The tailor was a handsome little fellow who was always merry and full of fun. He saw the shoemaker coming towards him from the opposite direction, and as he could tell by his bag what kind of a trade he plied, he sang a little mocking song to him,

'Sew me the seam,
Draw me the thread,
Spread it over with pitch,
Knock the nail on the head.'

The shoemaker, however, could not stand a joke; he pulled a face as if he had drunk vinegar, and made as if he were about to seize the tailor by the throat. But the little fellow began to laugh, held out his flask to him, and said, 'No harm was meant. Have a drop of this, and wash your anger down.'

The shoemaker took a good hearty drink and the storm on his face began to clear away. He gave the bottle back to the tailor and said that they should travel together.

'All right,' answered the tailor, 'if only it suits you to go to a big town where there is no lack of work.'

'That is just where I want to go,' answered the shoemaker. 'In a small nest there is nothing to earn, and in the country people like to go barefoot.' So they travelled on together, and always set one foot before the other like a weasel in the snow.

Both of them had time enough, but little to bite and to sup. When they reached a town they went about and paid their respects to the tradesmen, and because the tailor looked so lively

and merry, and had such jolly red cheeks, every one gave him work willingly, and when luck was good the master's daughters gave him a kiss beneath the porch, as well. When he again fell in with the shoemaker, the tailor had always the most in his bundle. The ill-tempered shoemaker made a wry face, and thought, 'The greater the rascal the more the luck,' but the tailor began to laugh and to sing, and shared all he got with his comrade. If but a couple of pence jingled in his pockets, he ordered good cheer, and thumped the table in his joy till the glasses danced, and it was light come, light go, with him.

When they had travelled for some time, they came to a great forest through which passed the road to the capital. Two footpaths, however, led through it, one of which was a seven days' journey, and the other only two, but neither of the travellers knew which way was the short one. They seated themselves beneath an oak-tree, and took counsel for what they should prepare, and for how many days they should provide themselves with bread. The shoemaker said, 'One must look before one leaps; I will take with me bread for a week.

'What!' said the tailor, 'drag bread for seven days on one's back like a beast of burden, and not be able to look about. I shall trust in God, and not trouble myself about anything! The money I have in my pocket is as good in summer as in winter, but in hot weather bread gets dry, and mouldy into the bargain. Even my coat does not go as far as it might. Besides, why should we not find the right way? Bread for two days, and that 's enough.' Each, therefore, bought his own bread, and then they tried their luck in the forest.

It was as quiet there as in a church. No wind stirred, no brook murmured, no bird sang, and through the thick leaves no sunbeam forced its way. The shoemaker spoke never a word; the heavy bread weighed down his back until the perspiration streamed down his cross and gloomy face. The tailor, however, was quite merry; he jumped about, hummed on

a leaf, or sang a song, and thought to himself, ' God in Heaven must be pleased to see me so happy.'

This lasted two days, but on the third the forest had not come to an end, and the tailor had eaten up all his bread, so his heart sank down a good yard deeper. In the meantime he did not lose courage, but trusted to God and his luck. On the third day he lay down in the evening hungry under a tree, and rose again next morning hungry still. So also passed the fourth day, and when the shoemaker seated himself on a fallen tree and devoured his dinner, the tailor was only a looker-on.

If he begged for a little piece of bread the other laughed mockingly, and said, ' Thou hast always been so merry, now thou canst try for once what it is to be sad. The birds which sing too early in the morning are struck by the hawk in the evening.' In short he was quite without pity.

But on the fifth morning the poor tailor could no longer stand up, and was hardly able to utter one word for weakness. His cheeks were white, and his eyes were red.

Then the shoemaker said to him, ' I will give thee a bit of bread to-day, but in return for it, I will put out thy right eye.'

Save his life, he must. And as there was no other way, the unhappy tailor was forced to submit. He wept once more with both eyes, and then held his face up to the shoemaker, who had a heart of stone, and who put out his right eye with a sharp knife. The tailor called to mind what his mother used to say to him when he had been enjoying himself in the pantry on the sly. ' Eat what one can. Suffer what one must.'

When he had finished his dearly bought bread, he got on his legs again, forgot his misery and comforted himself with the thought that he could always see well enough with one eye. But on the sixth day, hunger made itself felt again, and gnawed him almost to the heart. In the evening he fell down by a tree, and on the seventh morning he could not raise himself up for faintness, and death was close at hand.

Then said the shoemaker, ' I will show mercy and give thee

bread once more, but thou shalt not have it for nothing, for I shall put out thy other eye for it.'

And now the tailor felt how thoughtless his life had been, prayed to God for forgiveness, and said, 'Do what thou wilt, I will bear what I must, but remember that our Lord God does not always look on passively, and that an hour will come when the evil deed which thou hast done and which I have not deserved of thee, will be requited. When times were good with me, I shared what I had with thee. My trade is of that kind that each stitch must always be exactly like the other. If I no longer have my eyes and can sew no more I must go a-begging. At any rate do not leave me here alone when I am blind, or I shall die of hunger.'

But the shoemaker, who had driven God out of his heart, took the knife and put out his left eye. Then he gave him a bit of bread to eat, held out a stick to him, and drew him on behind him.

When the sun went down, they got out of the forest, and before them in the open country stood the gallows. Thither the shoemaker guided the blind tailor, and then left him alone and went his way. Weariness, pain, and hunger made the wretched man fall asleep, and he slept the whole night. When day dawned he awoke, but knew not where he lay. Two criminals were hanging on the gallows, and a crow sat on the head of each of them. Then one of the men who had been hanged began to speak, and said, 'Brother, art thou awake?'

'Yes, I am awake,' answered the second.

'Then I will tell thee something,' said the first; 'the dew which this night has fallen down over us from the gallows, gives every one who washes himself with it his eyes again. If blind people did but know this how many would regain their sight who do not believe that to be possible.'

When the tailor heard that, he took his pocket-handkerchief, pressed it on the grass, and when it was moist with dew, washed the sockets of his eyes with it. Immediately what the man on the gallows had said came true, and a pair of healthy new

eyes filled the sockets. It was not long before the tailor saw the sun rise behind the mountains. In the plain before him lay the great royal city with its magnificent gates and hundred towers, and the golden balls and crosses which were on the spires began to shine. He could distinguish every leaf on the trees, saw the birds which flew past, and the midges which danced in the air. He took a needle out of his pocket, and as he could thread it as well as ever he had done, his heart danced with delight. He threw himself on his knees, thanked God for the mercy He had shown him, and said his morning prayer. Nor did he forget to pray for the dead men who were hanging there swinging against each other in the wind like the pendulums of clocks. Then he took his bundle on his back and soon forgot the pain of heart he had endured, and went on his way singing and whistling.

The first thing he met was a brown foal running about the fields at large. He caught it by the mane, and wanted to jump on it and ride into the town. The foal, however, begged to be set free. 'I am still too young,' it said; 'even a light tailor such as thou art would break my back in two. Let me go till I have grown strong. Perhaps the time will come when I may reward thee for it.'

'Run off,' said the tailor; 'I see thou art still a giddy thing.' He gave it a touch with a switch over its back, whereupon it kicked up its hind legs for joy, leapt over hedges and ditches, and galloped away into the open country.

But the little tailor had eaten nothing since the day before. 'The sun to be sure fills my eyes,' said he, 'but the bread does not fill my mouth. The first thing that crosses my path and is even half good to eat, will have to suffer for it.'

Ere long a stork stepped solemnly over the meadow towards him.

'Halt! halt!' cried the tailor, and seized him by the leg. 'I don't know if thou art good to eat or not, but my hunger leaves me no great choice. I must cut thy head off, and roast thee.'

'Don't do that,' replied the stork. 'I am a sacred bird, which brings mankind great good, and no one does me an injury. Leave me my life, and I may do thee good in some other way.'

'Well, be off, Cousin Longlegs,' said the tailor. And the stork rose into the air with his long legs dangling down, and flapped gently away.

'What 's to be the end of this?' said the tailor to himself at last; 'my hunger grows greater and greater, and my stomach emptier and emptier. Whatsoever comes my way now is lost.' At this moment he saw a couple of ducklings which were on a pond come swimming towards him. 'You come just at the right moment,' said he, and laid hold of one of them to wring its neck. On this an old duck that was hidden among the reeds began to scream out loud, and swam to him with open beak, and begged him urgently to spare her dear children.

'Canst thou not imagine,' said she, 'how thy mother would mourn if any one wanted to carry thee off, and take thy life?'

'Oh, hold thy noise,' said the good-tempered tailor; 'thou shalt keep thy children,' and he put the captive back into the water.

As he turned to go, he found he was standing in front of an old hollow tree, and he saw some wild bees flying in and out of it. 'There I shall find the reward of my good deed,' said the tailor; 'the honey will refresh me at once.'

But the Queen-bee came out, and threatened him and said, 'If thou touchest my people, and destroyest my nest, our stings shall pierce thy skin like ten thousand red-hot needles. But if thou wilt leave us in peace and go thy way, we will do thee a service for it another time.'

The little tailor saw that here also nothing was to be done. 'Three dishes empty and nothing on the fourth is a bad dinner!' So he dragged himself with his famished stomach into the town, and as it was just striking twelve, dinner was ready cooked in the inn, and he was able to sit down at once.

When he was satisfied he said, 'Now I will get to work.' He went round the town, sought a master, and soon found a good

situation. As, however, he was a thorough master of his trade, it was not long before he became famous, and every one wanted to have his new coat made by the little tailor, whose importance increased daily.

'I can go no further in skill,' said he, 'and yet things get better and better every day.'

At last the King appointed him court-tailor.

But how things do happen in the world! On the very same day his former comrade the shoemaker also became court-shoemaker. When the latter caught sight of the tailor, and saw that he had once more two healthy eyes, his conscience troubled him. 'Before he takes revenge on me,' thought he to himself, 'I must dig a pit for him.' He, however, who digs a pit for another, falls into it himself.

In the evening when work was over and it had grown dusk, he stole to the King and said, 'Lord King, the tailor is an arrogant fellow and has boasted that he will get the gold crown back again which was lost in ancient times.'

'That would please me very much,' said the King, and he caused the tailor to be brought before him next morning, and ordered him to get the crown back again, or to leave the town for ever.

'Oho!' thought the tailor, 'a rogue gives more than he has got. If the surly King wants me to do what can be done by no one, I will not wait till morning but will go out of the town at once, to-day.' He packed up his bundle, therefore, but when he was outside the gate he could not help feeling sorry to give up his good fortune, and turn his back on the town in which all had gone so well with him.

Soon he came to the pond where he had made the acquaintance of the ducks, and at that very moment the old one whose ducklings he had spared, was sitting there on the bank, pluming herself with her beak. She knew him again instantly, and asked why he was hanging his head so?

'Thou wilt not be surprised when thou hearest what has befallen me,' replied the tailor, and told her his fate.

'If that be all,' said the duck, 'we can help thee. The crown fell into the water, and lies down below at the bottom. We 'll soon bring it up again for thee. In the meantime just spread thy handkerchief ready on the bank.' She dived down with her twelve young ones, and in five minutes up she came again with the crown resting on her wings, and the twelve young ones were swimming round about, helping to carry it with their beaks. They swam to the shore and put the crown on the handkerchief.

No one can imagine how magnificent the crown was. When the sun shone on it, it gleamed like a hundred thousand rubies. The tailor tied his handkerchief together by the four corners, and carried it to the King, who was full of joy, and hung a gold chain round the tailor's neck.

When the shoemaker saw that his first stroke had failed, he planned a second, and went to the King and said, 'Lord King, the tailor has become insolent again. He boasts that he will copy in wax the whole of the royal palace, with everything that belongs to it, loose or fast, inside and out.'

The King sent for the tailor and ordered him to copy in wax the whole of the royal palace, with everything that belonged to it, movable or immovable, within and without, and if he did not succeed in doing this, or if so much as one nail on the wall were wanting, he should be imprisoned for his whole life under ground.

The tailor thought, 'It gets worse and worse! No one can endure that!' and he threw his bundle on his back, and went forth. When he came to the hollow tree, he sat down and hung his head. The bees came flying out, and the Queen-bee asked him if he had a stiff neck, since he held his head so awry?

'Alas! no,' answered the tailor; 'something quite different weighs me down,' and he told her what the King had demanded of him.

The bees began to buzz and hum amongst themselves, and the Queen-bee said, 'Just go home again, but come back to-

morrow at this time, and bring a large sheet with you, and then all will be well.'

So he turned back again, but the bees flew to the royal palace and straight into it through the open windows, crept round about into every corner, and inspected everything most carefully. Then they hurried back and modelled the palace in wax with such rapidity that any one looking on would have thought it was growing before his eyes. By the evening all was ready, and when the tailor came next morning, the whole of the splendid building was there, and not one nail in the wall or tile of the roof was wanting, and it was as delicate and as white as snow, and it smelt sweet as honey. The tailor wrapped it carefully in his cloth and took it to the King, who could not admire it enough, placed it in his largest hall, and in return for it presented the tailor with a large house built of stone.

The shoemaker, however, did not give up, but went for the third time to the King and said, ' Lord King, it has come to the tailor's ears that no water will spring up in the courtyard of the castle, and he has boasted that it shall rise up in the midst of the courtyard to a man's height and be clear as crystal.'

Then the King ordered the tailor to be brought before him and said, ' If a stream of water does not rise in my courtyard by to-morrow as thou hast promised, the executioner shall, on that very spot, make thee shorter by the head.'

The poor tailor did not take long to think about it, but hurried out to the gate, and because this time it was a matter of life and death, the tears rolled down his face. Whilst thus he went along full of sorrow, the foal to which he had formerly given its liberty, and which had now become a beautiful chestnut horse, came leaping towards him.

' The time has come,' it said to the tailor, ' when I can repay thee for thy good deed. I know already what thou art in need of, but thou shalt soon be at ease. Get on my back. I can carry two such as thou.' The tailor's courage came back. He jumped up in one bound, and the horse went full speed into

the town, right up to the courtyard of the castle. It galloped as quick as lightning three times round it, and at the third time it came to a sudden stop. At the same instant, however, there was a terrific clap of thunder, in the middle of the courtyard a clod of earth was thrown like a cannon-ball into the air, high over the castle, and instantly after it a jet of water rose as high as man and horse. The water was as clear as crystal, and danced in the sunlight. When the King saw that he arose in amazement, and went and embraced the tailor in the sight of all men.

But good fortune did not last long. The King had daughters in plenty, one still prettier than the other, but he had no son. So the malicious shoemaker betook himself for the fourth time to the King, and said, ' Lord King, the tailor has not given up his arrogance. He has now boasted that if he liked, he could cause a son to be brought to the Lord King through the air.'

The King commanded the tailor to be summoned, and said, ' If thou dost cause a son to be brought to me within nine days, thou shalt have my eldest daughter to wife.'

' The reward is great indeed,' thought the little tailor. ' One would willingly do something for it. But the cherries grow too high for me. If I climb for them, the bough will break beneath me and I shall fall.'

He went home, seated himself cross-legged on his work-table, and thought over what was to be done. ' It can't be managed,' cried he at last, ' I will go away. After all, I can't live in peace here.' He tied up his bundle and hurried away to the gate. When he got to the meadow, he saw his old friend the stork, who was walking backwards and forwards like a philosopher. Sometimes he stood still, took a frog into close consideration, and at length swallowed it down.

The stork came to him and greeted him. ' I see,' he began, ' that thou hast thy pack on thy back. Why art thou leaving the town ? '

The tailor told him what the King had required of

him, and how he could not perform it, and lamented his misfortune.

'Don't let thy hair grow grey about that,' said the stork; 'I will help thee out of thy difficulty. For a long time now I have carried children in swaddling-clothes into the town, so for once in a way I can fetch a little prince out of the well. Go home and be easy. In nine days from this time repair to the royal palace, and there will I come.'

Cousin Longlegs came carefully in.

The little tailor went home, and at the appointed time was at the castle. It was not long before the stork came flying there and tapped at the window. The tailor opened it, and cousin Longlegs came carefully in, and walked with solemn steps over the smooth marble pavement. And he had a baby in his beak that was as lovely as an angel, and stretched out its little hands to the Queen. The stork laid it in her lap, and she caressed it and kissed it, and was beside herself with delight. Before the stork flew away, he took his travelling bag off his back and handed it to the Queen. In it there were little paper parcels of coloured sweets, and they were divided amongst the little princesses. The eldest, however, had none of them, but got the merry tailor for a husband.

'It seems to me,' said he, 'just as if I had won the highest prize. My mother was right after all. She always said that whoever trusts in God and only has good luck, can never fail.'

The shoemaker had to make the shoes in which the little

tailor danced at the wedding festival, after which he was commanded to quit the town for ever. The road to the forest led him to the gallows. Worn out with anger, rage, and the heat of the day, he threw himself down. When he had closed his eyes and was about to sleep, the two crows flew down from the heads of the men who were hanging there, and pecked his eyes out. In his madness he ran into the forest and must have died there of hunger, for no one has ever seen or heard of him again.

The Hut in the Forest

A POOR wood-cutter lived with his wife and three daughters in a little hut on the edge of a lonely forest. One morning as he was about to go to his work, he said to his wife, ' Let my dinner be brought into the forest to me by our eldest daughter, or I shall never get my work done. And in order that she may not miss her way,' he added, ' I will take a bag of millet with me and strew the seeds on the path.'

When, therefore, the sun was just above the middle of the forest, the girl set out on her way with a bowl of soup, but the hedge-sparrows, and the wood-sparrows, the larks and finches, blackbirds and siskins had picked up the millet long before, and the girl could not find the track. Trusting to chance, she went on and on, until the sun sank and night began to fall. The trees rustled in the darkness, owls hooted, and she began to be afraid. Then in the distance she saw a light glimmering between the trees. ' There must be some people living there, who could take me in for the night,' thought she, and she went on towards the light. It was not long before she came to a little house the windows of which were all lighted up. She knocked, and a rough voice from within cried, ' Come in.' The girl stepped into the dark entrance, and knocked at the door of the room.

'Come straight in,' cried the voice, and when she opened the door, an old grey-haired man was sitting at the table with his face leaning on his hands, and his white beard fell down over the table almost as far as the ground. By the stove lay three animals, a hen, a cock, and a brindled cow.

The girl told her story to the old man, and begged for shelter for the night.

The man said,

'Pretty little hen,
Pretty little cock,
And pretty brindled cow,
What say ye to that?'

'Duks,' answered the animals, and that must have meant, 'We are willing,' for the old man said, 'Here you shall have shelter and food. Go to the fire, and cook us our supper.'

The girl found plenty of everything in the kitchen, and cooked a good supper, but had no thought for the animals. She carried the full dishes to the table, seated herself by the grey-haired man, and ate and satisfied her hunger.

When she had had enough, she said, 'But now I am tired, where is there a bed in which I can lie down and sleep?'

The animals replied,

'Thou hast eaten with him,
Thou hast drunk with him,
Thou hast had no thought for us,
So find out for thyself where thou canst pass the night.'

Then said the old man, 'Just go upstairs, and thou wilt find a room with two beds, shake them up, and put white linen on them, and then I, too, will come and lie down to sleep.'

The girl went up, and when she had shaken the beds and put clean sheets on, she lay down in one of them without waiting any longer for the old man. In a little while the grey-haired man came, took his candle, looked at the girl and shook

his head. When he saw that she had fallen into a sound sleep, he opened a trap-door and let her down into the cellar.

Late at night the wood-cutter came home, and reproached his wife for leaving him to hunger all day.

'It is not my fault,' she replied; 'the girl went out with your dinner, and must have lost herself, but she is sure to come back to-morrow.'

The wood-cutter, however, arose before dawn to go into the forest, and asked that the second daughter should take him his dinner that day.

'I will take a bag with lentils,' said he. 'The seeds are larger than millet; the girl will see them better, and can't lose her way.' So when dinner-time came, the girl went out with his food, but the lentils had disappeared. The birds of the forest had picked them up as they had done the day before, and had left none. The girl wandered about in the forest until night, and then she too reached the house of the old man, was told to go in, and begged for food and a bed. The man with the white beard again asked the animals,

'Pretty little hen,
Pretty little cock,
And pretty brindled cow,
What say ye to that?'

The animals again replied 'Duks,' and everything happened just as it had happened the day before. The girl cooked a good meal, ate and drank with the old man, and did not concern herself about the animals, and when she inquired about her bed they answered,

'Thou hast eaten with him,
Thou hast drunk with him,
Thou hast had no thought for us,
So find out for thyself where thou canst pass the night.'

When she was asleep the old man came, looked at her, shook his head, and let her down into the cellar.

On the third morning the wood-cutter said to his wife, 'Send our youngest child out with my dinner to-day; she has always been good and obedient, and will stay in the right path, and not run about after every buzzing humble-bee, as her sisters did.'

The mother did not want to do it, and said, 'Am I to lose my dearest child, as well?'

'Have no fear,' he replied, 'the girl will not go astray. She is too prudent and sensible. Besides I will take some peas with me, and strew them about. They are still larger than lentils, and will show her the way.'

But when the girl went out with her basket on her arm, the wood-pigeons had already got all the peas in their crops, and she did not know which way she was to take. She was full of sorrow and never ceased to think how hungry her father would be, and how her good mother would grieve if she did not go home. At length when it grew dark, she saw the light and came to the house in the forest. She begged quite prettily to be allowed to spend the night there, and the man with the white beard once more asked his animals,

'Pretty little hen,
Pretty little cock,
And pretty brindled cow,
What say ye to that?'

'Duks,' said they. Then the girl went to the stove where the animals were lying, and petted the cock and hen, and stroked their smooth feathers with her hand, and caressed the brindled cow between her horns, and when, in obedience to the old man's orders, she had made some good soup, and the bowl was placed upon the table, she said, 'Am I to eat as much as I want, and the good animals to have nothing? Outside is food in plenty, I will look after them first.'

So she went and brought some barley and strewed it for the cock and hen, and a whole armful of sweet-smelling hay for the cow.

SHE BEGGED QUITE PRETTILY TO BE ALLOWED TO SPEND THE NIGHT THERE.

'I hope you will like it, dear animals,' said she, 'and you shall have a refreshing draught in ease you are thirsty.'

Then she fetehed in a bueketful of water, and the eoek and hen jumped on to the edge of it and dipped their beaks in, and then held up their heads as the birds do when they drink, and the brindled eow also took a hearty draught. When the animals were fed, the girl seated herself at the table by the old man, and ate what he had left. It was not long before the coek and the hen began to thrust their heads beneath their wings, and the eyes of the cow likewise began to blink. Then said the girl, 'Ought we not to go to bed?'

'Pretty little hen,
Pretty little cock,
And pretty brindled cow,
What say ye to that?'

The animals answered 'Duks,'

'Thou hast eaten with us,
Thou hast drunk with us,
Thou hast had kind thought for all of us,
We wish thee good-night.'

Then the maiden went upstairs, shook the feather-beds, and laid elean sheets on them, and when she had done it the old man eame and lay down on one of the beds, and his white beard reaehed down to his feet. The girl lay down on the other, said her prayers, and fell asleep.

She slept quietly till midnight, and then there was sueh a noise in the house that she awoke. There was a sound of ereaking and of eraeking in every eorner, and the doors burst open, and beat against the walls. The beams groaned as if they were being torn out of their joints, it seemed as if the stairease were falling down, and at length there was a erash as if the entire roof had fallen in. As, however, all grew quiet once more, and the girl was not hurt, she stayed quietly lying where she was, and fell asleep again. But when she was

awaked in the morning by the brightness of the sunshine, what did her eyes behold ? She was lying in a vast hall, and everything around her shone with royal splendour. On the walls, golden flowers grew up on a ground of green silk, the bed was of ivory, and the canopy of red velvet, and on a chair close by was a pair of shoes embroidered with pearls. The girl believed that she was in a dream, but three richly clad attendants came in, and asked what orders she would like to give ?

'If you will go,' she replied, 'I will get up at once and make ready some soup for the old man, and then I will feed the pretty little hen, and the cock, and the pretty brindled cow.'

She thought the old man was up already, and looked round at his bed, and it was not he, but a stranger that was lying in it. And as she was looking at him, and became aware that he was young and handsome, he awoke, sat up in bed, and said, 'I am a King's son, and was bewitched by a wicked witch, and made to live in this forest, as an old grey-haired man. No one was allowed to be with me but my three attendants in the form of a cock, a hen, and a brindled cow. The spell was not to be broken until a girl came to us whose heart was so good that she showed herself full of love, not only towards mankind, but towards animals. And that thou hast done, and by thee at midnight we were set free, and the old hut in the forest was changed back again into my royal palace.'

And when they had risen, the King's son ordered the three attendants to set out and fetch the father and mother of the girl to the marriage feast.

'But where are my two sisters ?' inquired the maiden.

'I have locked them in the cellar,' said he, 'and to-morrow they shall be led into the forest, and shall live as servants to a charcoal-burner, until they have grown kinder and do not leave poor animals to suffer hunger.'

The Peasant's Wise Daughter

THERE was once a poor peasant who had no land, but a little cottage only, and one daughter. Said his daughter, 'We ought to ask our lord the King for a bit of the land that has just been cleared.' When the King heard of their poverty, he presented them with a little field, which she and her father dug up, and intended to sow with a little corn and grain of that kind. When they had dug over nearly the whole of the field, they found in the earth a mortar of pure gold.

'Listen,' said the father to the girl. 'As our lord the King has been so gracious and given us the field, we ought to give him this mortar in return for it.'

The daughter, however, would not consent to this, and said, 'Father, if we went with the mortar without having the

pestle as well, we should have to get the pestle, so you had much better say nothing about it.'

However, he wouldn't obey her, but took the mortar and carried it to the King, said he had found it in the cleared land, and begged him to accept it as a present. The King took the mortar, and asked if he had found nothing besides that ?

'No,' answered the countryman.

Then the King said that he must now bring him the pestle. The peasant said they had not found that, but he might just as well have spoken to the wind; he was put in prison, and there he should stay until he produced the pestle. Every day the servants had to carry him bread and water, which is what people get in prison, and they heard how the man cried out continually, 'Ah ! if I 'd only listened to my daughter ! Alas, alas ! if I 'd only listened to my daughter ! ' So they went to the King and told him how the prisoner was always crying, 'Ah ! if I had but listened to my daughter ! ' and would neither eat nor drink. The King commanded the servants to bring the prisoner before him, and he asked the peasant why he was always crying, 'Ah ! if I 'd only listened to my daughter ! ' and what it was that his daughter had said.

'She told me that I ought not to take the mortar to you, for I should have to produce the pestle as well.'

'If you have a daughter who is as wise as that, bid her come here.' So she had to appear before the King, who asked her if she really was so wise, and said he would set her a riddle, and if she could guess that, he would marry her. She at once said yes, she 'd guess it.

Then said the King, 'Come to me not clothed, not naked, not riding, not walking, not in the road, and not out of the road, and if thou canst do that I will marry thee.'

So she went away, took off all she had on, and then she was not clothed, and next she took a great fishing-net, and seated herself in the middle of it and wound it round and round her, and then she was not naked, and she hired an ass, and tied the fisherman's net to its tail, so that it had to drag her along,

and that was neither riding nor walking. The ass had also to drag her in the cart-ruts, so that she only touched the ground with her big toe, and that was neither being in the road nor out of the road. And when she arrived in that fashion, the King said she had guessed the riddle and fulfilled all the conditions. Then he ordered her father to be let out of prison, took her to wife, and gave into her care all the royal possessions.

Now when some years had passed, the King was once reviewing his troops on parade, when it happened that some peasants who had been selling wood stopped before the palace with their wagons, some of which had oxen yoked to them, and some horses. There was one peasant had three horses, one of which had a young foal, and it ran away and lay down between two oxen that were in front of the wagon. When the peasants met they began to dispute, and soon came to blows and made a great disturbance, for the peasant with the oxen wanted to keep the foal, and said it belonged to one of his oxen, and the other said it was his horse's, and that it was his. The dispute was laid before the King, and he gave the verdict that the foal should stay where it had been found, and so the peasant with the oxen, to whom it did not belong, got it. Then the other went away, weeping and lamenting over his foal. Now he had heard how gracious his lady the Queen was because she herself had sprung from poor peasant folks, so he went to her and begged her to see if she could not help him to get his foal back again.

'Yes,' said she, 'I will tell thee what to do, if thou wilt promise not to betray me. Early to-morrow morning, when the King parades the guard, place thyself there in the middle of the road by which he must pass, take a great fishing-net and pretend to be fishing; go on fishing too, and empty out the net as if thou hadst got it full'—and then she told him also what he was to say if he was questioned by the King.

So next day the peasant stood where he had been told, and fished on dry ground. When the King passed by, and

saw it, he sent his messenger to ask what the stupid man was about.

He answered, ' I am fishing.'

The messenger asked how he could fish when there was no water there at all.

The peasant said, ' It 's just as easy for me to fish on dry land as it is for an ox to have a foal.'

The messenger went back and took the answer to the King, who ordered the peasant to be brought to him and told him that this was not his own idea, and he wanted to know whose it was. The peasant must confess that at once. But the peasant would not do so, and said always, God forbid he should! the idea was his own. So they threw him across a bundle of straw, and he was beaten and ill-treated until at last he admitted that he had it from the Queen.

When the King got home again, he said to his wife, ' Why hast thou behaved so falsely to me ? I will not have thee any longer for a wife ; thy time is up, go back to the place from whence thou camest—to thy peasant's hut.'

One favour, however, he granted her : she might take with her the one thing that was dearest and best in her eyes ; and thus was she dismissed.

She said, ' Yes, my dear husband, if you command this, I will do it,' and she threw her arms round him and kissed him, and said she would take leave of him. Then she ordered a strong sleeping draught to be brought, to drink farewell to him ; the King took a great pull at it, but she drank only a little. He soon fell into a deep sleep, and when she saw that, she called a servant and took a beautiful white linen sheet and wrapped the King in it, and the servant had to carry him into a carriage that stood before the door, and she drove with him to her own little cottage. She laid him in her own little bed, and he slept one day and one night without waking, and when he did wake he looked round and said, ' Bless me ! where am I ? ' He called his attendants, but none of them were there.

At length his wife came to his bedside and said, ' My dear

lord and King, you told me I might bring away with me from the palace that which was dearest and most precious in my eyes—I have nothing more precious and dear than yourself, so I have brought you with me.'

Tears rose to the King's eyes and he said, 'Dear wife, thou shalt be mine and I will be thine,' and he took her back with him to the royal palace and was married again to her, and very likely they are still living at the present time.

The Two Brothers

ONCE upon a time there were two brothers, one rich and the other poor. The rich one was a goldsmith and he was evil-hearted. The poor one supported himself by making brooms, and was good and honourable. And he had two children, who were twins and as like each other as two drops of water. These two boys were often in and out of the rich man's house, and sometimes got some of the scraps to eat.

It happened once when the poor man was going into the forest to gather twigs for his brooms, that he saw a bird which was all golden and more beautiful than he had ever seen before. He picked up a little stone, and threw it, and was lucky enough to hit him, but it brought down one golden feather only and the bird flew away. The man picked up the feather and carried it to his brother, who looked at it and said, 'It is pure gold!' and gave him a great deal of money for it. Next day he climbed into a birch-tree, and was about to cut off a branch or two when out flew the same bird. The man searched till he found a nest, with an egg in it, which was of gold. He took the egg home with him, and carried it to his brother, who again said, 'It is pure gold,' and gave him what it was worth.

At last the goldsmith said, 'How I should like to have the

bird itself!' So the poor man went into the forest for the third time, and again saw the golden bird sitting on the tree, so he threw a stone and brought it down and carried it to his brother, who gave him a great heap of gold for it. 'Now,' thought he, 'I can make both ends meet,' and went contentedly home.

The goldsmith was crafty and cunning, and knew very well what kind of a bird it was. He called his wife and said, 'Roast me the gold bird, and take care that none of it is lost. I have a fancy to eat it every bit myself! The bird was indeed no ordinary one, but of so wonderful a kind that whoever ate its heart and liver found every morning a piece of gold beneath his pillow. The woman plucked the bird, put it on the spit, and left it to roast.

Now it happened that while it was at the fire, and the woman had to go out of the kitchen to do some other work, the two children of the poor broom-maker ran in and went up to the spit and turned it once or twice. At that very moment two little bits of the bird fell down into the dripping-pan. Said one of the boys, 'Let 's eat these two little bits; I am so hungry! No one will ever miss them.' So they ate the pieces, but the woman came back then and seeing that they were eating something, said to them, 'What have you been eating?'

'Only two little morsels which fell out of the bird,' answered they.

'Oh! that must have been the heart and the liver,' said the woman, quite frightened, and in order that her husband might not miss them and be angry, she quickly killed a young cock, took out his heart and liver, and put them beside the golden bird. When it was done, she served it up to the goldsmith, who ate it all by himself and left not a bit of it. Next morning, however, when he felt beneath his pillow, expecting to bring out the piece of gold, no more gold pieces were there than there had always been.

The two children did not know what a piece of good fortune had fallen to their lot. Next morning when they got up,

something fell to the ground, and on looking to see what it was, there they found two gold pieces! They took them to their father, who was astonished and said, 'How can that have happened?' When next morning again they found two more, and so on daily, he went to his brother and told him the strange story. The goldsmith knew at once how it had come to pass, and that the children had eaten the heart and liver of the golden bird, and in order to revenge himself, envious and hard-hearted as he was, he said to their father, 'Thy children are in league with the Evil One. Do not touch the gold, and do not suffer them to stay any longer in thy house, for he has them in his power, and may ruin thee too.' The father feared the Evil One, and painful as it was to him, he nevertheless led the twins forth into the forest, and with a sad heart left them there.

The two children ran wildly about in the forest, and sought the way home again, but they could not find it, and only became more and more bewildered. At length they met a hunter who asked, 'To whom do you children belong?'

'We are the poor broom-maker's boys,' they replied, and they told him that their father would not keep them any longer in the house because a piece of gold lay every morning under their pillows.

'Come,' said the hunter, 'that 's nothing so very bad, if at the same time you keep honest, and are not idle.' And as the good man took a fancy to the children, and had none of his own, he took them home with him and said, 'I will be your father, and bring you up till you are big.'

They learned the craft of the hunter from him, and the piece of gold which each of them found when he awoke, was put by for them in case they should need it in the future.

When they were grown up their foster-father took them into the forest one day, and said, 'To-day I am going to see how well you can shoot, so that I may release you from your apprenticeship, and make huntsmen of you.' They went with him and lay in wait a long time, but no game appeared. The huntsman, however, looked up and saw a flock of wild geese

flying in the form of a triangle, so he said to one of the brothers, 'Shoot me down one from each corner.' He did it, and thus he accomplished his trial shot. Soon after another flock came flying by in the form of the figure two, and the huntsman bade the other also bring down one from each corner, and his trial shot likewise was successful.

'Now,' said the foster-father, 'I free you from your apprenticeship; you are skilled hunters, both of you.' Thereupon the two brothers went together into the forest, and consulted each other and agreed upon a plan. In the evening when they had sat down to supper, they said to their foster-father, 'We will not touch food, or take one mouthful, until you have granted us a request.'

Said he, 'What, then, is your request?'

They replied, 'We have now learned all we can, and we must show what we are worth in the world, so allow us to go away and travel.'

Then said the old man joyfully, 'You talk like brave hunters. What you desire has been my wish also. Go forth, and may all go well with you.' Thereupon they finished their supper in great spirits.

When the appointed day came, their foster-father presented each of them with a good gun and a dog, and let each of them take as many as he chose of the gold pieces that had been saved. Then he went a part of the way with them, and when taking leave, he gave them a sharp bright knife, and said, 'If ever you separate, stick this knife into a tree at the place where you part, and then when one of you goes back to that spot again, he will be able to see how his absent brother is faring, for the side of the knife which is turned in the direction by which he went, will rust if he dies, but will remain bright as long as he is alive.'

The two brothers went further and further on, and came to a forest which was so large that it was impossible for them to get out of it in one day. So they passed the night in it, and ate what they had put in their hunting-pouches, but they walked all the second day too, and still did not get out. As they had

nothing to eat, one of them said, 'We must shoot something for ourselves or we shall suffer from hunger,' and he loaded his gun, and looked about him. And when an old hare came running up towards them, he raised his gun to his shoulder, but the hare cried out,

'Dear hunters, do but let me live,
Two little ones to thee I'll give,'

and sprang instantly into the thicket, and brought out two young ones. But the little creatures played so merrily, and were so pretty, that the hunters could not find it in their hearts to kill them, but they kept them with them, and the little hares followed behind on foot. Soon after this a fox crept past; they were just going to shoot it, but the fox cried,

'Dear hunters, do but let me live,
Two little ones I'll also give.'

He, too, brought two little foxes, and the hunters did not like to kill them either, but gave them to the hares for company, and they followed behind. It was not long before a wolf came out of the thicket. The hunters made ready to shoot him, but the wolf cried,

'Dear hunters, do but let me live,
Two little ones I'll also give.'

The hunters put the two wolves with the other animals, and they followed behind them. Then a bear came who wanted to enjoy life a little longer, and cried,

'Dear hunters, do but let me live,
Two little ones I, too, will give.'

The two young bears were added to the others, and then there were eight of them. But who do you think came next? A lion it was, tossing his mane! But the hunters did not let themselves be frightened and took aim to shoot him also, but the lion said,

'Dear hunters, do but let me live,
Two little ones I, too, will give.'

And he brought his little ones to them, and now the hunters had two lions, two bears, two wolves, two foxes, and two hares to follow and serve them.

In the meantime their hunger was not appeased by this, and they said to the foxes, 'Hark ye, you cunning fellows, just provide us with something to eat. You are crafty enough.'

'Not far from here,' they replied, 'lies a village, from which we have already brought many a chicken; we 'll show you the way.' So they went into the village, bought themselves something to eat, and had some given to their beasts, and then travelled on again. The foxes, however, knew their way about very well and where the poultry-yards were, and were able to guide the hunters.

They travelled about for a while, but could find no situations where they could remain together, so they said, 'Well, it can't be helped, we must part.' They divided the animals, so that each of them had a lion, a bear, a wolf, a fox, and a hare, then they took leave of each other, promised to love each other like brothers till their death, and stuck the knife which their foster-father had given them into a tree, after which one went east, and the other west.

The younger, who had gone westward, in time came with his beasts to a town which was all hung with black crape. He went into an inn, and asked the host if he could put up his animals. The innkeeper gave him a stable, where there was a hole in the wall, and the hare crept out and fetched himself the head of a cabbage, and the fox fetched a hen, and when he had eaten up that he went and got the cock as well, but the wolf, the bear, and the lion could not get out because they were too big. Then the innkeeper let them be taken to a place where a cow was lying on the grass, and they too ate till they were satisfied. And when the hunter had taken care of his animals, he asked the innkeeper why the town was hung with black crape? Said the host, 'Because our King's only daughter is to die to-morrow.' The hunter asked if she was so ill that she couldn't live.

'No,' answered the host, 'she is vigorous and healthy, but she must die all the same!'

'How is that?' asked the hunter.

'There is a high hill outside the town, on which dwells a dragon who every year must have a maiden given him, or he lays the whole country waste, and now he has had all the maidens, and there is no longer any one left but the King's daughter. Yet there is no mercy for her; she must be given up to him, and that 's to be done to-morrow.'

Said the hunter, 'Why is the dragon not killed?'

'Ah,' replied the host, 'so many knights have tried it, but it has cost all of them their lives. The King has promised that he who conquers the dragon shall have his daughter to wife, and shall also rule the kingdom after his own death.'

The hunter said nothing more, but next morning took his animals, and with them climbed the dragon's hill. A little church stood at the top of it, and on the altar three full cups were standing, with the inscription, 'Whoever empties the cups will become the strongest man on earth, and will be able to wield the sword which is buried before the threshold of the door.' The hunter did not drink, but went out and sought for the sword in the ground, but was unable to move it from its place. Then he went in and emptied the cups, and now he was strong enough to take up the sword, and his hand could quite easily wield it.

When the hour came when the princess was to be delivered over to the dragon, the King, the marshal, and courtiers accompanied her. From afar she saw the hunter on the dragon's hill, and thought it was the dragon standing there waiting for her, and wanted very badly not to go up to him, but at last, because otherwise the whole town would have been destroyed, she was forced to finish her miserable journey. The King and courtiers returned home full of grief; the King's marshal, however, was to stay where he was, and look on from a distance.

When the King's daughter got to the top of the hill, it was

not the dragon that stood there, but the young hunter, who comforted her, and said he would save her, led her into the church, and locked her in.

It was not long before the seven-headed dragon came, loudly roaring. When he perceived the hunter, he was astonished and said, 'What business hast thou here on my hill?'

It was not long before the seven-headed dragon came, loudly roaring.

The hunter answered, 'I want to fight with thee.'

'Many knights have left their lives here,' said the dragon; 'I shall soon have made an end of thee too,' and he breathed fire out of seven jaws. The fire he meant to have lighted the dry grass, and the hunter would have been suffocated in the heat and smoke, but all the animals came running up and trampled

out the fire. Then the dragon rushed upon the hunter, but he swung his sword until it sang through the air, and struck off three of his heads. At that the dragon rose up in the air in fury, and spat out flames of fire over the hunter, and was about to plunge down on him, but the hunter once more swung his sword, and again cut off three of his heads. The monster became faint and sank down, nevertheless it was just going to rush upon the hunter, but he with his last strength smote its tail off, and as he could fight no longer, he called up his animals who tore it to pieces.

When the struggle was ended, the hunter unlocked the church, and found the King's daughter lying on the floor, as she had lost her senses with terror during the contest. He carried her out, and when she came to herself once more, and opened her eyes, he showed her the dragon all cut to pieces, and told her that she was now delivered.

She rejoiced and said, 'Now thou wilt be my dearest husband, for my father has promised me to him who kills the dragon.' Thereupon she took off her necklace of coral, and divided it among the animals in order to reward them, and the lion received the golden clasp. Her pocket-handkerchief, however, on which was her name, she gave to the hunter, who went and cut the tongues out of the dragon's seven heads, wrapped them in the handkerchief, and preserved them carefully.

That done, as he was so faint and weary with the fire and the battle, he said to the maiden, 'We are both faint and weary, we will sleep a while.' Then she said Yes, and they lay down on the ground, and the hunter said to the lion, 'Thou shalt keep watch, that no one surprises us in our sleep,' and both fell asleep.

The lion lay down beside them to watch, but he also was so weary with the fight, that he called to the bear and said, 'Lie down near me, I must sleep a little: if anything comes, wake me up.' Then the bear lay down beside him, but he also was tired, and called the wolf and said, 'Lie down by me, I

must sleep a little, but if anything comes, wake me up.' Then the wolf lay down by him, but he was tired also, and called the fox and said, 'Lie down by me, I must sleep a little; if anything comes, wake me up.' Then the fox lay down beside him, but he too was weary, and called the hare and said, 'Lie down near me, I must sleep a little, and if anything should come, wake me up.' Then the hare sat down by him, but the poor hare was tired too, and as there was no one whom she could call to keep watch for her she too fell asleep. And now the King's daughter, the hunter, the lion, the bear, the wolf, the fox, and the hare, were all sleeping sound.

The marshal, however, who had been looking from a distance, took courage when he did not see the dragon flying away with the maiden, and finding that all had become quiet, he climbed up the hill. There lay the dragon hacked and hewn to pieces on the ground, and not far off were the King's daughter and a hunter with his animals, and all of them were sunk in a deep sleep.

Now he was a wicked man and he took his sword, cut off the hunter's head, seized the maiden in his arms, and carried her down the hill. She awoke, terrified, but the marshal said, 'Thou art in my hands; thou shalt say that it was I who killed the dragon.'

'I cannot do that,' she replied, 'for it was a hunter with his animals who did it.' Then he drew his sword, and threatened to kill her if she did not obey him, and so he forced her to promise it.

Then he took her to the King, who did not know how to contain himself for joy when he once more looked on his dear child alive, whom he had believed to have been torn to pieces by the monster. The marshal said to him, 'I have killed the dragon, and delivered the maiden and the whole kingdom as well, therefore I demand her as my wife, as was promised.'

The King said to the maiden, 'Is what he says true?'

'Ah, yes,' she answered, 'it must indeed be true, but I will not consent to have the wedding celebrated until after a year

and a day,' for she thought in that time she should hear something of her dear hunter.

The animals, however, were still lying sleeping beside their dead master on the dragon's hill, and there came a great humble-bee and lighted on the hare's nose, but the hare wiped it off with her paw, and went on sleeping. The humble-bee came a second time, but the hare again rubbed it off and slept on. Then it came for the third time, and stung her nose so that she awoke. As soon as the hare was awake, she roused the fox, and the fox the wolf, and the wolf the bear, and the bear the lion. And when the lion awoke and saw that the maiden was gone, and his master was dead, he began to roar frightfully and cried, 'Who has done that? Bear, why didst thou not wake me up?' The bear asked the wolf, 'Why didst thou not wake me up?' and the wolf the fox, 'Why didst thou not wake me up?' and the fox the hare, 'Why didst thou not wake me up?' The poor hare alone did not know what answer to make, and so the blame rested upon her. Then they were just going to fall upon her, but she entreated them and said, 'Kill me not, I will bring our master to life again. I know a mountain on which a root grows which, when placed in the mouth of any one, cures him of all illness and every wound. But the mountain lies two hundred hours' journey from here.'

The lion said, 'In four-and-twenty hours must thou run there and back again, and have brought the root with thee.' Then the hare bounded away, and in four-and-twenty hours she was back, and brought the root with her. The lion put the hunter's head on again, and the hare placed the root in his mouth, and immediately all joined together again, and his heart beat, and life came back.

Then the hunter awoke, and was alarmed when he did not see the maiden, and thought, 'She must have gone away whilst I was sleeping, in order to get rid of me.' The lion in his great haste had put his master's head on the wrong way round, but the hunter did not notice it because he was so sad about the King's daughter. But at noon, when he was going to eat some-

thing, he saw that his head was turned baekwards and could not understand it, and asked the animals what had happened to him in his sleep. Then the lion told him that they, too, had all fallen asleep from weariness, and on awaking, had found him dead with his head cut off, that the hare had brought the life-giving root, and that he, in his haste, had laid hold of the head the wrong way, but that he would repair his mistake. Then he tore the hunter's head off again, turned it round, and the hare healed it with the magic root.

The hunter, however, was sad at heart, and travelled about the world, and made his animals dance in the streets for a living. It eame to pass that exaetly at the end of one year he came baek to the same town where he had delivered the King's daughter from the dragon, and this time the town was gaily hung with red cloth. Then he said to the host, 'What does this mean? Last year the town was all hung with black crape, what means the red eloth to-day?'

'Last year,' answered the host, 'our King's daughter was to have been delivered over to the dragon, but the marshal fought with it and killed it, and so to-morrow their wedding is to be solemnised, and that is why the town was then hung with blaek erape for mourning, and is to-day eovered with red cloth for joy.'

Next day when the wedding was to take plaee, the hunter said at midday to the innkeeper, 'Do you believe, sir host, that I while with you here to-day shall eat bread from the King's own table?'

'Nay,' said the host, 'I would bet a hundred pieces of gold that that will not eome true.' The hunter aecepted the wager, and set against it a purse with the same number of gold pieces.

Then he ealled the hare and said, 'Go, my dear runner, and fetch me some of the bread which the King is eating.' Now the little hare was the lowest of the animals, and could not pass this order on to any of the others, but had to stir her legs to do it herself. 'Alas!' thought she, 'if I go leaping through the streets by myself, the butchers' dogs will all be after me.'

It happened as she feared; the dogs came barking after her, wanting to make holes in her good fur coat. But she sprang clear away. Have you never seen a hare running? And she sheltered herself in a sentry-box without the soldier being aware of it. Then up came the dogs and wanted to pull her out, but the soldier did not understand the fun, and struck them with the butt-end of his gun, till they ran away yelping and howling. As soon as the hare saw that the way was clear, she ran into the palace and straight to the King's daughter, sat down under her chair, and scratched at her foot. Then she said, 'Wilt thou get away?' thinking it was her dog. The hare scratched her foot a second time, and again she said, 'Wilt thou get away?' and thought it was her dog. But the hare did not let herself be turned from her purpose, and scratched for the third time; then she peeped down, and knew the hare by her collar. She took her on her lap, carried her into her chamber, and said, 'Dear Hare, what dost thou want?'

'My master, who killed the dragon, is here,' answered the hare, 'and he has sent me to ask for a loaf of bread like that which the King eats.'

Then she was full of joy and had the baker summoned, and ordered him to bring a loaf such as was eaten by the King.

The little hare said, 'But the baker must carry it for me too, so that the butchers' dogs may do no harm to me.' The baker carried it for her as far as the door of the inn, and then the hare got on her hind legs, took the loaf in her front paws, and carried it to her master. Then said the hunter, 'Behold, sir host, the hundred pieces of gold are mine.' The host was astonished, but the hunter went on to say, 'Yes, sir host, I have the bread, but now I 'll have some of the King's roast meat also.'

'I should indeed like to see that,' said the host, 'but he would make no more wagers.

The hunter called the fox and said, 'My little fox, go and fetch me some roast meat, such as the King eats.' The little

red fox knew the byways better, and went by holes and corners without any dog seeing him, seated himself under the chair of the King's daughter, and scratched her foot. Then she looked down and recognised the fox by its collar, took him into her chamber with her, and said, 'Dear Fox, what dost thou want?'

He answered, 'My master, who killed the dragon, is here, and has sent me. I am to ask for some roast meat such as the King eats.'

Then she bade the cook come, who was obliged to prepare a roast joint, the same as was eaten by the King, and to carry it for the fox as far as the door. Then the fox took the dish, waved away with his tail the flies which had settled on the meat, and carried it to his master.

'Behold, sir host,' said the hunter, 'bread and meat are here, but now I will also have proper vegetables with it, such as are eaten by the King.' Then he called the wolf, and said, 'Dear Wolf, go to the palace and fetch me vegetables such as the King eats.' Then the wolf went straight to the palace, as he feared no one, and when he got to the King's daughter's chamber, he twitched at the back of her dress, so that she had to look round. She recognised him by his collar, and took him into her chamber with her, and said, 'Dear Wolf, what dost thou want?'

He answered, 'My master, who killed the dragon, is here. I am to ask for some vegetables, such as the King eats.'

Then she made the cook come, and he had to make ready a dish of vegetables, such as the King ate, and had to carry it for the wolf as far as the door, and then the wolf took the dish from him, and carried it to his master.

'Behold, sir host,' said the hunter, 'now I have bread and meat and vegetables, but I will also have some pastry to eat, like that which the King eats.'

He called the bear, and said, 'Dear Bear, thou art fond of licking anything sweet; go and bring me some tarts such as the King eats.' Then the bear trotted to the palace and every

one got out of his way, but when he reached the guard, they barred the way with their muskets, and would not let him go into the royal palace. But he stood up on his hind legs, and gave them a few boxes on the ears, right and left, with his paws, and that soon scattered them, and he went straight on to the King's daughter, placed himself behind her, and growled a little. She looked behind her, and knew the bear, and bade him go into her room with her, and said, 'Dear Bear, what dost thou want?'

He answered, 'My master, who killed the dragon, is here, and I am to ask for some tarts such as the King eats.'

Then she summoned her confectioner, who had to bake some pastry such as the King ate, and carry it to the door for the bear. The bear first licked up the comfits which had rolled off, and then he stood upright, took the dish, and carried it to his master.

'Behold, sir host,' said the hunter, 'now I have bread, meat, vegetables and confectionery, but I will drink wine also, and such as the King drinks.'

He called his lion to him and said, 'Dear Lion, thou thyself likest to drink till thou art tipsy; go and fetch me some wine, such as is drunk by the King.' Then the lion stalked through the streets, and the people fled from him, and when he came to the guard, they wanted to bar the way against him, but he did but roar once, and they all ran away. Then the lion went to the royal apartment, and knocked at the door with his tail. The King's daughter came out and was almost afraid of the lion, but she knew him by the golden clasp of her necklace, and bade him go with her into her chamber. 'Dear Lion,' she said, 'what wilt thou have?'

He answered, 'My master, who killed the dragon, is here, and I am to ask for some wine such as is drunk by the King.'

Then she bade the cup-bearer be called, who was to give the lion some wine like that which was drunk by the King. The lion said, 'I will go with him, and see that I get the right

wine.' So he went down with the cup-bearer, and when they were below, the cup-bearer wanted to draw him some of the common wine that was drunk by the King's servants ; but the lion said, ' Stop, I will taste the wine first,' and he drew half a measure, and swallowed it down at one draught. ' No,' said he, ' that is not right.' The cup-bearer looked at him askance, but went on, and was about to give him some out of another barrel which was for the King's marshal. The lion said, ' Stop, let me taste the wine first,' and drew half a measure and drank it. ' That is better, but still not right,' said he. Then the cup-bearer grew angry and said, ' How can a stupid animal like you understand wine ? ' But the lion gave him a blow behind the ears, which made him tumble down and not at all gently either, and when he had picked himself up again, without another word, he conducted the lion into a little cellar apart, where the King's wine lay, which no one else ever drank. The lion first drew half a measure and tried the wine, and then he said, ' That may possibly be the right sort,' and bade the cup-bearer fill six bottles of it. And now they went upstairs again, but when the lion came out of the cellar into the open air, he reeled about a little, and was rather drunk, and the cup-bearer was forced to carry the wine as far as the door for him, and then the lion took the handle of the basket in his mouth, and took it to his master.

The hunter said, ' Behold, sir host, here have I bread, meat, vegetables, confectionery and wine such as the King has, and now I will dine with my animals,' and he sat down and ate and drank, and fed the hare, the fox, the wolf, the bear, and the lion also, and he rejoiced, for he saw that the King's daughter still loved him.

When he had finished his dinner, he said, ' Sir host, I have eaten and drunk, as the King eats and drinks, and now I will go to the King's court and marry the King's daughter.'

Said the host, ' How can that be, when she is already betrothed, and to be married to-day ? '

Then the hunter drew forth the handkerchief which the

King's daughter had given him on the dragon's hill, in which were folded the monster's seven tongues, and said, ' What I have here in my hand shall help me to do it.'

The innkeeper looked at the handkerchief, and said, ' Whatever I believe, I do not believe that, and I am willing to stake my house and courtyard on it.' The hunter, however, took out a bag with a thousand gold pieces in it, put it on the table, and said, ' I 'll stake that on it.'

Now the King said to his daughter, at the royal table, ' What did all the wild animals want, which have been coming to thee, and going in and out of my palace ? '

She replied, ' I may not tell you, but send and have the master of the animals brought, and you will do well.'

The King sent a servant to the inn with an invitation to the stranger, and he arrived just as the hunter had laid his wager with the innkeeper. Then said he, ' Behold, sir host, the King sends his servant and invites me, but this is not the way I am going.' And he said to the servant, ' I request the Lord King to send me royal clothing, and a carriage with six horses, and servants to attend me.'

When the King heard the answer, he said to his daughter, ' What shall I do ? '

She said, ' Cause him to be fetched as he desires to be, and you will do well.'

Then the King sent royal apparel, a carriage with six horses, and servants to wait on him.

When the hunter saw them coming, he said, ' Behold, sir host, now I am fetched as I desired to be,' and he put on the royal garments, took the handkerchief with the dragon's tongues with him, and drove off to the King.

The King saw him coming and said to his daughter, ' How shall I receive him ? '

She answered, ' Go to meet him and you will do well.'

So the King went to meet him and led him in, and his animals followed. The King gave him a seat near himself and

his daughter, and the marshal, as bridegroom, sat on the other side, but did not recognise the hunter.

And now at this very moment the seven heads of the dragon were brought in for all to see, and the King said, ' These seven heads were cut off by the marshal, wherefore to-day I give him my daughter to wife.'

Then the hunter stood up, opened the seven jaws, and said, ' Where are the seven tongues of the dragon ? '

Then the marshal was terrified, and grew pale and did not know what answer to make. At length in his confusion he said, ' Dragons have no tongues.'

' Liars ought to have none, but the dragon's tongues are the tokens of the victor,' replied the hunter, and he unfolded the handkerchief, and there lay all seven inside it. And he put each tongue in the mouth to which it belonged, and it fitted exactly. Then he took the handkerchief on which the name of the princess was embroidered, and showed it to the maiden, and asked to whom she had given it, and she answered, ' To him who killed the dragon.'

He called his animals, and took the collar off each of them and the golden clasp from the lion, and showed them to the maiden, asking to whom they belonged.

She answered, ' The necklace and golden clasp were mine, but I divided them among the animals who helped to conquer the dragon.'

Then said the hunter, ' When I, tired with the combat, was resting fast asleep, the marshal came and cut off my head. He then carried away the King's daughter, and gave out that it was he who had killed the dragon, but that he lied I prove with the tongues, the handkerchief, and the necklace.' And he related how his animals had healed him by means of a wonderful root, and how he had travelled about with them for one year, and at last had come there again and had learned the treachery of the marshal from what the innkeeper told him.

Then the King asked his daughter, ' Is it true that this man killed the dragon ? '

And she answered, ' Yes, it is true. Now I may reveal the wicked deed of the marshal, as it has come to light without my breaking my word, for he wrung from me a promise to be silent. For this reason, however, I made the condition that the marriage should not take place for a year and a day.'

Then the King bade twelve councillors be summoned to pronounce judgment on the marshal, and they sentenced him to be torn to pieces by four bulls. So the marshal was executed, but to the hunter the King gave his daughter, and named him to reign in his stead over the whole kingdom.

The wedding was celebrated with great joy, and the young King caused his father and his foster-father to be brought, and loaded them with treasures. Neither did he forget the innkeeper, but sent for him and said, ' Behold, sir host, I have married the King's daughter, and your house and yard are mine.' ' Yes,' said the host, ' according to justice it is so.'

But the young King said, ' It shall be done according to mercy,' and told him that he should keep his house and yard, and have the thousand pieces of gold as well.

And now the young King and Queen were very happy, and lived in gladness together. He often went out hunting because it was a delight to him, and the faithful animals had to accompany him. In the neighbourhood, not far off, there was a forest of which it was reported that it was haunted, and that whoever entered it did not easily get out again. The young King, however, longed greatly to hunt in it, and let the old King have no peace until he allowed him to do so. So he rode forth with a great following, and when he came to the forest, he saw a snow-white hart, and said to his people, ' Wait here till I return, I want to chase that beautiful creature,' and he rode into the forest after it, followed only by his animals. The attendants dismounted and stayed there until evening, but he did not return, so they rode home, and told the young Queen that the young King had followed a white hart into the enchanted forest and had not come back again, and she was in the greatest concern about him. He, however, had ridden on

and on after the beautiful wild animal, and had never been able to overtake it. When he thought he was near enough to aim, he instantly saw it bound away into the far distance, and at length it vanished altogether. And now he found out that he had penetrated deep into the forest, and he blew his horn but there was no answer, for his attendants could not hear it. And as night, too, was falling, he saw that he could not get home that day, so he got off his horse, lighted a fire for himself near a tree, and resolved to spend the night by it. While he was sitting by the fire with his animals lying down beside him, it seemed to him that he heard a human voice. He looked round, but could see nothing. Soon afterwards he again heard a groan as if from above, and then he looked up, and saw an old woman sitting in the tree, who wailed without stopping.

'Oh, oh, oh, how cold I am!' she moaned.

'Come down,' said he, 'and warm thyself if thou art cold.'

'No,' she said, 'thy animals will bite me.'

He answered, 'They will do thee no harm, old mother. Do come down.'

She, however, was a witch, and said, 'I will throw down a wand from the tree, and if thou strikest them on the back with it, they will do me no harm.' Then she threw him a small switch, and he struck them with it, and instantly they lay still all turned into stone. When the witch was safe from the animals, down she leapt and touched him also with a switch, and he too was changed to stone. The old hag she laughed, and dragged him and his animals into a cave where many more such stones already lay.

As the young King never came back at all, the Queen's anguish and fears grew greater and greater. And it so happened that at this very time there came into the kingdom the other brother who had turned to the east when the two had first separated. He had sought employment, and finding none, had travelled about here and there, and he too had made his animals dance. Then it came into his mind that he would just go and

Instantly they lay still all turned into stone.

look at the knife that they had thrust in the trunk of a tree at their parting, that he might learn how his brother was. When he got there his brother's side of the knife was half rusted, and half bright. Then he was alarmed and thought, 'A great misfortune must have befallen my brother, but perhaps I can still save him, for half the blade is still bright.' He and his animals went on towards the west, and when he entered the gate of the town, the guard came to meet him, and asked if he was to announce him to his consort the young Queen, who for two days had been in the greatest sorrow at his absence, and was afraid he had been killed in the enchanted forest? The sentries, indeed, thought no otherwise than that he was the young King himself, for he was just like him to look at, and had wild animals running behind him. He saw at once that they were speaking of his brother, and thought, 'It will be better if I pass myself off for him, and then I can rescue him more easily.' So he allowed himself to be escorted into the castle by the guard, and was received with the greatest joy. The young Queen indeed thought that he was her husband, and asked him why he had stayed away so long. 'I had lost myself in the forest,' he explained, 'and could not find my way out again any sooner.' At night he was taken to the royal bed, but he laid a two-edged sword between him and the young Queen. She did not know what that could mean, but did not venture to ask.

For two days he remained in the palace, and in the meantime found out all he could about the enchanted forest, and at last he said, 'I must hunt there once more.' The King and the young Queen wanted to persuade him not to do it, but he stood out against them, and went forth with a larger following. When he had gone into the forest, it fared with him as with his brother; he saw a white hart and said to his people, 'Stay here, and wait till I return, I want to chase this lovely wild creature,' and he rode into the forest and his animals after him. But he could not overtake the hart, and got so deep into the forest that he was forced to pass the night there. And when

he had lighted a fire, he heard some one wailing above him, ' Oh, oh, oh, how cold I am ! '

Looking up he saw the self-same old witch sitting in the tree.

' If thou art cold,' said he, ' come down, little old mother, and warm thyself.'

' No, no,' she answered, ' thy animals will bite me.'

But he said, ' They will not hurt thee.'

' I will throw down a wand to thee,' she cried, ' and if thou smitest them with it they will do me no harm.'

The hunter heard that, but he did not trust the old woman, and said, ' I will not strike my animals. Come down, or I will fetch thee.'

Then she cried, ' What dost thou want ? Thou shalt not touch me.'

But he replied, ' If thou dost not come, I 'll shoot thee.'

' Shoot away,' said she ; ' I do not fear thy bullets ! '

Then he took aim and fired at her, but the witch was proof against all leaden bullets, and chuckled, and yelled and cried, ' Thou shalt not hit me.'

The hunter knew what to do though, and tore three silver buttons off his coat, and loaded his gun with them, for against them her magic was useless, and when he fired, down she fell at once with a scream.

He set his foot on her and said, ' Old witch, if thou dost not instantly confess where my brother is, I will seize thee with both my hands and throw thee into the fire.'

She was in a great fright, and begged for mercy, and said, ' He and his animals lie in a cave, turned to stone.'

Then he made her go there with him, and threatened her, and said, ' Old sea-cat, now shalt thou make my brother and all the human beings lying here, alive again, or into the fire thou shalt go ! '

She took a wand and touched the stones, and then his brother with his animals came to life again, and many others, merchants, and workmen, and shepherds, and they all rose up

and thanked him for their deliverance, and went off to their homes.

But when the twin brothers saw each other again, they kissed each other and rejoiced with all their hearts. Then they seized the witch, and bound her fast and laid her on the fire, and when she was burnt the dismal forest opened of its own accord, and was light and clear, and in the distance the King's palace could be seen about three hours' walk away.

Thereupon the two brothers went home together, and told each other their histories on the way. And when the youngest said that he was ruler of the whole country in the old King's stead, the other observed, 'That I remarked very well, for when I came to the town, and was taken for thee, all royal honours were paid me; the young Queen looked on me as her husband, and I had to eat at her side, and sleep in thy bed.'

When the other heard that, he became so jealous and angry that he drew his sword, and struck off his brother's head. But when he saw him lying there dead, and his red blood flowing, he repented most bitterly.

'My brother delivered me,' he cried, 'and I have killed him for it,' and he bewailed him aloud. Then up came his hare and offered to go and bring some of the root of life, and away she bounded and brought it back while yet there was time, and the dead man was brought to life again, and never knew he had been wounded.

After this they went on their way, and the younger said, 'Thou lookest like me, hast royal apparel on as I have, and the animals follow thee as they do me. We will go in by opposite gates, and arrive at the same time from the two sides in the old King's presence.'

So they separated, and before long in came the guards from the doors on both sides at the same moment to announce that the young King and his animals had returned from the chase.

'It is not possible,' the old King said; 'the gates lie quite a mile apart.' In the meantime, however, the two brothers

entered the courtyard of the palace from opposite sides, and both mounted the steps.

Then the King in amazement said to his daughter, ' Tell me which is thy husband. Each of them looks exactly like the other, I cannot tell one from the other.' Then she was in great distress, and she could not tell either. But at last she remembered the necklace which she had given to the animals, and she sought and found her little golden clasp on one of the lions, and she cried in her delight, ' He who is followed by this lion is my true husband.'

The young King laughed and said, ' Yes, he is the right one,' and they all sat down together to table, and ate and drank, and were merry.

At night when the young King went to bed, his wife said, ' Why hast thou for these last nights always laid a two-edged sword in our bed ? I thought thou hadst a wish to kill me.' And then he knew how true his brother had been.

The Nix of the Mill-pond

ONCE upon a time there was a miller who lived with his wife in great contentment. They had money and land, and year by year their prosperity increased more and more. But ill-luck comes like a thief in the night, and as their wealth increased so again did it decrease, year by year, till at last the miller could hardly call the mill in which he lived, his own. He was in great distress, and when he lay down after his day's work, he could find no rest, but tossed about in his bed, full of care. One morning he rose before daybreak and went out into the open air, thinking that perhaps there his heart might become lighter. As he crossed the mill-dam the first sunbeam was just breaking forth, and he heard the sound of a ripple in the pond. He turned and saw a beautiful woman rising slowly out of the water. Her long hair, which she was holding off her shoulders with her soft hands, fell down on both sides, and covered her white body. He soon saw that she was the Nix of the Mill-pond, and in his fright he did not know

whether to run or stay where he was. But the nix raised her sweet voice and called him by his name, and asked why he was so sad? The miller was at first struck dumb, but when he heard her speak so kindly, he took heart, and told her how he had formerly lived in wealth and happiness, but that now he was so poor that he did not know what to do.

'Be easy,' answered the nix; 'I will make thee richer and happier even than thou wast before, only thou must promise to give me what has just been born in thy house.'

'What else can that be,' thought the miller, 'but a puppy or a kitten?' and he promised her what she desired.

The nix descended into the water again, and he hurried back to his mill comforted, and in good spirits. But before he reached the house the maid-servant came to meet him and cried to him to rejoice, for his wife had given birth to a little boy. The miller stood as if struck by lightning. He saw well that the cunning nix had been aware of it, and had deceived him. Hanging his head, he went up to his wife's bedside and when she said, 'Why dost thou not rejoice over the fine boy?' he told her what had befallen him, and what kind of a promise he had given to the nix. 'Of what use to me are riches and prosperity,' he added, 'if I am to lose my child? But what can I do?' Even the relations, who had come to wish them joy, did not know what to say.

In the meantime good fortune returned to the miller's house. All that he undertook succeeded. It was as if trunks and coffers filled of themselves, and the money in the cupboards increased during the night. It was not long before his wealth was greater than it had ever been before. But he could not rejoice over it untroubled; the bargain which he had made with the nix tormented his soul. Whenever he passed the mill-pond he feared she might ascend and remind him of his debt. He never let the boy himself go near the water. 'Beware,' he said to him; 'if thou dost but touch the water, a hand will rise, seize thee, and draw thee down.'

But as year after year went by and the nix did not show

herself again, the miller began to feel at ease. The boy grew to be a youth and was apprenticed to a hunter. When he had learned all he could, and had become a first-rate hunter, the lord of the village took him into his service. In the village dwelt a beautiful and true-hearted maiden, whom the hunter loved, which when his master saw he gave him a little house, and the two were married, and lived in peace and happiness, loving each other with all their hearts.

One day the hunter was chasing a roe, and when the animal turned aside from the forest into the open country, he pursued it and at last shot it. He did not notice that he was now in the neighbourhood of the dangerous mill-pond, and after he had cleaned the deer, he went to the water to wash his blood-stained hands. Scarcely, however, had he dipped them in, than the nix ascended, smilingly wound her dripping arms around him, and drew him down under the waves, which quickly closed over him.

When evening came, and the hunter did not return home, his wife became alarmed. She went out to seek him, and as he had often told her that he had to be on his guard against the snares of the nix, and dared not venture into the neighbourhood of the mill-pond, she already suspected what had happened. She hastened to the water, and when she found his hunting-pouch lying on the bank, she had no longer any doubt about the misfortune. Lamenting her sorrow and wringing her hands, she called on her beloved by name, but in vain. She hurried round to the other side of the pond, and called him anew. She reviled the nix with harsh words. But no answer followed. The surface of the water remained calm, only the crescent moon looked calmly back at her. The poor woman did not leave the pond. With hasty steps she paced round and round it without resting a moment, sometimes in silence, sometimes uttering loud cries of grief, and sometimes softly sobbing.

At last her strength came to an end, she sank to the ground and fell into a heavy sleep. Presently a dream took possession

of her. She was anxiously climbing upwards between great masses of roek. Thorns and briars eaught her feet, the rain beat in her faee, and the wind tossed her long hair about. When she had reached the summit, quite a different sight lay before her. The sky was blue, the air soft, the ground sloped gently downwards, and on a green meadow, gay with flowers of every eolour, stood a pretty little cottage. She went up to it and opened the door, and inside there sat an old woman with white hair, who beekoned kindly to her.

At that moment the poor woman awoke, day had already dawned, and she at once resolved to do as in her dream. She laboriously elimbed the mountain. Everything took place exaetly as she had seen it in the dream. The old woman received her kindly, and pointed out a chair on whieh she might sit. 'Thou must have met with a misfortune,' she said, 'since thou hast sought out my lonely eottage.'

With tears, the woman related what had befallen her.

'Be comforted,' said the old woman, 'I will help thee. Here is a golden comb for thee. Tarry till the full moon has risen, then go to the mill-pond, seat thyself on the bank, and comb thy long blaek hair with this eomb. When thou hast done, lay it down on the bank, and thou shalt see what will happen.'

The woman returned home, but the time passed slowly till the full moon eame. At last the shining circle appeared in the heavens, and she went out to the mill-pond. She sat down and combed her long blaek hair with the golden eomb, and when she had finished, she laid it down at the water's edge. It was not long before there was a movement in the depths, a wave rose on the surface and rolled to the shore, and bore the comb away with it. When the comb had sunk to the bottom, the waters parted, and the head of the hunter rose above them. He did not speak, but looked sorrowfully at his wife. At the same instant a second wave eame rushing up and eovered the man's head. All had vanished, the mill-pond lay peaeeful as before, and nothing but the faee of the full moon shone on it.

Full of sadness, the woman went baek, but again the dream showed her the cottage of the old woman. Next morning she set out once more and complained of her woes to the wise woman. The old woman gave her a golden flute, and said, 'Tarry till the full moon comes again, then take this flute. Play a beautiful air on it, and when thou hast finished, lay it on the sand. Then thou shalt see what will happen.'

The wife did as the old woman told her. No sooner was the flute lying on the sand than there was a stirring in the depths, and a wave rushed up and bore the flute away with it. Immediately afterwards the waters parted, and not only the head of the man, but half of his body also arose. He stretehed out his arms longingly towards her, but a seeond wave came up and eovered him, and drew him down again.

'Alas! what does it profit me,' said the unhappy woman, 'that I should see my beloved, only to lose him again!'

Despair filled her heart anew, but the dream led her a third time to the house of the old woman. She set out, and the wise woman gave her a golden spinning-wheel, eonsoled her and said, 'All is not yet fulfilled. Tarry until the time of the full moon, then take the spinning-wheel, seat thyself on the bank, and spin full the spool, and when thou hast done that, place the spinning-wheel near the water, and thou shalt see what will happen.'

The woman obeyed all she said exaetly. As soon as the full moon showed itself, she carried the golden spinning-wheel to the shore, and span industriously until the flax came to an end, and the spool was quite filled with thread. No sooner was the wheel standing on the shore than there was a more violent movement than before in the depths of the pond, and a mighty wave rushed up, and bore the wheel away with it. Immediately the head and the whole body of the man rose into the air in a great jet of water. He quiekly leaped to the bank, caught his wife by the hand and fled. But they had gone a very little way, when the whole pond rose with a frightful

roar, and streamed out over the land. The fugitives already saw death before their eyes, when the woman in her terror implored the help of the old woman, and in an instant they were transformed, she into a toad, he into a frog. The flood which had overtaken them could not destroy them, but it tore them apart and washed them far away.

When the water had subsided and they touched dry land again, they both regained human form, but neither knew where the other was. They found themselves among strange people, who did not know their native land. High mountains and deep valleys lay between them. In order to keep themselves alive, both were obliged to tend sheep. For many long years they drove their flocks through field and forest and were full of sorrow and longing.

When spring had once more burst forth on the earth, they both went out with their flocks one day, and by chance they drew near each other. They met in a valley, but did not recognise each other. Yet they rejoiced that they were no longer so lonely. Henceforth each day they drove their flocks to the same place. They did not speak much, but they felt comforted. One evening when the full moon was shining in the sky, and the sheep were already at rest, the shepherd pulled the flute out of his pocket, and played on it a sweet but sorrowful tune. When he left off he saw that the shepherdess was weeping bitterly.

'Why art thou weeping?' he asked.

'Alas!' answered she, 'thus shone the full moon when for the last time I played that tune on the flute, and the head of my beloved rose out of the water.'

He looked at her, and it seemed as if a veil fell from his eyes, and he recognised his dear wife, and when she looked at him, and the moon shone in his face she knew him also. They fell into each other's arms and kissed each other, and no one need ask if they were happy.

The Fox and the Geese

THE fox once came to a meadow in which was a flock of fine fat geese, whereupon he smiled and said, 'I come in the nick of time. You are all sitting together so beautifully, that I can gobble you up one after the other.' Cackling with terror, the geese jumped up and began to wail and beg piteously for their lives. But the fox would listen to nothing. 'No! there 's no mercy for you!' said he; 'you must die.' At length one of them took heart and said, 'If we poor geese have got to give up our vigorous young lives, show us the only possible favour you can, and allow us one last prayer, that we may not die in our sins, and then we will place ourselves in a row, so that you can pick yourself out the fattest first.' 'Yes,' said the fox, 'that 's reasonable, and a pious request. Pray away, I will wait till you are done.' Then the first began a good long prayer, for ever saying, 'Ga! Ga! Ga! Ga!' and as she showed no signs of coming to an end, the second did not wait until her turn came, but began also, 'Ga! Ga! Ga! Ga!' The third and fourth followed her, and soon they were all cackling together, 'Ga! Ga! Ga! Ga!'

And when they have done praying, the story shall be continued further, but at present they are still praying without stopping.

The Iron Stove

IN the days when wishing was still of some use, a King's son was bewitched by an old witch, and shut up in an iron stove in a forest. There he passed many years, and no one could deliver him. Then there came into the forest a King's daughter, who had lost herself, and could not find her father's kingdom again. After she had wandered about for nine days, she came at length to the iron stove.

A voice came from it, and asked her, 'Whence comest thou here, and whither art thou going?'

She answered, 'I have lost my father's kingdom, and cannot get home again.'

Then a voice inside the iron stove said, 'I will help thee to get home again, and that indeed most swiftly, if thou wilt promise to do what I desire of thee. I am the son of a King greater by far than thy father, and I will marry thee.'

Then was she afraid, and thought, 'Good Heavens! What could I do with an iron stove?' But as she very much wished to get home to her father, she promised to do as he desired.

So he said, 'Thou shalt return here, and bring a knife with thee, and scrape a hole in the iron.' And then he gave her a companion who walked near her, but did not speak, and in two hours he took her home. There was great joy in the castle when the King's daughter came home, and the old King fell on her neck, and kissed her.

She, however, was sorely troubled, and said, 'Dear father, what I have suffered! I should never have got home again from the great wild forest, if I had not come to an iron stove, but I have been forced to give my word that I will go back to it, set it free, and marry it.'

This terrified the old King so much that he all but fainted, for he had only this one daughter. So they resolved they would send in her stead the miller's daughter, who was very beautiful. They took her there, gave her a knife, and told her she was to scrape at the iron stove. So she scraped at it for four-and-twenty hours, but could not scrape off the least bit of it.

When day dawned, a voice in the stove said, 'It seems to me it is day outside.'

Then she answered, 'It seems so to me too. I fancy I hear the noise of my father's mill.'

'So thou art a miller's daughter! Then go away at once, and let the King's daughter come here.'

So off she went and told the old King that the one outside there would have none of her—he would have the King's daughter. This terrified the old King, and the princess cried, But there still was a swineherd's daughter, who was even prettier than the miller's daughter, so they determined to give her a piece of gold to go to the iron stove instead of the King's daughter. There she was taken, and she too scraped away for four-and-twenty hours. She, however, made nothing of it either.

When day broke, a voice inside the stove cried, 'It seems to me it is day outside!'

Then answered she, 'So it seems to me also. I fancy I hear my father's horn blowing.'

'Then thou art a swineherd's daughter! Be off at once, and tell the King's daughter to come, and tell her all must be done as was promised, and if she does not come, everything in the kingdom shall be wrecked and ruined, and not one stone left standing on another.'

When the King's daughter heard that she began to weep, but now there was nothing for it but to keep her promise herself. So she took leave of her father, put a knife in her pocket, and went off to the iron stove in the forest. When she got there, she began to scrape, and the iron began to give way, and by the time two hours were over, she had already scraped

a small hole. She peeped in, and saw a youth so handsome, and so brilliant with gold and with precious jewels, that her very soul rejoiced. At that she went on scraping, and made the hole so large that he was able to get out.

Then said he, 'Thou art mine, and I am thine. Thou art my bride, and hast released me.'

He wanted to take her away with him to his kingdom, but she entreated him to let her go once again to her father, and the King's son allowed her to do so, but she was not to say more to her father than just three words, and then she was to come back again. So she went home, but she did speak more than three words. And instantly the iron stove disappeared, and was carried far away over glass mountains and piercing swords, though the King's son was set free, and no longer shut up in it. After this she bade good-bye to her father, took some money with her, but not much, and went back to the great forest to search for the iron stove, but it was nowhere to be found. For nine days she sought it, and then her hunger grew so great that she did not know what to do, for she could no longer live. When it was evening, she seated herself in a little tree, and made up her mind to spend the night there, as she was afraid of wild beasts. When midnight drew near she saw in the distance a tiny light, and thought, 'Ah, there I should be saved!' She climbed down from the tree, and went towards the light, praying as she went. Soon she came to a little old house, with grass growing all round, and a small heap of wood in front of it. She thought, 'Ah! what have I come to, here?' and peeped in through the window, but she saw nothing within but toads, big and little, except a table well covered with wine and roast meat, and the plates and winecups were of silver. She took courage, and knocked at the door. The fat toad cried,

'Little green waiting-maid,
Waiting-maid with the crooked leg,
Hop, skip, jump about,
Quickly see who stands without,'

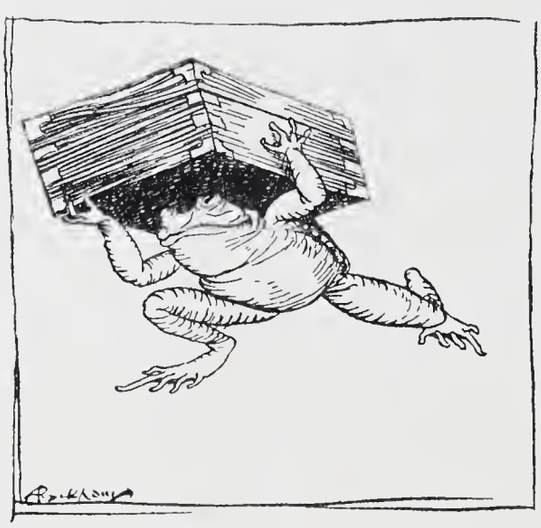
and a little toad hopped along and opened the door for her.

When she entered, they all bade her welcome, and made her sit down. They asked, 'Where hast thou come from, and where art thou going to?' Then she related all that had befallen her, and how because she had disobeyed the order which had been given her not to say more than three words, the stove, and the King's son also, had disappeared, and now she was on her way to seek him over hill and dale until she found him. Then the old fat one said,

'Little green waiting-maid,
Waiting-maid with the crooked leg,
Hop, skip, and jump about,
And get me the great box out.'

Then the little one went and brought the box.

After this they gave her meat and drink, and took her to a soft bed, which felt like silk and velvet, and she laid herself down in God's name, and slept. When morning came she arose, and out of the great box the old toad gave her three needles which she was to take with her. They would be needed by her because she had to cross a high glass mountain, and go over three sharp swords and a great lake. If she did all this she would get her lover back again. Then the old toad gave her three things which she was to take the greatest care of, namely, three large needles, the wheel of a plough, and three nuts. With these she travelled on, and when she came to the glass mountain which was so slippery, she stuck the three needles first behind her feet and then in turn before them, and so got over it, and when she was over, she hid them in a corner which she marked carefully. After this she came to the three



The little one went and brought the box.

sharp swords, and then she seated herself on her plough-wheel, and rolled over them. At last she reached a great lake, and when she had crossed it, she came to a large and beautiful castle. She went in and asked for a place. She was a poor girl, she said, and would gladly be a servant. For she knew that the King's son was there whom she had released from the iron stove in the great forest. And she was taken as a kitchen-maid at low wages. But already the King's son had another maiden by his side whom he wanted to marry, for she, he thought, had long been dead.

In the evening, when she had washed up and her work was done, she felt in her pocket and found the three nuts which the old toad had given her. She cracked one with her teeth, and was going to eat the kernel, when lo and behold! there was a gorgeous royal robe in it! But when the bride heard of this she came and asked for the dress, and wanted to buy it, and said, 'It is not a dress for a servant-girl.' But she said No, she would not sell it, only if the bride would grant her one thing she should have it, and that was, leave to sleep one night in her bridegroom's chamber. The bride gave her permission because the dress was so lovely, and she had never had one anything like it.

When evening came she said to her bridegroom, 'That silly girl will sleep in thy room.'

'If thou art willing so am I,' said he. She, however, gave him a glass of wine in which she had poured a sleeping-draught. So the bridegroom and the kitchen-maid went to sleep in the room, and he slept so soundly that she could not waken him.

She wept the whole night and cried, 'I set thee free when thou wert in an iron stove in the wild forest, I sought thee, and I crossed over a glass mountain, and three sharp swords, and a great lake before I found thee, and yet thou wilt not hear me!'

The servants sat by the chamber-door, and heard how she bemoaned the whole night through, and in the morning they

told it to their lord. And the next evening when she had washed up, she opened the second nut, and a far more beautiful dress was within it, and when the bride beheld it, she wished to buy that also. But the girl would not take money, and begged that she might sleep once again in the bridegroom's chamber. The bride, however, gave him a sleeping-drink, and again he slept so soundly that he could hear nothing.

As before the kitchen-maid wept the whole night long, and cried, 'I set thee free when thou wert in an iron stove in the wild forest, I sought thee, and I crossed over a glass mountain, and over three sharp swords and a great lake before I found thee, and yet thou wilt not hear me!'

The servants sat by the chamber-door and heard her weeping the whole night through, and in the morning informed their lord of it. And on the third evening, when she had washed up, she opened the third nut, and within it was a still more beautiful dress which was stiff with pure gold. When the bride saw that she wanted to have it, but the maiden only gave it up on condition that she might for the third time sleep in the bridegroom's bed-chamber.

This time the King's son was on his guard, and threw the sleeping-draught away. So when she began to weep and to cry, 'Dearest love, I set thee free when thou wert in the iron stove in the terrible wild forest,' the King's son leapt up and said, 'Thou art the true one, thou art mine, and I am thine.' And at once while it was still night, he drove off in a carriage with her, and they took away the false bride's clothes so that she could not get up.

When they came to the great lake, they sailed across it, and when they reached the three sharp swords they seated themselves on the plough-wheel, and when they got to the glass mountain they thrust the three needles in it, and so at length they got to the little old house. But when they went in, it turned out to be a great castle, and the toads were all disenchanted, and were all King's children, and full of joy. Then their wedding was celebrated, and the King's son and

the princess remained in the castle, which was much larger than those of their fathers. But as the old King grieved at being left alone, they fetched him away, and brought him to live with them, and then they had two kingdoms, and lived happily ever after.

A mouse did run,
The story is done.

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