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CHILDREN'S BOOK
COLLECTION



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LOS ANGELES

Joseph Brown Thompson

A

Christmas Gift

from

his Father

December 25th 1868











H.W.

W.G.M

HANS ANDERSEN'S
Fairy Tales.

I L L U S T R A T E D .



New York:
Published by James Miller,
522 Broadway.



FAIRY TALES,

BY

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

ILLUSTRATED.

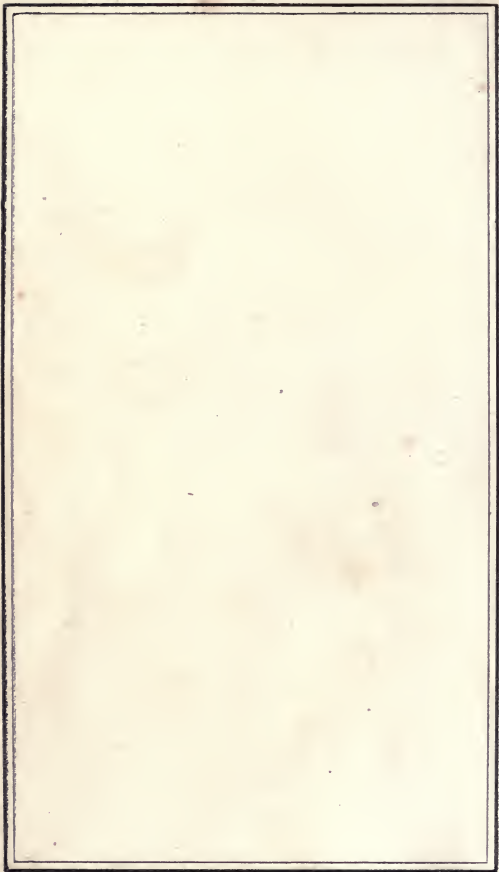


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522 BROADWAY.



Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales.

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Preface.

To the Young Readers of these Tales.

MY DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS,

THE task of translating this volume into English was to me as a labor of love; for when I read these charming stories for the first time the thought immediately occurred to me, "How delightful a book would this be for English children to have! How many persons would be enchanted with the book if they could but read it!" And so, wishing that others—many others, as I hope—might share my pleasure with me, wishing that the name of Andersen

Preface.

might become as familiar and be as joyfully greeted in England as it is everywhere throughout Denmark, I thought the best thing I could do would be to translate what he has here written; and then I doubted not of finding some bookseller who would take my book and publish it. Well, I set about the work; and at every pretty passage I thought to myself, how some bright, playful eyes would sparkle still more brightly; and some sweet rosy mouth send forth a happy laugh, when the words I was then writing would be read: and so I translated story after story, and was as impatient to get on as though I had not read the book before, and wanted to know myself what was coming. Then I took them with me to England, and read them to different persons,—the young, and those who had been young,—and all were equally delighted with the pretty descrip-

Preface.

tions, the beautiful thoughts, the quaint drollery, and the kindly feeling to be found throughout. For these stories though, it is true, not all strictly speaking fairy-tales, yet seem to me to come from Fairy-land; for they have the strange witchery about them that when a child reads he sees just such pictures as delight his young fancy; and when a grown-up person takes them in his hand he is equally delighted, though he sees them quite differently to the child, for to him there are hidden meanings and deep wisdom in what appears to some a mere childish tale. It may seem very magical for a thing to appear quite different to two persons at the same time, and yet remain unchanged; but so it is. As a proof of this, the lady to whom I have taken the liberty of dedicating my little book wrote to me some time ago: "I look forward with great interest to the publica-

Preface.

tion of that charming book, which I shall enjoy quite as much as if I were one of your legitimate readers of eight years old, instead of fifty-eight next Tuesday:" so you see that not only the school-boy but one whose genius has delighted thousands, can read them with enjoyment. However, I suppose this is because the good and the gentle-natured, be their age what it may, are all children in heart; taking delight in the same simple things, and moved like most of yourselves by the expression of natural feeling. At Copenhagen, too, these tales are read in the theatre to the audience between the acts; so great and so general is the interest they excite.

How Andersen could imagine such charming things I cannot tell, nor do I know if the elves and pixies of Denmark gave him a hint or not; but I should think the beautiful thoughts and words so full of pathos

Preface.

were brought him rather by some good angel, a messenger from heaven.

A friend of mine, Count Pocci, of Munich, (you all know where Munich is?), told me if I could find a publisher, he would make the drawings for the book. I was particularly glad of this, because he has already illustrated a great many such works: tales of his own, about little orphan children being left all alone in the world, without any being but God to take care of them; and pretty verses of four or five lines for every day in the month; besides the books of other authors: and they were all done in the feeling and spirit I liked.

Here, in Bavaria, I can assure you,

“ All children know,
They know and love him well;
And clap their hands with joy to hear
The tales that he can tell.

Preface.

“ And in the men he draws for them,
And in his tales, is shown
Full well he knows that childhood has
A world that’s all its own.”

But it is really time to end. I intended to say a few words only, and I have stayed to talk with you for more than half an hour. Farewell, my pretty ones; and like the children in the vignette, plucking fruits and flowers from the overhanging boughs, may you derive gladness and much amusement from these “Tales from Denmark.”

Farewell for a time: I hope some day to meet you all again.

CHARLES BONER.





Ole Lucköie.



WID you ever see any body who knows so many stories as good old Ole Lucköie—and then, too, *such* stories!—Yes, of an evening, although the children be sitting never so nicely and prettily behaved at table, or on their footstools,

Ole Luckoie.

up stairs Ole Lucköie comes quite softly. He has, in reality, list shoes on; he opens the door very gently, and then what should he do but strew a certain powder on the children's eyelids. It is so fine, so very fine; but still it is always enough to make it impossible for them to keep their eyes open any longer; and that is the reason they do not see him: then he glides behind them, and breathes gently on their neck; and then their heads feel so heavy! But it does not hurt them, for good old Ole Lucköie loves the children, and wishes them well; he only wants them to be quiet, and they are most so when they are in bed. He wants them to be still, that he may be able to tell them his stories.*

* Ole Lucköie, that is, "old kind-hearted Ole," is he whose business it is in every family to close the children's eyes when they go to bed—in short, to sing them their lullaby. In Germany the same nursery-genius is to be found: he is called "The Sandman," who, when it is time for the little ones to go to bed, strews sand in their eyes, so that they can no longer keep them open. It is an every-day expression, when

Ole Tuckie.

As soon as the children are asleep, good old Ole seats himself at the foot of their bed. He is well dressed; his coat is of silken stuff; but to say what color it is would be an impossibility, for it is so glossy, and is green, and red, and blue, according as he turns. Under each arm he carries an umbrella; one with pictures, which he holds over the good children, and then they dream the whole night the prettiest stories; and one on which there is nothing, and this one he holds over naughty children, who then sleep on dully the whole night, and when they awake in the morning have dreamed nothing at all.

Let us hear now how Ole came every night for a whole week to a little boy called Hjalmar, and what he related to him. That makes seven stories; for a week, you know, has seven days.

of an evening a person looks sleepy, and winks and rubs his eyes, to say, "Ha, ha! I see the Sandman is come!"—NOTE OF THE TRANSLATOR.

Ole Luckie.

MONDAY.

“Now, then, listen to me!” said the kind old man, when he had got Hialmar to bed. “Now I’ll show you a pretty sight!” and suddenly all the flowers in the flower-pots were changed into great trees, that spread their long branches up to the very ceiling, and along the walls, so that the whole room looked like the prettiest bower; and all the boughs were full of flowers, and every flower was more beautiful than a rose, and smelt delightfully. If one chose to eat it, it tasted sweeter than sugar-plums. The fruits shone like gold; and plum-cakes were then almost bursting with raisins; there was nothing could be compared to it! But at the same moment a terrible lamentation was heard in the table-drawer, where Hialmar’s school-books were lying.

“What’s that?” said Ole, going to the drawer and pulling it out. There lay the slate, on which the figures were pushing and knocking each other; for a wrong number had got into the sum, so that the whole was

Ole Tuckaie.

on the point of breaking down: the pencil jumped and hopped about, chained as he was to the slate by a piece of string, just like a little dog: he wanted to help the sum, but was not able. And a little further lay Hialmar's copy-book: here, too, was a moaning and lamentation within. On every leaf, from top to bottom, were capital letters, each with a small one beside it, and so all the way down. That was the copy; and by these some other letters were standing, that fancied they looked like them. Hialmar had written these; but there they lay, pretty much as if they had tumbled over the pencil-line on which they were meant to stand.

"Look! you must stand so!" said the copy; "look!—so, sideways, with a bold front."

"Oh! we should be glad enough to do so," said Hialmar's letters, "but we can't; we are such poor wretched creatures!"

"Then you must have some pepper," said Ole.

"Oh, no!" they all cried, and stood so

Ole Tuckoie.

upright that it was a pleasure to look at them.

“Well, I can’t tell you any more stories now,” said the kind old man; “I must go and drill the letters: one, two! one, two! one, two!” And then they stood as straight and as well as only a copy can stand; but when Ole went away, and Hialmar looked at them next morning, there they were all just as wretched-looking as before.

TUESDAY.

As soon as Hialmar was in bed, Ole touched all the furniture in the room with his magic wand, and it immediately began to speak; and each thing spoke of itself.

Over the chest of drawers there hung a large picture in a gilded frame. It was a landscape; and in it were to be seen high old trees, flowers in the grass, and a broad piece of water, with a river that flowed round the wood, past many castles, away into the mighty sea.

The kind old man touched the picture



H. Warren



Ole Luckie.

with his wand; and the birds began to sing, the boughs of the trees moved, and the clouds floated by, so that one could see their shadows moving over the landscape. Ole now lifted Hialmar up to the frame, and Hialmar put his feet in the picture, right in among the high grass, and there he stood. He ran to the water and seated himself in a little boat; it was painted red and white, the sails shone like silver, and six swans, with golden chains around their necks, and a brilliant blue star on their heads, drew the boat past a green wood, where the trees related stories of robbers and witches, and the flowers told about the pretty little elves, and about what the butterflies had said to them.

The most beautiful fishes, with scales like gold and silver, swam after the boat; sometimes they gave a jump, so that they made a splashing in the water; and birds, red and blue, large and small, came flying behind in two long rows; the gnats danced, and the chafers hummed; they all would accompany Hialmar, and each one had a story to tell.

Ole Luckie.

That was an excursion ! Sometimes the woods were thick and gloomy ; now they were like the most pleasing gardens, full of flowers and sunshine, and there were two large castles of marble and crystal. On the balconies Princesses were standing, all of whom were quite little girls, acquaintances of Hialmar, with whom he had often played. They stretched out their hands, each one holding the nicest little sucking-pig imaginable, made of sugar ; and Hialmar took hold of one end as he sailed by, and a Princess held the other ; so that each got a piece—she the smaller, and he the larger one. Before each castle little Princes were standing sentry ; they shouldered arms with their golden swords, and sent down showers of raisins and games of soldiers. They were the right sort of Princes ! Hialmar now sailed through a wood, now through large halls, or the middle of a town ; he passed, too, through the town where his nurse lived, she who had carried him about when he was quite a little boy, and had loved him so dearly. She nodded and beckoned to him,

Ole Luckoie.

and sang the pretty verse which she had composed herself and had sent to Hialmar :

“ I think of thee, my darling, I think of thee, my joy,
At morning and at evening, my little prattling boy ;
For I it was who treasured the first words which
thy tongue
In infancy did utter, and on thy accents hung.
'Twas I who kissed thy forehead, 'twas I who kiss-
ed thy cheek
So rosy and so dimpled, when thou didst try to
speak ;
And I have rocked thy cradle, and sung thy lullaby,
And watch'd till thine eyes opened, as blue as the
blue sky.
And so thou wast a part of my life and of my joy !
No ! ne'er shall I forget thee, my darling, darling
boy !”

And all the birds sang, too, the flowers danced on their stems, and the old trees bowed their heads, while the kind-hearted old man told his story.

Ole Lurkue.

WEDNESDAY.

Well, to be sure ! How the rain is pouring down without ! Hialmar could hear it even in his sleep ; and when Ole opened the window the water reached to the very sill ; it was quite a lake : but the most magnificent ship lay just before the house.

“ Will you sail with me, little Hialmar ? ” said Ole ; “ if you will, you can go and visit foreign countries with me to-night, and be here again in the morning. ”

And all at once there stood Hialmar in his Sunday clothes on the deck of the splendid ship ; and it grew beautiful weather immediately, and they sailed through the streets, and round about by the church, and the whole place was now a large wild sea. They sailed on so long till at last no land was to be seen, and they perceived a flight of storks coming from Hialmar’s home, and going to warmer climes. They always flew one behind the other, and they had already flown so very, very far ! One of them was

Ole Luckie.

so tired, that his wings could scarcely carry him further; he was the last of all, and he soon remained a great way behind. At last, with outspread wings, he sank lower and lower, beat the air a few times with his pinions, but in vain. His wings touched the rigging of the ship, he slipped down from the sail, and, plump!—there he stood on the deck!

Upon this a sailor-boy took him and put him into a hen-coop with the poultry, along with the ducks and turkeys. The poor stork stood among them quite out of countenance.

“Only look, what an odd sort of fellow that is!” said all the cocks and hens. And the turkey-cock puffed himself up as much as he could, and asked him who he was. And the ducks walked backwards, and nodded to each other.

And the stork told them of sultry Africa, of the pyramids, and of the ostrich that races over the desert like a wild horse. But the ducks did not understand him, and again nodded their heads, and said one to another,

Ole Turkey.

“Shall we not agree that he is a simpleton?”

“Yes, to be sure, he is a simpleton,” said the turkey-cock, gobbling.

So the stork was silent, and thought of his dear Africa.

“Those are very pretty thin legs of yours,” said the turkey; “pray, what do they cost a yard?”

“Quack! quack! quack!” giggled all the ducks; but the stork did as if he had not heard them.

“Oh, you might very well have laughed, too,” said the turkey to the stork, “for the joke was a good one. But perhaps it was not high enough for you! Ha! ha! ha! he is a shallow fellow, so let us not waste our words upon him, but keep our clever things for ourselves!” And then he gobbled, and the ducks gabbled, “quack! quack! quack!” It was really laughable to see how amused they were.

But Hjalmar went to the hen-coop, and called the stork, who hopped out to him on the deck. He had now rested, and it seem-

Ole Turkey.

ed as if he nodded to Hjalmar to thank him; then he spread out his wings and flew away to warm lands; but the fowls clucked, the ducks gabbled, and the turkey grew as red as fire.

“We’ll make soup of you to-morrow,” said Hjalmar; and saying these words he awoke, and was lying in his own little bed. That was a strange journey that Ole had taken him in the night!

THURSDAY.

“What do you think?” said Ole; “but don’t be afraid: I’ll show you a little mouse.” And he held out his hand to him with the pretty little creature. “She is come to invite you to a wedding. There are here two little mice that are to be married this evening. They live under the floor of your larder; and they say it is a wondrous charming residence!”

“But how can I get through th: little mouse-hole?” asked Hjalmar.

“Leave that to me,” said the old man:

Ole Lurkair.

“I’ll take care to make you small enough.’ And he touched Hialmar with his wand, and he grew smaller and smaller immediately, till at last he was not bigger than a finger. “Now, then, you can put on the little leaden soldier’s clothes; I think they’ll fit you, and it looks so well to have on uniform when one is in company.”

“Very well,” said Hialmar; and in the same moment he was dressed like the nicest little leaden soldier.

“If you will have the goodness to take a seat in your mamma’s thimble,” said the little mouse, “I will do myself the honor to draw you.”

“Oh, your ladyship surely won’t take the trouble yourself!” said Hialmar, and on they drove to the wedding.

First they came into a long gallery under the floor, that was just high enough to drive through with the thimble, and was lighted the whole way with touchwood, which shone in the dark brilliantly.

“Does it not smell deliciously here?” said the mouse that drew him along; “the

Ole Turkoie.

whole corridor has been rubbed with bacon-rind—there can be nothing nicer !”

Now they came into the hall where was the bridal pair. On the right stood the lady mice, who whispered as if they were amusing themselves at the others' expense; and on the left stood the gentlemen mice, stroking their whiskers with their paws; and in the middle of the room one beheld the marriage pair, standing in a hollow cheese; and they kissed each other before every body, for they were betrothed and were just going to be married. More and more company came; the mice almost trampled each other to death, and the two whose wedding was to be celebrated stationed themselves right in the door-way, so that there was no going in or out. The whole room, like the corridor, had been rubbed with bacon-rind; this was all the refreshment they got; but as dessert, a pea was shown, in which a little mouse of the family had bitten the names of the wedding pair; that is to say, the initials only. It was beautiful beyond all description.

Ole Lucköie.

All the mice said the wedding was very grand, and that the conversation, too, had been very good.

Now Hialmar drove home again. He had, it is true, been in very high society; but he had been obliged to bend, and creep, and make himself very small, and put on a leaden soldier's uniform.

FRIDAY.

“It is incredible what a quantity of old people are always wanting to have me,” said Ole Lucköie; “particularly those who have done something wicked! ‘Good, dear Ole Lucköie,’ say they to me, ‘we cannot close our eyes; and we lie the whole night, and see all our misdeeds, that sit like little ugly goblins at the foot of the bed, and sprinkle us with hot water. Do come and drive them away, that we may get a little sound sleep!’ And then they heave deep sighs. ‘We will willingly pay you:—good night, Ole; the money lies on the window-

Ole Luckoie.

sill!" But I don't do it for money," said the old man.

"What shall we undertake to-night?" said Hialmar.

"Why, I don't know if you would like to go to a wedding: it is quite a different sort of one to yesterday's. Your sister's large doll, that looks like a man, and is called Herman, is to marry the doll Bertha; besides, it is her birthday; so many presents will arrive."

"Yes, I know," said Hialmar; "every time the doll wants new clothes, my sister says it is her birth-day, or her wedding. That has happened a hundred times already for certain."

"Yes, but to-night is the wedding for the hundred-and-first time; and after it has happened a hundred and one times, then all is over. This time, therefore, it will be unparalleled: only look!"

And Hialmar looked on the table. There stood the little pasteboard baby-house, with lights in the windows, and before the door were all the leaden soldiers presenting arms;

Ole Luckie.

the wedding pair were sitting on the floor, leaning thoughtfully against the leg of the table. Then Ole Lucköie put on grand-mamma's black gown, and married them. When the wedding was over, all the furniture in the room began singing the following song, which the lead-pencil had written for the occasion :

“ Ho, for the bridegroom ! and ho, for the bride
That's standing beside him in beauty's pride !
Her skin it is made of a white kid-glove,
And on her he looks with an eye of love.
Joy to the husband, and joy to the wife,
And happiness, too, and a long, long life !”

And then presents were made them ; but no eatables were given : this they had themselves desired ; for they had quite enough with love.

“ Shall we go into the country now, or make a tour abroad ?” asked the bridegroom ; and the swallow, who was a great traveller, and the old hen in the court that had brooded six times, were called in to give their advice ; and the swallow related about

Ole Luckie.

the beautiful warm countries where large and clustering grapes hang on the vines, where the air is mild, and where the mountains have tints that are here unknown.

“But you have not our green cabbages there,” said the Hen. “I passed one summer in the country with all my young family: there was a sandpit there, in which we could go and scratch; besides that, we were allowed to be in a garden full of green cabbages. Oh, how green it was! I cannot imagine any thing more lovely!”

“But one cabbage-head looks just like the other,” said the Swallow; “and then here you have so often bad weather.”

“One is accustomed to it,” said the Hen.

“But it is cold here, it freezes!”

“That is good for the cabbage,” said the Hen. “Besides it can be warm here, too. Had we not four years ago a summer that lasted five weeks? It was so hot that one could hardly breathe. Moreover, here are none of the poisonous animals that are found abroad. Here we have no robbers! He must be a blockhead that does not think our

Ole Luckie.

country the finest in the world! Such a one does not deserve to live in it!" And at these words tears ran down the Hen's cheeks. "I have travelled, too! I have travelled in a hamper more than twelve miles. There is no such great pleasure in travelling that I can see!"

"Yes, the Hen is a sensible person," said the Doll Bertha. "I have no great wish to travel over mountains either; for that is nothing else but going up and then coming down again. No, we will take a trip to the sand-pit, and go walking in the cabbage-garden."

And so the matter was settled.

SATURDAY.

"Am I to hear a story?" said little Hjalmar, as soon as the good-natured Ole had got him to sleep.

"We have no time this evening," said Ole, spreading out his handsomest umbrella over him. "Look at these Chinese!" And the large umbrella looked like a great china

Ole Lucköie.

plate with blue trees and pointed bridges, full of little Chinese standing and nodding their heads.

“We must get the whole in order for to-morrow,” said Ole Lucköie; “to-morrow is a holyday, it is Sunday. I must go up to the church-tower, to see if all the little church-sprites have polished the bells, that they may sound melodiously. I must away into the fields, to see if the winds have swept the dust from the grass and the leaves; I must take down all the stars and polish them. I take them all in my apron; but they must first be numbered, and the holes where they belong must be numbered, too, so that each may get his right place again, otherwise they would not fit tight; and we should have a quantity of falling stars if one after the other were to tumble down.”

“I’ll tell you what, Mr. Ole Lucköie,” said an old Portrait, that hung on the wall near which Hjalmar slept. “I am Hjalmar’s great-grandfather. I am very much obliged to you for telling the boy pretty stories, but you must not set his ideas in

Ole Turkoie.

confusion. Stars cannot be taken down and polished. Stars are globes like our world, and that is the very best thing about them."

"Many thanks, old great-grandfather!" said Ole. "Very many thanks! You are, it is true, an old great-grandfather, but I am older than you. I am an old heathen; the Greeks and Romans named me the God of Dreams. I have been in the houses of the great, and still go there. I know how to deal with great and little! Now, then, do you tell a story!" And old Ole went away and took his umbrella with him.

"Now-a-days one dares not say what one thinks!" murmured the old Portrait.

And here Hialmar awoke.

SUNDAY.

"Good evening," said Ole; and Hialmar nodded, and ran quickly to the portrait of his great-grandfather, and turned it with the face to the wall, in order that it might not mix in the conversation as it did yesterday evening.

Ole Tuckoie.

“Now you must tell me a story about the five green peas that lived in a pea-shell, and about the cock that paid his addresses to the hen, and of the darning-needle that wanted to be very fine, and fancied itself a sewing-needle.”

“One can have too much of a good thing,” said Ole. “I will rather show you something. I will show you my brother; but he never comes but once; and when he does come to any body he takes him on his horse, and tells him stories. He knows only two; the one is indescribably beautiful, such as no one in the world can imagine; and the other is so horrible and frightful—I cannot say how dreadful!” And he lifted little Hialmar up to the window, and said: “There, look at my brother, the other Ole; he is, it is true, sometimes called Death! You see, he does not look half so horrid as he is made in picture-books, where he is all bones. All that is silver embroidery that he has on his dress! it is the richest hussar uniform! a cloak of black velvet flies behind him over his horse: look! how he gallops!”

Ole Lucköie.

And Hialmar saw how Ole Lucköie's brother rode away, and took the young and the old up with him on his horse. Some he set before him, and others behind; but he always asked first what testimonials they had.

"Oh, good ones," said they all. "Yes, but let me look myself," said he; and then they were obliged to show him the book: and all those who had "VERY GOOD," or "PARTICULARLY GOOD," came before him on horseback, and heard the beautiful story; but those who had "PRETTY WELL," or "BAD," in their books, were obliged to get behind and hear the dreadful one. They trembled and cried, and wanted to jump down from the horse, but they could not, for they and the horse had grown together.

"But Death is the more beautiful of the two," said Hialmar; "I am not afraid of him."

"Nor should you be," said Ole; "only take care that you have a good certificate in your book."

"Yes, that is instructive," murmured the

Ole Luckoie.

great-grandpapa's portrait; "it is, however, a good thing to express one's opinion after all;" and now the old gentleman was pleased.

Well, that is the story of Ole Lucköie, and this evening he can tell you some more tales.



The Buckwheat.



F, after a thunder-storm, you go into a field where Buckwheat is growing, you will sometimes see that it looks quite black and singed; just as if a stream of flame had passed over it: and then the farmer says, "The lightning has done this." But how is it that the lightning does it? I will tell you what the Sparrow told me, and the sparrow heard it from an old Willow-tree that stood in a field of

The Buckwheat.

Buckwheat, and is still standing there. It is a large and quite a venerable Willow, but old and wrinkled, and is cleft from top to bottom; and out of the clefts grow blackberry-bushes and grass. The tree bends forwards, and the branches almost reach the ground—it looks like long green hair hanging down. In all the fields around grain was growing: Rye, Buckwheat, and Oats. Yes, beautiful Oats, that look, when ripe, like a whole sea of little golden canaries sitting on a bough. The grain stood there in such blessed fulness; and the heavier it was the lower it bowed in pious humility.

A field of Buckwheat was there, too, and it lay just before the old Willow-tree. But the Buckwheat bowed not down as did the other grain; stiff and proud, there it stood.

“I am quite as rich as the ears of Corn,” it said, “and, besides, I am much more beautiful: my flowers are as lovely as the blossom of the Apple-tree: it is quite a pleasure to look at me! Did you ever see any thing more splendid than we are, old Willow-tree?”

The Buckwheat.

And the Willow nodded as though he would say, "Yes, certainly I have." But the Buckwheat was puffed up with pride, and said, "The stupid tree! he is so old that grass is growing over his body!"

Now, a dreadful thunder-storm drew near; all the flowers of the field folded their leaves, or bowed their heads, while the tempest passed: but the Buckwheat, in his pride, stood quite erect.

"Bow thy head, as we do," said the Flowers.

"I shall do no such thing!" said the Buckwheat.

"Bow thy head, as we do," said the Corn; "the Spirit of the storm is about to rush by. He hath wings which reach from the clouds unto the earth; he will dash thee down before thou hast time to implore him to be merciful!"

"No, I will not bend," said the Buckwheat.

"Close thy flowers, and bend down thy leaves," said the old Willow-tree; "look not into the glare of the lightning when the

The Buckwheat.

cloud bursts: men even dare not do that for in the lightning one seeth into God's own heaven, and THAT sight is enough to dazzle even man: how would it fare with us, mere plants of the earth, if we dared to do it? we are so much less!"

"So much less!" said the Buckwheat; "now just for that I *will* gaze into God's own heaven!" and he did do so in his pride and presumption. It was as if the whole world was in fire and flame, so terribly did it lighten.

Later, when the storm was over, there stood the Flowers and the Corn in the calm pure air refreshed by the rain; but the Buckwheat was burned by the lightning as black as a coal: it lay a dead useless plant upon the field.

And the old Willow moved its branches in the wind, and large drops fell from the green leaves, as though the tree wept. And the Sparrows asked: "What are you weeping for? It is so beautiful here! Look how the sun is shining; look how the clouds are sailing on! Do you not smell the fra-

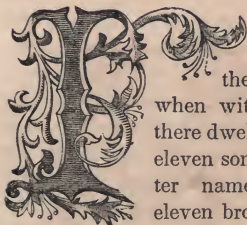
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grance of the flowers and of the bushes? What are you weeping for, then, you old Willow?

And the Willow told them of the pride and presumption of the Buckwheat, and of the punishment that is sure to follow. I, who relate the story, heard it from the Sparrows: they told it me one evening when I begged for a fairy-tale.



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THEY, far from here, in the land whither the swallows fly when with us it is winter, there dwelt a King, who had eleven sons, and one daughter named Elise. The eleven brothers, princes all, went to school with stars on their breast, and swords at their side. They wrote on golden tablets with pencils of diamond; and they could read in any book, and out of any book: you heard in a moment that they were Princes. Their sister Elise sat on a

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little stool of looking-glass, and had a picture-book that had cost half a kingdom.

What a happy life the children led! but it was not to last long.

Their father, the King of the whole country, married a wicked Queen, who treated the children very ill. On the very first day they felt the difference. There was a great festival at the palace, and the children played at visiting; but instead of having roasted apples and cakes, as formerly, the Queen gave them only sand in little saucers, and said, "they must fancy it was something good to eat."

The following week she sent little sister Elise to some peasants in the country; and it was not long before she had something bad of the Princes to tell the King, so that he no longer cared much about them.

"Be off! go into the world, and take care of yourselves!" said the wicked Queen. "Fly off in the shape of large dumb birds!" But yet she could not make it quite so bad as she wished; and into eleven beautiful white swans were the Princes changed

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With a strange cry, they flew out of the windows of the palace, and disappeared over the park and the wood.

It was still very early in the morning when they passed by the place where Elise was lying asleep in the peasant's cottage. They flew in circles round the roof, turned their long necks here and there, and beat the air with their wings; but nobody heard or saw them, and they were obliged to continue their flight up into the clouds, and over the wide world. Then they flew to the great gloomy wood, which extended to the sea-shore.

Poor little Elise stood in the peasant's room, and played with a green leaf; for it was the only thing she had to play with. She made a hole in the leaf, and through it peeped at the sun; and it seemed to her as though she saw the bright eyes of her brothers; and as often as the warm sunbeams fell on her cheeks, she thought of her brothers' kisses.

Each day passed like the other. If the wind blew through the great rose-tree be-

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fore the house, it whispered to the roses, "Who is more lovely than ye are?" But the roses shook their heads and said, "Elise is far more lovely!" And if the old wife sat on a Sunday before the cottage-door, and read in her book of hymns, the wind turned over the leaves, and said to the book, "Who is more pious than thou?" "Elise!" answered the hymn-book; and what the roses and the hymn-book said was quite true.

When Elise was fifteen years old, she was to return home; but as soon as the Queen saw how beautiful she was, she took such an aversion to her that she would have liked to change her into a wild swan like her brothers. However, she did not dare to do so, because the King wanted to see his daughter.

One morning early, the Queen went into her bath, which was of marble, and ornamented with soft cushions and costly carpets. She took three toads, kissed them, and said to one of them, "Do thou sit on the head of Elise when she goes to bathe,

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that she may become as lazy and drowsy as thou art." "Sit thou on her forehead," said she to another, "that she may grow as ugly as thou art, so that her father may not recognise her." "Do thou lie in her bosom," said she to the third, "that her heart may be tainted, and that she may grow wicked, and be her own punishment."

Then she put the toads into the clear water, which immediately assumed a greenish color; and she called Elise, undressed her, and made her step into the bath, and put her head under the water. And then one toad sat in her hair, the other on her forehead, and the third on her bosom; but Elise did not seem to remark it. When she left the bath there swam three red poppies on the water; and had the animals not been poisonous, and kissed by the witch, they would have been turned into roses, from tarrying a while on Elise's heart and head. She was too pious for witchcraft to have any power over her.

When the wicked Queen saw this, she rubbed the child all over with walnut-juice.

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till she was of a dark-brown color; smeared her lovely face with a stinking ointment, and made her fine long hair hang in wild confusion. To recognise the beautiful Elise was now impossible.

When her father saw her he started, and said that she was not his daughter. Nobody knew her again, except the house-dog and the swallow; but they were poor creatures, who had nothing to say in the matter.

Poor Elise wept bitterly, and thought of her eleven-brothers, not one of whom did she see at the palace. Much afflicted, she stole away, and walked across field and moor to the large forest. She knew not whither she wanted to go; but she was very dejected, and had such a longing after her brothers, who, no doubt, had been turned adrift in the world, too; them would she seek, and she was determined to find them.

She had not been long in the forest before night came on, and she lost her way in the dark. So she laid herself down in the soft moss, said her evening prayer, and leaned her head on the stump of a tree. It was so

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still in the forest, the air was so mild, and around in the grass and on the moss there gleamed the green light of many hundred glow-worms; and when she gently touched one of the branches with her hand, the radiant insects came down to her like falling stars.

The whole night she dreamed of her brothers: they played again like children, wrote on golden tablets with pencils of diamond, and looked at the pretty picture-book that had cost half a kingdom; but on the tablets they did not merely write as formerly, strokes and O's; no, now they described the bold deeds that they had accomplished, and the strange fortunes they had experienced; and in the picture-book all was animated—the birds sang, the men stepped out of the book and spoke with Elise and her brothers: but when she turned over a leaf, in they jumped again directly, in order that the pictures might not get into confusion.

When Elise awoke, the sun was already high in the heaven: it is true she could not see it, the high trees interwove their leafy

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branches so closely; but the sunbeams played upon them, and looked like a waving golden gauze. There was such a fragrance from the verdure; and the birds almost perched on Elise's shoulder. She heard the water splashing; for there were many considerable brooks which all met in a pond with a beautiful sandy bottom: 'tis true thick bushes grew all around it; but the deer had broken a broad way through, and on this path Elise went to the water. It was so clear, that if the boughs and the bushes had not been waved backwards and forwards by the wind, one would have been forced to believe that they were painted, and lay down at the bottom, so distinctly was every leaf reflected; those that glowed in the sunlight as well as those which lay in the shade.

When Elise saw her face in the water she was much frightened, so brown and ugly did she look; but when she wetted her little hand and rubbed her eyes and forehead, the white skin appeared again; and Elise laid her clothes aside and stepped into the fresh

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water,—a more lovely royal child than she was not to be found in the whole world.

After she had dressed herself and braided her long hair, she went to the bubbling spring, drank out of the hollow of her hand, and wandered farther into the wood—she herself knew not whither. She thought of her brothers, thought of the ever-watchful and good God, Who would certainly not forsake her; for it was He Who made the wild apples to grow, to give food to the hungry; and He showed her a tree whose branches bent down under the weight of the fruit. Here she dined, put props under the branches, and then went into the thickest part of the wood. It was so still there that she heard her own footsteps, and the rustle of every withered leaf that bent beneath her feet. Not a bird was to be seen, not a sun-beam penetrated the thick foliage-roof; and the high trunks stood so near together, that when she looked straight forward, a grating of wooden beams seemed to close around her: oh, it was a solitude such as Elise had never known! And the night was so dark

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—not a single glow-worm shone! Much afflicted, she lay down to sleep; and there it seemed to her as if the boughs above her parted, and the ever-watchful and good God looked down upon her with an eye of love, and a thousand little angels peeped forth to gaze at her from the clouds.

On awaking the next morning, she did not know if it were a dream, or if it had really happened.

She went a few steps further on, when she met an old woman with a basket full of berries. The old woman gave her some. Elise asked her if she had not seen eleven Princes riding through the wood.

“No,” answered the woman; “but yesterday I saw eleven swans, with golden crowns on their heads, swim down the stream near here.”

And she led Elise to a hill, at whose foot a brook flowed winding along; the trees on either bank stretched their long leafy branches towards each other, and where on account of their natural growth they were unable to meet, the roots had loosened them-

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selves from the earth and hung interwoven over the water.

Elise bade the old woman farewell, and walked on by the side of the brook to the spot where it flowed into the great and open sea.

The whole sea lay spread out before the maiden; but not a sail, not a boat was to be seen: how was she to go on? She looked at the countless pebbles on the shore; they were all smooth and rounded by the water; glass, iron, stones—all that lay on the shore had received this form from the water; and yet it was much softer than her little delicate hand. “It rolls on untiringly, and even what is hard is made smooth. Not less untiring will I be: thanks for the lesson, ye clear rolling waves; some day, so my heart tells me, ye will bear me to where my dear brothers are!”

On the sea-weed which was washed up on the shore lay eleven white swans' feathers: Elise collected them into a nosegay: some drops were hanging on them, but whether dew or tears it was impossible to distinguish.

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On the shore it was very solitary, but she felt it not; for the sea presented an eternal change—more in one single hour than the lakes could show in a whole year. If a black cloud came, it was as if the sea would say, “I, too, can look gloomy;” and then the wind blew, and the waves turned their white sides outermost; but if the clouds looked red, and the winds slept, then the sea was like a rose-leaf—now it was green, now white; but however still it might rest, there was on the shore a gentle motion, and the water heaved slightly, like a sleeping infant’s bosom.

As the sun was going down, Elise saw eleven wild swans, with golden crowns on their heads, flying towards the land: they flew one behind the other, and looked like a long white pennon. Then Elise climbed up the hill, and hid herself behind some bushes; the swans alighted close to her, and fluttered their large white wings.

The sun sank into the water, and suddenly the swan-like forms disappeared, and eleven handsome Princes, Elise’s brothers,

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stood before her. She uttered a loud cry; for although they were greatly changed, Elise knew—felt they were her brothers; and she threw herself in their arms, calling them by name; and the brothers were so happy when they saw and recognised their dear little sister, who was now grown so tall and beautiful. They laughed and wept; and they had soon told each other how ill their step-mother had treated them all.

“We fly as wild swans,” said the eldest of the brothers, “as long as the sun is above the horizon; but when he has set we appear in our human form again. We must, therefore, take good heed at such time to have a resting-place; for were we flying then in the clouds, we should drop down as men into the deep below. This is not our dwelling-place: a land as beautiful as this lies beyond the sea; but the way is long,—we must cross the vast ocean, and there is no island on our passage where we could pass the night: there is but a small solitary rock that rises out of the waves; it is only large enough for us to stand side by side

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upon it, and so to take our rest: if the sea be troubled, then the water dashes high over our heads. But yet we thank Heaven for even this resting-place: there we pass the night in our human form; and without this cliff we should never be able to visit our beloved country; for it takes two of the longest days of the year to accomplish our flight. Once a year only are we permitted to revisit the home of our fathers: we may stay here eleven days; and then we fly over the large forest, whence we can espy the palace in which our father dwells, and where we were born; whence we can see the high tower of the church in which our mother lies. Here the very trees and bushes seem familiar to us; here the wild horses still dash over the plains as when we saw them in our childhood; the charcoal-burner sings the same old tune to which we danced in our youth;—all here has charms for us, and here we have found thee, dear little sister! Two days more are we permitted to stay, and then we must away over the sea to a pleasant land; but, lovely as it is, it is not





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the country of our birth. And thou, Elise, how can we take thee with us—we have neither ship nor boat?”

“Oh, how can I set ye free?” said their sister. And so they spoke together nearly the whole night; a few hours only were given to sleep.

The next morning Elise was awakened by the rustling of swans' wings rushing by over her head. Her brothers were again changed into swans, and flew around in large circles, and at last they were far, far off. But one of them, the youngest, stayed with her; he laid his head on her lap, and she stroked his large white wings: the whole day they stayed together. Towards evening the others returned; and when the sun was gone down, there they stood again in their natural shapes.

“To-morrow,” said the youngest, “we must fly hence, and may not return before the end of another year: but we cannot leave thee here. Hast thou courage to follow us? My arm is strong enough to carry thee through the wood: the wings of us all

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would surely then be powerful enough to bear thee over the sea."

"Yes, take me with you," said Elise. And they spent the whole night in weaving a sort of mat of the flexible bark of the willow and of tough bull-rushes; and when finished it was large and strong. Elise laid herself upon it; and when the sun appeared, and her brothers were again changed into wild swans, they took the mat in their bills, and flew with their dear sister, who still slept, high up into the clouds. The rays of the sun fell full upon her face; so one of the swans flew above her head, that he might overshadow her with his broad wings.

They were far distant from land when Elise awoke. She thought she must be in a dream, so strange did it seem to her to be borne thus through the air high above the ocean. Beside her lay a branch with ripe juicy berries, and a bundle of palatable roots; these her youngest brother had gathered and placed near her; and she looked up to him with a smile of gratitude; for she recognised him in the swan that flew

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above her head and shaded her with his wings.

They flew so high, that the first ship they saw below them seemed like a white sea-mew hovering over the waves. Elise beheld a large cloud behind them: it was a mountain, and on it she saw in gigantic proportions the shadows of herself and of the eleven swans. It was a picture more magnificent than eye had ever gazed on; but as the sun rose higher and the cloud was left behind, the shadowy picture vanished. The whole day they flew on like a whizzing arrow; but yet it was more slowly than usual, for they had their sister to carry. The sky looked threatening; the evening was closing in; and Elise, full of anxiety, saw the sun sinking down; but the solitary rock was not to be discerned. She fancied by the beating of their wings that the swans were exerting themselves very much. Alas, it was her fault that her brothers could not advance more quickly! Should the sun set, then they would be men,—they would fall into the sea and be drowned. From her

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very inmost heart did she pray to God ; but as yet no rock was to be seen : the black cloud drew nearer ; the violent gusts of wind announced a storm ; the clouds stood up-reared on a frightfully large wave, that rolled onwards with the speed of the hurricane ; and it lightened, one flash quickly following the other.

The sun was now on the very margin of the sea. Elise's heart beat violently ; when suddenly the swans darted downwards so rapidly that she thought she was falling ; but now again she floated in the air. The sun was half in the water when she perceived for the first time the small rock below her, which to her eyes did not appear larger than the head of a seal when the creature holds it out of the water. And the sun went down so fast : already it was only like a star ; when at the same moment her foot touched the firm ground, and the sun vanished like the last spark of a piece of burning paper. She saw her brothers standing round her arm-in-arm ; but there was not more room than just enough for them

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and for her. The sea dashed boisterously against the rock, and fell on them like a heavy shower of rain; the sky was one continual blaze of fire, and the thunder rolled uninterruptedly; but the brothers and their sister held each other by the hand and sang a psalm, and it gave them consolation and strength.

At daybreak the air was clear and still; and as soon as the sun rose the swans flew away from the island with Elise. There was yet a high sea; and when they were up in the clouds, and looked down on the blackish-green ocean full of white foam, it seemed as if a million swans were skimming over the water.

As the sun rose higher, Elise saw before her, half swimming as it were in the air, a mountainous country with glittering glaciers; and amid them stood a palace, miles long, with one bold colonnade rising over the other, and surrounded with palm-groves and beautiful flowers, each as large as a mill-wheel. She asked if that was the land to which they were flying: but the swans

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shook their heads; for what she saw was the glorious and ever-changing cloud-palace of the Fata Morgana,*—thither they dare bring no one; and while Elise's gaze was still fixed upon it, mountains, groves, and palace all tumbled down together, and twelve proud churches stood in their place, all like each other, with high towers and pointed windows. She thought she could hear the organ pealing; but what she heard was merely the roar of the sea. She was now quite near the churches, when suddenly they were changed into a fleet that sailed below. She looked down, but there was only the haze of the sea driving along over the water. There was a continual change before her eyes; but at last she really saw the land she was to go to. There beautiful blue mountains lifted themselves on high, with forests of cedars, and towers, and palaces. Long before sunset she was sitting on a hill before a large cavern, which was

* Mirage. An optical illusion, presenting an image of objects on the earth or sea, as if elevated into the air.

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so thickly covered by green creeping-plants, that it looked as if overspread with embroidered hangings.

“Let us see, now, what you dream to-night!” said the youngest brother, as he showed her the chamber where she was to sleep.

“Would that I might dream how I could disenchant you!” said she. And this thought possessed her entirely; she prayed heartily to God for aid, and even in her dreams continued her prayer. Then it seemed to her as if she were flying high through the air to the cloud-palace of the Fata Morgana; and the Fairy advanced to meet her in light and loveliness; and yet, after all, it was the old woman who had given her berries in the wood, and told her of the swans with golden crowns on their heads.

“Thy brothers may be released,” said the Fairy; “but hast thou patience and fortitude? ’Tis true the sea is softer than thy delicate hands, and yet it changes the form of the hard stones; but it feels not the

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pain which your tender fingers would suffer. It has no heart, and suffereth not the anguish and suspense which thou wouldst have to endure. Dost thou see these nettles in my hand? Many such grow around the cave where thou sleepest; these only, and such as shoot up out of the graves in the churchyard, are of use; and mark this—thou must gather them although they sting thy hands; thou must brake* the nettles with thy feet, and then thou wilt have yarn; and of this yarn, with weaving and winding, thou must make eleven shirts of mail with long sleeves; and if thou wilt throw these over the eleven wild swans, then the enchantment will be at an end. But remember, from the moment thou beginnest thy work until its completion, even should years pass by meanwhile, thou must not utter a single word: the first sound of thy lips will pass like a fatal dagger through thy brothers' hearts—on thy tongue depends their life. Mark well all that I say!"

* A brake is an instrument for dressing flax.

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And at the same moment the Fairy touched Elise's hand with the nettle: it was like burning fire; and it awoke her. It was bright day; and close beside her bed lay a nettle like that she had seen in her dream. Then she fell on her knees, thanked God, and went out of the cavern to begin her work.

With her delicate hands she seized the horrid nettles that burned like fire. Her hands and arms were blistered; but she minded it not, could her dear brothers be but freed. She trampled on each nettle with her naked feet, and twisted the green flax.

At sunset her brothers returned: they were sadly frightened at Elise's dumbness, and thought it was a new enchantment under which she was laid by their wicked step-mother; but when they saw her blistered hands, they knew what their sister was doing for their sakes, and the youngest brother wept; and whenever his tears fell Elise felt no pain—the burning smart ceased immediately.

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The whole night she was occupied with her work ; for she could not rest till she had freed her dear brothers. All the following day she sat in solitude, while the swans were flying afar ; but never did time seem to pass so quickly. One shirt of mail was finished ; and now she begun the second.

Suddenly the horn of a hunter was heard among the mountains. She grew frightened—the sound came nearer—she heard the bark of the dogs. Full of apprehension, she flew into the cavern, tied the nettles which she had gathered and hackled into a bundle, and seated herself upon it.

At the same moment a large dog sprang forward out of the bushes, and immediately after another and another : they barked loudly, then ran back and came again. It was not long before the hunters themselves stood in front of the cave, and the handsomest of them all was the King of the country. He advanced towards Elise ; a maiden more beautiful than she had he never beheld.

“ Whence comest thou, lovely child ? ”



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said he. Elise shook her head; she dared not speak, for the deliverance and the life of her brothers depended on her silence. She hid her hands underneath her apron, that the King might not see what she was obliged to suffer.

“Come with me,” said he; “thou must not stay here. If thou art as good as thou art beautiful, I will clothe thee in silk and velvet, I will put a golden crown upon thy head, and thou shalt dwell in my palace with me.” So saying, he lifted her on his horse. She wept and wrung her hands; but the King said, “I only seek thy happiness! one day thou wilt be thankful to me!” And he galloped away over hill and valley, holding her fast before him; and the huntsmen followed at full speed.

As the sun was going down, she saw before her the magnificent capital, with its churches and domes; and the King led her to the palace, where jets of water were splashing on the high marble walls; where wall and ceiling shone with the richest paintings: but all this delighted not her

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eyes; she mourned and wept, and in silence suffered the women to array her in royal robes; to braid her hair with pearls, and to put soft gloves on her burned hands.

At last there she stood in all her glory, and was so dazzlingly beautiful that the whole court bowed before her; and the King chose her as his betrothed; although the archbishop shook his head, and whispered to the King that the lovely forest maiden must certainly be a witch, who had intoxicated his heart and dazzled his eye by her beauty.

But the King gave no heed to his words: he ordered the music to sound, and the richest meats were served, and the loveliest girls danced before her, and she was led through odorous gardens to the most magnificent halls. But no smile played on her lip, nor in her eye: affliction only was hers; it was her sole possession. Then the King opened a small chamber adjoining her sleeping-room: it was covered with costly green carpeting, and resembled exactly the cavern in which she had formerly been. On the floor

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lay a bundle of flax, which she had spun from the fibres of the nettles; and from the ceiling hung the shirt of mail which she had completed. All this had been collected and brought hither by one of the hunters as a curiosity.

“Here thou canst dream that thou art in thy former home,” said the King. “Here is the work which occupied thee there. Now amid all thy splendor it will delight thee to live in fancy that time over again.”

When Elise saw what was so dear to her heart, a smile played about her mouth, and the blood came back again to her cheeks. She thought of the deliverance of her brothers, and kissed the King’s hand. He pressed her to his heart, and ordered that all the church-bells should announce the wedding-festival. The beautiful forest maiden became Queen of the country.

Then the archbishop whispered words of evil import in the King’s ear; but they did not sink deep in his heart. The marriage was celebrated; the archbishop even was obliged to set the crown on her head; and in

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his wicked rage he pressed the narrow circlet of gold so hard upon her forehead, that it pained her; but a heavier weight, grief for her brothers, lay on her heart; so that she felt not the bodily smart. She spoke not; for a single word would have caused her brothers' death; but in her eyes was an expression of deep love for the good and handsome King, who did every thing to make her happy. With her whole heart she grew every day more attached to him: oh! had she but dared to confide to him her sorrows, and tell him all she felt! But dumb she must remain; in silence must she accomplish her task. And so at night she slipped away, went into the small room which was decked like the cavern, and wove one shirt of mail after the other; but when she began the seventh, behold, the flax was all gone!

She well knew that such nettles as she could use grew in the churchyard; but then she herself must gather them, and how was she to get out to do so?

“Oh, what's the smarting of my fingers

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compared to the anguish that my heart endures?" thought she: "venture I must, and God will surely not withdraw His hand from me."

Trembling as though she were going to commit a wicked action, she one moonlight night crept down into the garden, and went through the long avenues, and on the solitary road to the churchyard. There she saw on one of the broadest gravestones a troop of Lamias sitting—ugly witches, who took off their ragged covering as though they were going to bathe, and then dug with their long thin fingers amid the fresh grass, and drew forth the dead bodies, and devoured the flesh. Elise was forced to pass near them; and the witches fixed upon her their malicious eyes; but she said a prayer, gathered the stinging-nettles, and carried them home to the palace.

Only a single person had seen her: it was the archbishop. He watched while the others slept. Now he was sure he was right when he said the Queen was not what she should be: that she was a witch; and that the

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King and the people were beguiled by her enchantments.

When the King went to confess, the archbishop told him what he had seen, and what he feared; and as these wicked words passed his lips, the carved figures of saints around the confessional shook their heads, as though they would say, "It is not true! Elise is innocent!" But the archbishop explained it otherwise; he said it was a sign of her guilt, and that the figures shook their heads at her sins.

Then two large tears rolled down the cheeks of the King; and it was with a heavy heart that he went home. In the night he pretended to be asleep; but no sleep came to his eyes; and he observed that Elise rose every night; and each time he followed her softly, and saw how she disappeared in her little room.

Each day the countenance of the King grew darker. Elise saw it, and knew not the cause; but it made her uneasy: and what did her heart not suffer on her brothers' account! Her bitter tears rolled

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down on the royal velvet and purple, and lay there like sparkling diamonds; and all who saw the splendor and magnificence with which she was surrounded, wished themselves in Elise's place.

In the meantime, however, her work was nearly completed; one shirt of mail only was wanting, but her flax was exhausted: she had not a single nettle more. Once more, only once, would she be obliged to go to the churchyard and pluck a handful. She thought with terror of the lonely walk, and of the horrible Lamias; but her resolve was as firm as her trust in God.

Elise went; but the King and the archbishop followed her. They saw her vanish at the churchyard gate; and, on approaching nearer, they saw the Lamias sitting on a grave-stone, as Elise had seen them; and the King turned away at the sight; for he thought that she, whose head had that evening rested on his bosom, was one of them.

"She shall be judged by the people!" said he, with a faltering voice. And the

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sentence of the people was—"That she should be burnt alive!"

From the magnificent royal hall she was now led to a dismal damp cell, where the wind whistled through the grated window. Instead of velvet and silk, they gave her the bundle of nettles which she had collected in the churchyard, tied together with a thick piece of rope. "These," they said, "she might lay under her head as a pillow;" and the coarse hard shirts of mail were to serve her as bed and covering: but nothing could have delighted her more; and she set to work again, and prayed fervently to God. Before her prison-door the populace sang jeering songs about her: not a soul comforted her with one word of affection.

All at once, towards evening, she heard the rustling of swans' wings close to her window. It was her youngest brother, who had found his sister; and she sobbed aloud for joy, although she knew that the coming night would perhaps be the last of her life. But then the work was nearly done, and her brothers were at hand.

The Wild Swans.

The archbishop came to pass the last hour with her, for he had promised the King to do so; but she shook her head, and begged him, by look and gesture, to leave her. This night her task must be accomplished, or all would have been in vain; all her tears, her sorrows, her silence, and her many sleepless nights. The archbishop went away with angry words upon his lips; but poor Elise knew she had done nothing wrong, and continued her work.

The little mice ran busily backwards and forwards about the dungeon, and dragged the nettles to her feet, in order to help her a little; and the thrush sat on the grating of her window, and sang the whole night as merrily as he could, that Elise might not be disheartened.

It began to dawn; it was still an hour before the sun would rise and shine in all his summer splendor, when the eleven brothers stood before the palace-gates, and asked to be led into the presence of the King. They were told it could not be, for it was still night; besides, the King was asleep, and no one dared to wake him. They en-

The Wild Swans.

treated, they threatened; the guard came, and at last even the King appeared, and asked what was the matter; when just at that moment the sun rose, and there were no longer any brothers to be found: there were only eleven white swans to be seen flying away over the palace.

The people streamed out of the city-gates; for all wished to see the witch burnt. A miserable horse dragged the cart on which she sat: they had dressed her in a sort of frock of coarse sackcloth; her beautiful long hair hung loose around her head; her cheeks were deathly pale; her lips moved almost imperceptibly while she spun the green-flax; for even on the way to death she ceased not from the work she had begun. The ten shirts of mail lay at her feet; she was weaving the eleventh.

The people cruelly laughed at her all this time. "Look at the witch!" shouted they; "how she is muttering! She has no book of psalms in her hand; no, there she sits with her accursed conjuration: take it from her! let us tear the witch stuff in a thousand pieces!"

The Wild Swans.

So saying, they all rushed towards her, intending to rob her of her treasure and destroy the shirts of mail; when suddenly eleven white swans were seen. They flew to Elise, formed a circle round her, and beat the air with their wings. The frightened crowd gave way.

“’Tis a sign from heaven! she is surely innocent!” whispered some; but they dared not say it aloud.

The executioner seized her hand; when quickly she threw the eleven shirts of mail over the swans, and eleven handsome princes stood before her; but the youngest had one swans’ wing instead of an arm, for a sleeve was wanting on his shirt of mail; since his good sister Elise, with all her zeal, unequalled as it was, had not been quite able to finish it. And the populace, that had seen what had happened, bowed before her as before a saint; but she sank insensible in the arms of her brothers, overcome by suspense, pain, and sorrow.

“Yes, she is innocent!” said the eldest brother; and he related all that had befallen her. While he spake, an odor as of a million

The Wild Swans.

roses spread around ; for each billet of wood in the pile had taken root, and put forth branches and blossoms ; so that instead of the horrid flames which were expected, there was now a sweetly smelling hedge full of red roses : and on the top of all was a flower of dazzling whiteness, and shining like a star. The King plucked this flower, and laid it on Elise's bosom ; and she awoke with joy and peace in her heart.

Then all the church-bells began ringing of their own accord, and the birds came in swarms ; and the procession to the palace was such as no King had ever seen before.



The Angel.



S soon as
a good lit-
tle child
dies, one
of God's
angels de-
scends to
the earth,

takes the dead child in his arms, spreads out his large white wings, and flies over all the places that were dear to the little one when was alive; and on the way he gathers a

The Angel.

nandful of flowers, which he then carries to Heaven, in order that they may bloom still more beautifully there than they did here on Earth. The loving God presseth all these flowers to His bosom; but the flower that He loveth best He kisseth; and then it receives a sweet clear voice, so that it can sing and rejoice with the happy hosts around.

An Angel of God related this as he bore a dead Child to Heaven; and the Child heard as in a dream; and they flew over all the spots around the home where the little one had played in its lifetime, and they passed through gardens with the loveliest flowers. "Which flower shall we take with us and plant afresh in Heaven?" asked the Angel.

And a beautiful slender rose-tree was standing there; but a rude hand had wantonly broken the stem, so that all the branches, that a short time before were so fair and green, and which were full of large half-open rose-buds, now hung down quite withered and sad, upon the soft, smooth carpet of turf.

"The poor tree!" said the Child; "take

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it, so that it may bloom again on high with the loving God."

And the Angel took it, and kissed the Child; and the little one half-opened his eyes. They gathered some of the superb flowers; but they took the despised daisy and the wild pansy, too.

"Now we have flowers," said the Child, and the Angel nodded, as if to say, "yes;" but they did not yet fly up to Heaven.

It was night: it was quite still. They stayed a while in the great city, near which the child had lived, they floated to and fro in one of the narrowest streets, where great heaps of straw, of ashes and rubbish, lay about: there had been a removal. The streets looked disordered and dirty. There lay broken pots and plates, plaster figures, rags, the crowns of old hats; nothing but things that were displeasing to the sight.

And amidst the devastation the Angel pointed to the fragments of a flower-pot, and to a clod of earth that had fallen out of it, and which was only held together by the roots of a great withered wild flower; but

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it was good for nothing now, and was therefore thrown out into the street.

“We will take that one with us,” said the Angel, “and I will tell you about it while we are flying.”

And now they flew on; and the Angel related :

“Down yonder, in the narrow street, in the low cellar, lived once a poor sickly boy. He had been bedridden from his very infancy, for an incurable disease had seized upon his tender frame. When he was very well indeed, he could just go a few times up and down the little room on his crutches; that was all. Some days in summer the sunbeams fell for half an hour on the little cellar-window; and then, when the boy sat there, and let the warm sun shine upon him, and saw the red blood through his small thin fingers, then it was said, ‘Yes, he has been out to-day.’ All he knew of the wondrously beautiful spring-time, the green and beauty of the woods, was from the first bough of a beech-tree that a neighbor’s son once brought him as a May-day token; and

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he held it over his head, and dreamed he was under the green shelter of the beech-trees, where the sun shone and the birds were singing around him.

“One day in spring his neighbor’s son brought him some wild flowers also, and among them was by chance one with a root; it was therefore planted in a flower-pot and placed in the window close by his bedside. And a fortunate hand had planted the flower; it thrived, put forth new shoots, and every year it bore sweet-smelling flowers. To the eyes of the sick boy it became the the most beautiful garden—his little treasure upon earth: he watered and tended it, and took care that it got every sunbeam, to the very last that glided by on the lowest pane. And the flower grew up in his very dreams, with its colors and its fragrance; it was overlooked by others, and for him alone it bloomed and smelt so sweetly: to it he turned in dying, when the loving God called him to Himself. He has now been a year with God—a year has the flower stood in the window withered and forgotten, and

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now, at the removal, it has been thrown among the rubbish into the street. And that is the flower, the same poor faded flower, which we have taken into our garland; for this flower has caused more joy than the rarest flower in the garden of a queen."

"But how do you know all this?" asked the Child whom the Angel was carrying up to Heaven.

"I know it," said the Angel; "I was myself the little sick boy that went on crutches; I must surely know my own flower again."

And the Child opened his eyes and looked in the beautiful calm face of the Angel; and at the same moment they were in Heaven, where was only joy and blessedness.

And God pressed the dead Child to His bosom: thereon it became winged like the other Angel, and flew hand in hand with him; and God pressed all the flowers to His bosom, but the poor withered flower He kissed; and a voice was given to it, and it sang a song of triumph with all the angels that moved around God in Heaven, some

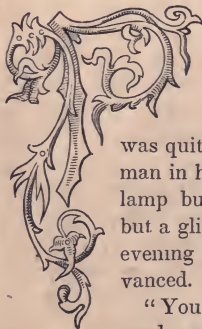
The Angel.

sweeping on their bright wings quite near to him, others round these in larger circles, always further away in immensity, but all equally blessed.

And they all sang, great and small; the good, innocent little child, who once limped about on his toilsome crutches, and the poor field-flower that had lain withered among the sweepings in the narrow, dingy street.



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OUR Johnny was very melancholy; for his father lay grievously ill, and could not hope to live. He was quite alone with the sick man in his small chamber; the lamp burned faintly, and gave but a glimmering light, and the evening was already far advanced.

“You have always been a good son to me, Johnny,” said the dying father, “and God will therefore

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certainly help you through the world!" He cast a tender look upon his son, heaved a deep sigh, and died. There he lay as though he were asleep. But Johnny wept; for now he had not a friend in the whole world—neither father nor mother, brother nor sister. Poor John! he knelt beside the bed, kissed his dead father's hands, and wept bitterly; but at last he fell asleep, and his wearied head sank on the hard bedstead.

Then he dreamed that he saw the sun and the moon bowing before him, and his father recovered, and laughing merrily: and he laughed just as he did when he was alive. A lovely maiden, wearing a golden crown in her long and beautiful hair, stretched out her hand to him; and his father said, "Look at her, the most lovely maiden in the world, who one day will be thy wife!" and then he awoke. The vision he had beheld in his dream had vanished; his father lay dead and cold on the bed, and he was alone. Poor John!

The next week was the funeral. John followed close behind the coffin, and wept

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again most bitterly ; for he would never see his good father more—he who had thought so much of him ! He heard the earth fall upon the coffin, he still saw the last corner of it ; but with the next shovelful of earth even that was no longer visible. Then it seemed to him as though his heart would break, so very wretched did he feel. Yet he felt some consolation from the singing of the children round the grave ; his tears flowed and relieved his heavy grief. The sun shone with a friendly look upon the green trees, as though it would say, “ Be not so sorrowful, John ! Seest thou not how blue and beautiful the heaven is ? Thy father is there now, and implores a merciful God to take thee under his protection, that thou mayest be happy ! ”

“ I will always behave well,” thought John, “ and then one day I shall go to heaven to my father. Oh, how shall we rejoice when we see each other again ! And he will again show me many things, and teach me what is heavenly felicity, as he

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did when here on earth. Oh, how happy shall I be!"

John pictured this heavenly meeting so vividly to himself, that he smiled through his tears. The little birds sat in the chestnut-tree, and chirped their gladsome song; they were happy, although they had come with him to the funeral. But they knew very well that the dead man was now in heaven, and that he had wings which were much larger and more beautiful than their own; for he had led a good life, and therefore was it that they rejoiced. John saw how they flew from the green trees out into the world, and he felt a wish to fly away, too. But he first made a large cross of wood, to put over his father's grave; and when he carried it there in the evening, he found the grave decorated with flowers. Others had done this; for everybody loved the good old father that was now no more.

Early in the morning John buckled on his little knapsack, put his whole fortune, consisting of fifty crowns, carefully into his girdle, and intended to set out on his travels.

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But, before doing so, he went to the church-yard, repeated a pious thanksgiving at the grave of his father, and said: "Farewell, dear father! I vow that I will always act uprightly, and then you will be able to pray God to protect and aid me."

In the fields the flowers displayed themselves fresh and beautiful in the warm sunshine, and appeared to nod him their welcoming. John returned once more to the old church where, when a little child, he had been baptized, and where he had gone every Sunday with his father to hear the service, and where, too, he had sung many a psalm. There he saw how the little sprite of the church stood in the belfry-window, in a pointed red cap, and with one hand shaded his eyes from the sun, which was shining directly in his face. John waved him a farewell; and the little sprite waved his red cap in return, laid one hand on his heart, and kissing the other, gave him to understand how sincerely he wished him well, and that he might have a right happy journey.

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John now thought of all the fine things he should see in the great and splendid world, and kept going on farther and farther than he had ever been before, till at last he did not know a single place that he passed through, or the people whom he met. So he was now a good way off, and amid perfect strangers.

The first night he was forced to pass on a haycock in the open air: other bed had he none. But this seemed to him very beautiful; the king, he thought, could not have a better. The whole large meadow watered by a stream, the haycock, and the blue sky above, seemed to him a splendid bedchamber. The green grass, with the many red and white flowers, was his carpet; the elder and the wild roses his flower-bed; and the stream, with its fresh blue waves, his bath, out of which the sedge nodded him a friendly "good night" and "good morrow." The moon was the large night-lamp, which burnt high up on the blue ceiling of heaven, without any danger of setting his bed-curtains on fire. Here he might sleep quietly; and

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he did so, too, and only awoke just as the sun was rising, and the little birds all around sang. "Good morrow! good morrow! are you not up yet?"

When he set out again on his wayfaring, and had reached the next village, he heard the ringing of bells, and saw the people going to church. He therefore entered the house of God, heard the sermon, and joined in the song of thanksgiving; and it seemed to him as if he were again in his own church with his father.

In the churchyard were many graves, on some of which rank grass was growing. "The mound over my father's grave will soon look so, too," thought he in sorrowful silence; "for no one will weed up the grass and plant flowers upon it!" While he thus talked to himself, he pulled up some of the weeds about the graves, set up the crosses that had fallen down, and hung on them the wreaths of evergreens that had been blown away by the wind. "Perhaps another may do as much for my father's grave, as I am no longer able," said he. At the gate of the

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churchyard stood an old beggar, who supported himself on crutches. John gave him a piece of silver, and then, contented and happy, continued his journey.

Towards evening a storm came on; John tried to find a place of shelter, but it was dark before he could reach a house. At last he saw a small church on a hill before him, and when he reached it he found the door ajar. So he went in, intending to remain there till the storm had subsided.

“I will sit here in the corner,” said he; “I am quite tired, and have need of a little rest.” He leaned his head against the wall, folded his hands as he repeated his evening prayer, and soon fell into a sound sleep, the while it thundered and lightened without.

It was midnight when he awoke; but the storm had passed, and the moon shone through the high church-windows. On the pavement of the church stood an open coffin, in which a dead man lay, placed there for burial. John was not the least frightened at the sight; for he had a good conscience, and knew for certain that the dead harm no one;

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but that it is the wicked only who can work us evil. And such were the two men now standing beside the corpse in the open coffin, that had been only placed in the church until the funeral. They would leave him no place even in death, and intended to fling the dead man out into the churchyard.

“Why will you do that?” asked John. “It is wrong of you: let the corpse rest, in Christ’s name!”

“Hallo! what now!” answered the two villains. “He has cheated us; he owed us money that he could not pay, and now he has chosen to die into the bargain; so that we shall never get a farthing of our money. We will have our revenge, and fling him out of his coffin, and let him lie on the earth like a dog.”

“I have only fifty crowns,” said John; “they are all my inheritance; but I will give them to you if you will only promise me faithfully to leave the poor corpse in peace.”

“If you choose to pay for him,” continued the two men, “we will do him no harm, that you may be sure of.”

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Then they took the money that John offered them, laughed scornfully at his good nature, and left the church. But John laid out the dead body carefully, folded the hands over the breast, and bade it adieu. He, too, then left the little church, and went with a light heart through the wood.

All around, where the waning moon could shine through the trees, he saw the pretty little elves at play, who did not allow his arrival to interrupt them, because they knew that good people only are permitted to see them. Some were hardly as big as one's finger, and had their long yellow hair done up with golden combs. They rocked themselves on the large dewdrops that sparkled on the leaves of the trees and the high grass; and if a drop rolled down, and one or the other of the little creatures tumbled head over heels on the long grass, the rest laughed and danced for joy. It was a droll sight to see. They began, too, to sing; and John knew all the airs. Large brown spiders, with silver crowns, were obliged to stretch long suspension-bridges from one

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hedge to the other, which, when the dew-drops fell on them, looked like a web of spun glass. Thus they amused themselves in all manner of ways till the sun appeared. Then the little elves crept into the cups of the flowers, and the wind broke their suspension-bridges and their aërial castles, and wafted them through the air.

John had just reached the skirt of the wood, when the loud voice of a man called after him, "Hallo, comrade! where are you bound for?"

"Into the wide world," answered John. "I have neither father nor mother—I am a poor youth; but I trust confidently in God, who, I do not doubt, will help me on."

"I, too, am going into the world," said the strange man. "Shall we two go together?"

"With all my heart," answered John; and now on they both went in company, and soon began to like each other very much; for they both were good persons. But John soon remarked that his companion possessed much greater experience than himself; for

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he knew somewhat of everything, and had travelled over the whole world.

The sun was already high in the heavens, when they seated themselves under a tree to eat their breakfast. At the same moment an old woman passed by, who was so weak that she was obliged to go on crutches; and yet she carried a bundle of sticks at her back, that she had gathered with much labor in the wood; and out of her tucked-up apron three bundles of fern and willow-twigs were hanging. When she had got quite near the two travelers, her foot slipped; she fell, and uttered a cry of pain; for in falling the old woman had broken her leg.

John jumped up, and wanted his companion to help him to carry the old woman home; but the stranger unbuckled his knapsack, took out a little box, and said, that he had a salve in it which would cure the leg directly; but, as recompense for the cure, he required the old woman to give him the three bundles she had in her apron.

“A goodly payment, truly!” answered

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the old woman, laughing wildly. It was true, she said, she did not much like giving away the herbs; yet it was a sad thing to lie a-bed with broken limbs; and therefore she gave them to the stranger. As soon as she had rubbed her leg with the salve, she got up quite cured; and could walk even better than before. Such was the healing power of this ointment; which, however, is not to be had at any apothecary's.

“What will you do with the herbs?” asked John of his companion.

“Those are three beautiful nosegays, in my eyes,” replied the stranger; “for you must know that I am a very eccentric personage.” The two travellers then went on for a good distance.

“What a storm is approaching!” said John, suddenly: “Look at those black clouds!”

“You mistake,” said the other; “those are not clouds, but high mountains,—on which, far above the clouds, one enjoys the pure air of heaven. Oh, there it is wondrous beautiful! To-morrow, doubtless, we shall

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have got so far on our travels through the world."

But the mountains were not so near as John thought; for they had to walk the whole day before they reached them. Dark woods hung upon their sides; and stones were there as large as a whole town. "It would cost a good deal of trouble," said the stranger, "to cross the high mountains; and it would therefore be better to go to an inn, and rest and strengthen ourselves for the following day."

At the little public-house many people were assembled; for a man with a puppet-show had just arrived, and every body was curious to see the play. On one of the front seats sat, among other spectators, a sleek butcher, with his bull-dog beside him.

The play began. A king and a queen sat on a splendid throne: both wore golden crowns, and had robes with long trains. Pretty puppets, with glass eyes and large mustachios, stood at the window, which they kept on opening and shutting, that the royal pair might enjoy the fresh air. All went on

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well, and without accident; but when the queen rose to walk across the stage, the bull-dog—heaven knows why, or what could put it into his head—made a spring at the stage, seized the lovely queen by her slender waist, and treated her most shamefully.

The poor man, who played the whole piece alone, was so unhappy at this misfortune, that he shed tears; but when the spectators had left the room, John's companion went up to him, and comforted him with the assurance that he could cure the doll. So he took his little box out of his knapsack, and rubbed the ill-used queen with the wonderful ointment that had cured the leg of the old woman in the wood. Immediately the queen recovered; and now could even move arms and legs herself, as if she were alive.

The puppet-showman was now as joyful as he had before been sad; and that his best figure could move of itself seemed to him no trifling wonder.

In the night there was suddenly heard a continued groaning in the room, so that every body in the house was awakened by it, and

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ran to see who was taken ill. The showman went to his puppets; for it seemed to him as if the sighing and lamentation proceeded from them. To his astonishment he saw that all the dolls were lying about in the greatest confusion, and moaned unceasingly, because they wished to be rubbed too, as the queen had been, that they also might have the power of moving alone. The queen herself fell on her knees, lifted her splendid golden crown on high, and said, "Take my crown!—gladly will I give it,—anoint only my consort and my court!" This scene moved the showman so much, that he offered the stranger the receipts of the next representation, if he would only rub some of his best figures with the wondrous salve. The stranger said he did not ask for money; he demanded only the sabre which the showman wore; and when the latter had most readily given it up to him, he rubbed six of the puppets with his ointment, who began to dance immediately, and so naturally, that all the servants, real living people, were seized with a mighty longing to dance also,

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and the whole household was soon figuring away—coachman and cook, waiter and chamber-maid. In this way the whole night passed in the merriest manner imaginable.

The next morning John and his companion left the inn, ascended the high mountains, and wandered through the large pine-forest. They had soon climbed so high that the churches beneath them seemed only like little red-berries amid green bushes; and their gaze wandered afar for miles. Never before had John seen so much of the glorious world. The gladdening sun shone pleasantly in the sky, and the horn of the hunter resounded in the valley. "Beneficent God," said John, lost in rapture at the sight, "fain would I thank Thee for Thy goodness to us men, and for the glorious beauty of Thy world in which Thou hast placed us!" and a tear of joy glittered in his eye.

His companion, too, stood lost in thought, and looked down upon the plain with its numerous villages and towns illumined by the sun. At the same moment they heard a strange sound; and, on looking up, beheld a

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large white swan soaring in the air. The swan was of extraordinary beauty, and sang as they had never heard bird sing before; but its song grew fainter and fainter, and at last it bent its long black neck downwards, sank slowly, and soon after lay dead at their feet.

“Such a beautiful pair of wings, so white and large as those of this fine bird are worth something,” said the man. “I will take them with me. Now you see, John, that the sabre is of some use.” And hereupon he, at one stroke, cut off both the wings of the dead bird, saying he intended to take care of them.

They now continued their journey over the mountains for many miles, till at last they saw a large town lying before them, with more than a hundred steeples and domes that glittered in the sunshine like silver. In the middle of this large town was a magnificent palace of marble, the roof of which was of pure gold; for here dwelt the King of the country.

John and his companion did not enter the

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town immediately, but went to an inn outside the city-gates, that they might first brush and clean their things; for they wished to appear as decent people in the streets of so magnificent a town. Here the landlord told them that the King of that country was such a good man, that he never did any thing to displease his subjects, but that the Princess, his daughter, was a sad lady. As to beauty, she did not want for that, for there could not be a more lovely maiden in the world; but she was a bad witch, for whose sake many a young prince had lost his life. Any one might demand her hand; but he must then guess her thoughts three times. Should he really guess them, then she married him, and he was to be king over the land when her father died; but should he be unable to answer the three questions proposed, she had him hanged or beheaded; so cruel a creature was this Princess. The old King, her father, was much grieved at the matter; however, he could not change it, for he had once for all declared he would have nothing to do with the love-affairs of his

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daughter, and in this respect she might act quite as she chose.

Hitherto, as often as a young Prince had come to guess the thoughts of the Princess, it had turned out badly, and the suitor had been either hanged or beheaded. Then people said he had been warned beforehand, so it was his own fault if he chose to make the Princess an offer instead of leaving her alone. Once a-year the old King and all his soldiers went to church, to pray that his daughter might change; however, she always remained the same. Old women who were addicted to gin-drinking, on this day colored their drams black, so great was the general mourning for the Princess; and what could the good wives do more to show their sincere sympathy in the King's grief?

"The good-for-nothing Princess!" said John, when the landlord had finished his story; "she ought to have the rod, for she deserves it. Were I her old father, I would soon teach her to give up her cruelty."

While they were speaking, a loud "Hurrah!" was heard in the street. It was the

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Princess who rode by, and so dazzlingly beautiful was she that, when the people looked at her, they forgot her wickedness, and broke out in shouts of joy wherever she showed herself. Twelve beautiful damsels, in white silk dresses, each holding a golden tulip in her hand, rode by her side on jet black horses, while the Princess sat on one that was quite white. Her riding-habit was of gold brocade, sprinkled with diamonds and rubies; her riding-whip was like a sun-beam, and the golden crown on her lovely head resembled the small stars of heaven. Over her charming dress hung a zephyr-like mantle of more than a thousand butterflies' wings. But all this splendor was surpassed by the radiant beauty of the Princess.

When John beheld her, he blushed deeply, and was unable to utter a word; for the Princess looked exactly like that lovely maiden of whom he had dreamed the night his father died. She appeared of matchless beauty, and he could not help loving her with all his heart. It is certainly not true, thought he, that she is such a wicked witch,

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and that she has those youths who demand her hand beheaded or hanged if they cannot guess her thoughts. Any one has the right to ask her in marriage, even the poorest. I too will go to the palace as a suitor, for I feel that I cannot be happy without her.

When he informed the others of his intention, all counselled him against so rash a step, thinking he would fare no better than his predecessors; and his travelling companion was against it too. But John was full of hope; he brushed his clothes most carefully, polished his shoes, washed his hands and face, combed his nice golden hair into curls, and then set off quite alone for the town and the palace.

“Come in!” cried the old King, when John knocked at the door. He entered, and the good old gentleman advanced towards him in dressing-gown and embroidered slippers; yet he had his golden crown on his head, the sceptre in his right hand, and the imperial globe in his left.

“Stop a moment,” said he, tucking the golden globe under his arm; and holding out

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one hand to John, he gave him a hearty welcome. But as soon as he heard John's intention of proposing for the Princess, he began to weep so bitterly that globe and sceptre both rolled down upon the floor, and he was obliged to dry his tears with his dressing-gown. Poor good old King!

"Don't do it!" said he, warningly, to John; "the same will happen to you that has happened to all the rest. Only look here!" He then led John to the park of the Princess, which, true enough, presented a most dreadful spectacle; for on every tree hung the skeletons of three or four kings' sons, who had wooed the Princess but could not guess what she thought about. As often as the wind stirred among the leaves, the dry bones rattled, and scared away the birds, so that not a single songster showed himself in this fearful grove. The flowers were tied up to human bones instead of sticks, and all around, over the more tender plants, death's heads were grinning. That was a fine sort of Garden for a Princess!

"Here you may see what will be your

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fate," said the old King. "I counsel you, therefore, to desist from your intention, if you do not wish to fare like these. You will, besides, make me most unhappy if you persist; for it grieves me to the very heart."

John kissed the good old King's hand, and comforted him with the prospect of being successful in obtaining the beautiful Princess, whom he loved above every thing.

Just at this moment the Princess returned from her ride, and galloped with all her ladies into the courtyard of the palace. The King and John went to meet and salute her. The Princess was exceedingly friendly, and gave John her hand, which increased his passion for her still more; and he would on no account believe that she could be a witch as everybody asserted.

Then they all returned to the drawing-room, and were served by the prettiest little damsels imaginable, who handed round sweetmeats and gingerbread nuts. But the old King was so melancholy that he ate nothing—and, besides, the gingerbread nuts were probably a little too hard for him.

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It was now arranged that John was to come to the palace again the next morning, when the judges and the grand council would be assembled to hear how he succeeded in guessing the thoughts of the Princess. Should he guess right the first time, he was to appear before the judges two other days in the same manner; but as yet no suitors for the Princess's hand had outlived the first day.

John was not the least cast down at this information; on the contrary, he was rather gay, and of good courage. He thought only of the lovely princess; and trusted, besides, to the all-loving God for help. As to the way he was to receive it, he could form no idea; so he preferred thinking no more about the matter. Jumping for joy, he returned to his inn, where his companion awaited him.

John could never tell enough of the amiability and extraordinary beauty of the Princess; and he longed already for the morrow, when he was to return to the palace, and guess the thoughts of his beloved.

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But his companion shook his head doubtfully, and was quite sorrowful. "I love you so well," said he; "we could have kept together for a long time yet, and now we are to part! Good, dear Johnny! I could weep at this approaching separation; but I will not disturb your joy on the last evening that we may ever pass together. So let us rather be cheerful; to-morrow, when you are gone, I shall have time enough to weep!"

The inhabitants had already heard of the arrival of a new suitor for the hand of the Princess, on which account a general mourning prevailed throughout the whole town. The theatre was closed, the King and the clergy kneeled in the churches, and even the confectioners put crosses on their little figures of sugar-work; for how was it possible that this suitor should succeed better than the rest?

In the evening John's companion had a large bowl of punch brought in, and said, "they would now be right merry, and drink to the Princess's health." But John had not drank two glasses, before such a drow-

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siness came over him, that he could keep his eyes open no longer, and fell asleep in his chair.

His comrade then lifted him gently into bed; and when it was night, took the two wings which he had cut off the dead swan, and fastened them on his own shoulders. He afterwards put the largest bundle of fern and willow-twigs, which the old woman in the forest had given him, into his pocket, opened a window, and flew out, away over the town, and straight to the palace, where he hid himself in a bow-window, close to the bedchamber of the Princess.

Stillness reigned in the town. The clock was striking a quarter to twelve, when the window was opened, and the Princess, in a large white garment, and with large black wings, flew away over the town towards a high mountain. As soon as the man perceived her, he made himself invisible, followed the Princess through the air, and beat her so with his rod, that the blood well nigh followed the stripes. Holloa! Ho! That was a ride through the air! The wind

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caught the garment of the Princess, blowing it about like a sail, and the moon shone bright the while.

“Oh! how it hails!” said the Princess, at every stripe of the rod; and well enough did she deserve the chastisement. At last she arrived at the mountain, and knocked for admittance. A noise like thunder was heard as the mountain opened, and the Princess entered; and the man, whom no one could see, followed at her heels.

They passed through a long dark passage, the walls of which shone like fire from the glowing spiders that were running up and down. They afterwards arrived in a spacious hall, built of gold and silver, on whose sides red and blue flowers were displayed as large as sun-flowers; but no one dared to pick them, for their stalks were poisonous snakes, and the flowers themselves the fire that streamed from their jaws. The whole ceiling was covered with beaming worms, and sky-blue bats that fluttered their transparent wings unceasingly.

In the middle of the hall stood a large

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throne, supported by the skeletons of four horses, caparisoned with trappings of red spiders. The throne itself was of milk-white glass; and the cushions were mice, each one holding the tail of another in his mouth. Above was outspread a canopy of rose-colored cobweb, studded with small flies that shone like precious stones.

On the throne sat an old goblin, with a crown on his frightful head, and a sceptre in his hand. He kissed the Princess on the forehead, desired her to sit beside him on the costly throne; and then the music immediately began. Large black grasshoppers played the jews-harp, and an owl beat his breast instead of a drum, as he had no other. Little fiends, each one with a Will-o'-the-Wisp in his cap, danced to this music about the hall. Not one of the company discovered the man who had placed himself immediately behind the throne, whence he could hear and see all that happened.

The courtiers of the mountain-dwarf now entered the saloon; they did so as if they were persons of immense importance; but

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any one a little skilled in human nature could easily see that they did not feel happy. They were, moreover, nothing but broomsticks, with cabbages for heads; into which the goblin had conjured some life, and had them dressed in embroidered clothes. However, that was of no consequence; as they were only there for parade and show.

When the dancing had lasted some time, the Princess told the mountain-sprite that she had got another suitor; and asked him at last on what she should think, when he came to the palace next morning to guess her thoughts.

“I’ll tell you, my daughter,” said the old goblin. “Choose something quite simple; then he will be least likely to guess it. Think, for example, of your shoe: he’ll never dream of that. Then off with his head, and don’t forget to bring his eyes with you to-morrow night; for they are what I am very fond of.”

The Princess bowed low, and assured him she would not forget the eyes when she came again. Then the Sprite opened the

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mountain, and the Princess returned to the palace through the air; but John's companion followed close behind, and gave her such a whipping with his rod that she complained loudly of the violent hail-storm, till at last she slipped in at her chamber-window. But the stranger returned to his inn, where John still lay fast asleep, took his wings from his shoulders, and went to bed; for he was, no doubt, pretty tired after so fatiguing a journey.

It was still early when John awoke. He left his bed, and his companion got up too, and told him he had dreamed that night of the Princess and her shoe; wherefore he begged him to ask the Princess if it were not of her shoe she had thought.

"I can just as well say the shoe as anything else," said John. "Perhaps what you dreamed is right; for I have the firm conviction that God will help me out of this dilemma. Notwithstanding, I will wish you farewell; for should I not guess the Princess's thoughts, I shall never see you more."

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The two travelers then embraced each other, and John bent his steps towards the town and the palace. The festal hall was filled with people; the judges sat in large arm-chairs, with soft cushions on which they leaned their heads because they were obliged to think so much.

The old King got up as soon as he perceived John, and wiped his eyes with his white pocket-handkerchief. Then came the Princess. She was still more beautiful than yesterday, saluting every one in a most friendly manner, and, giving John her hand, said, "Good morrow, worthy friend."

Now, then, John was to say on what the Princess was thinking. Ah, how tenderly she looked at him! but as soon as she heard him utter the word "SHOE!" she turned pale, and her whole frame began to tremble. That, however, availed her but little; for John had really guessed her thoughts.

Well, how happy the old King was when he heard it! He turned head over heels for sheer joy, and all present applauded him

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and John, who, it was decided, had that day been victorious.

Equally pleased was his companion when he told him how lucky he had been in the adventure; but John folded his hands and thanked God for His gracious assistance, Who, he confidently hoped, would aid him in his need the other two days. On the very next morning he was to guess the thoughts of the Princess for the second time.

The evening of this day passed like the preceding one. When John was asleep, his comrade fled off to the Princess, and followed her to the enchanted mountain. This time he had provided himself with two rods, and whipped the poor Princess much more severely than the first time. No one saw him, yet he heard and understood all that passed in the hall of the mountain-dwarf. The Princess was to think this time on her glove, and he told it to John as if he had had a dream. John was enabled, therefore, to guess rightly on what the Princess had thought the second time, which caused undissembled joy at the palace.

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Every body at court now turned head over heels, as the King had done the first day; but the Princess lay on a sofa, and would not speak a word.

Now, then, the third day was to be got over,—should that turn out well, then John would not only have the beautiful Princess for his wife, but would rule over the whole kingdom when the old King was dead. But could he not guess the Princess's thoughts, he would lose his life, and the Dwarf of the mountain would devour his eyes.

This evening John went to bed earlier than usual, said his prayers, and fell into a quiet sleep. His comrade, on the contrary, fastened his swan's wings on again, buckled his sabre round him, and put three rods into his pocket. Then off he flew to the palace.

The night was as dark as pitch; there was such a violent storm that the tiles flew off the roofs, and the trees in the Princess's park waved to and fro with the rattling skeletons of the princes that had been hanged. It lightened fearfully, and the thunders rolled so dreadfully that it was but

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one continued war throughout the whole night.

Now the window of the bedchamber flew open, and the Princess soared through the wildly agitated air. The paleness of death was on her face; but she laughed at the storm, and thought it was not yet half bad enough. Her garments fluttered in the wind, and the man whipped her so unmercifully with his threefold rod that the blood flowed, and she could at last hardly fly any further. Finally she reached the mountain.

“It hails and it storms,” said she; “never have I flown in such a tempest!”

“It is possible to have too much of a good thing,” answered the goblin.

Then the Princess related to him how John had rightly guessed her thoughts a second time as well. Should he be successful on the third day, the victory was his; she would no longer be able to come to the mountain, nor could carry on any more witchcraft; and this disturbed her exceedingly.

“He shall never guess on what you think

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this time," said the fiend. "I will find out something on which he never thought: if he did, he must be a greater sorcerer than I am. Now let us be merry."

Saying these words, he seized the Princess by the hand, danced with her round the hall, and all the little imps and wills-o'-the-wisp followed his example. The red spiders ran up and down the wall, so that they looked like flowers of fire; the owl beat his drum, the cricket sighed, and the black grasshoppers played the jews-harp; in short, there was a regular witches' ball.

When the imps had danced enough, the Princess prepared to depart, for she feared she might be missed at the palace. The Dwarf of the mountain said he would accompany her, that he might enjoy her company the longer.

They flew now through the air; but the man made such good use of his three rods, that the mountain-imp confessed he had never been in such a hail-storm before.

Arrived at the palace, he bade the Princess farewell, and whispered in her ear

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‘Think of my head!’ But the man heard the words; and just as the Princess slipped into her bedchamber, and the imp turned round to go to his enchanted mountain, the stranger seized him by his black beard, and with the sabre hewed off his disgusting head close to his shoulders. The trunk he threw into the sea as food for the fishes; but the head he dipped in the water, and then tied it up in a silken handkerchief. He carried it home with him to the inn, and laid down to sleep.

On the following morning he handed the kerchief to John, begging him, however, not to open it before the Princess had proposed her question.

The last day the large hall of the palace was so filled with people that they could not all find room enough, and they were therefore obliged to stand on each other. The councillors sat as before in their easy arm-chairs, bolstered with cushions of eider-down; and the old king was dressed in a new suit; and the crown and the sceptre had been rubbed up and polished tremendously.

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But the Princess was quite pale; she was dressed in black, as though she were to attend a funeral.

“On what am I thinking at this moment?” asked she of John, who at the same instant opened his handkerchief, and was terribly frightened when he saw the horrid head of the mountain-imp within it. All the spectators shuddered with dread at the sight; and the Princess sat as though she were petrified,—she was unable to utter a word. At last, however, she rose from her seat and gave John her snow-white hand; for he had now for the third time guessed her thoughts aright. Without looking at any one, she merely said the words, “You are now my lord; this evening we will hold the wedding.”

“Now that pleases me,” said the old King; “and so it shall be.” Then the whole assembly shouted “Hurrah!” the military band played through the streets, the bells rang, and the confectioners took their little sugar-work figures out of mourning: there was nothing but joy in the town.

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Three whole roasted oxen, stuffed with ducks and fowls, were carried out to the market-place, where any one could eat of them and drink wine from the fountains. Whoever bought a roll at a baker's got half-a-dozen plum-cakes into the bargain.

In the evening the whole town was illuminated ; the soldiers fired off cannons, and the boys in the street crackers ; everywhere was eating and drinking without end ; while at the palace the ladies and gentlemen danced together, and far below in the town was heard the song :

“ Now let us be merry, and dance and sing :
Let's drink to the health of our good old king,
Now, then, pretty lasses, come join the round,
The fiddles are playing, the tabors sound ;
And he who's not merry to-night, ha ! ha !
We'll soon wake him up with a tra-la-la ! ”

But the Princess was still a witch, and did not care for John. His companion knew this ; so he gave him three feathers out of the wings of the swan, and a little phial with some drops, and desired him to have a bath

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placed near the bridal bed. Then when the Princess had retired to rest he was to give her a gentle push, so that she fell into the bath; and then he was to hold her under the water three several times, having beforehand thrown in the three feathers and the drops. After this the Princess would be disenchanted, and would love him very much.

John did what his faithful companion had desired him: 'tis true, the Princess screamed aloud when he put her under water, and struggled with hands and feet. When she came up the first time she was like a jet-black swan, with fiery eyes; the second time she was changed into a white swan, only a black ring was round her neck. John now said a prayer, and held the bird under water for the third time: immediately it was changed into the most beautiful Princess; she had become even more beautiful than she was before, and thanked her young consort with tears in her eyes for having freed her from enchantment.

The following morning was devoted to re-

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ceiving the visits of those who came to congratulate the newly married couple. The King appeared with the rest with all his court, and there was wassailing and rejoicing throughout the day.

At last John's former traveling-companion appeared to congratulate him; but he had his staff in his hand, and carried the knapsack at his back. John went to meet him, embraced him before all the assembly, and begged him pressingly not to go away, but to remain with him for ever, that he might share the good fortune which he owed to him with so dear a friend. But the stranger shook his head and said, "My good John, that cannot be, for my time is at an end; I have but paid my debt. Do you remember the dead man whom wicked persons would not allow to rest peaceably in his coffin? You gave all that you possessed that he might find rest in the grave.—That corpse am I!"

As he said this he vanished.

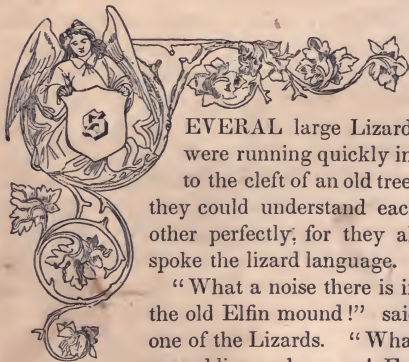
The wedding-festivities lasted a whole month; John and the Princess loved each

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other dearly, and the old King lived many years and joyous days with his children, and let his merry grandchildren ride upon his knee, and play with the polished sceptre. But John reigned over the whole land, and became at last a very powerful monarch.



The Elfin Mound.



SEVERAL large Lizards were running quickly into the cleft of an old tree; they could understand each other perfectly, for they all spoke the lizard language.

“What a noise there is in the old Elfin mound!” said one of the Lizards. “What a rumbling and uproar! For two nights I have not been able to close my

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eyes, and might just as well have had a toothache, for then I certainly should not have slept."

"There is a something going on there," said the other Lizard. "They let the mound stand on four red poles till the crowing of the cock, to have it thoroughly aired; and the Elfin damsels have learnt new dances, in which there is some stamping. A something is going on, I'm sure."

"Yes; I have spoken to an Earthworm of my acquaintance," said the third Lizard. "The Earthworm came direct from the mound, where day and night he had been rummaging about in the ground. He had heard a good deal; for he can see nothing, poor wretch, but eaves-dropping and listening he understands to perfection. Visitors are expected at the Elfin mound; visitors of rank, but who they were, the Earthworm either would not or could not say. All the Jacks-o'-the-lantern have been ordered to prepare a procession by torch-light; and all the silver and gold, of which there is plenty

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in the Elfin mound, will be polished and laid in the moonshine."

"But who can the strangers be!" said all the Lizards. "What can be going on? Listen! what a humming and buzzing!"

At the same instant the Elfin mound opened, and an elderly Elfin damsel, without a back, but for the rest very respectably dressed, came tripping forth. It was the old Elfin King's housekeeper; she was distantly related to him, and wore an amber heart on her forehead. Her feet were so nimble—trip—trap—trip—trap!—how she skipped along, right away to the moor to the Night-raven.

"You will be invited to the Elfin mound, and that to-night," said she. "But would you not do us a great favor, and take charge of the invitations? As you do not give parties yourself, you must do us this service. Strangers of high rank are coming to us; magicians of no small importance, let me tell you; and so the old Elfin King wants to show himself off to advantage."

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“Who is to be invited?” asked the Night-raven.

“Why, to the grand ball every body may come; men even, if they do but speak in their sleep, or are able to do something in our way. But the principal banquet is to be very select; those of the first rank only are to be invited. I have had a long discussion with the Elfin King; for, according to my notions, we cannot even ask ghosts. The Sea-god and his daughters must be invited first; 'tis true, they don't like much coming on dry land, but they will have probably a wet stone to sit upon, or maybe something better still; and then, I think, they will not refuse for this once. We must have the old Mountain Dwarfs of the first class, with tails; the Elf of the Brook, and the Brownie; and then, I think, we must not omit the Swart Elf, and the Skeleton Horse: they belong, it is true, to the clergy, who are not of our sort; however, 'tis their office, and they are, moreover, nearly related to us, and are continually paying us visits.”

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“Caw!” said the Night-raven, and flew away to invite the company.

The Elfin maidens were already dancing on the Elfin mound: they danced with long shawls, woven of haze and moonshine; and to all who like this sort of dancing, it seems pretty.

In the centre of the Elfin mound was the great hall, splendidly ornamented; the floor was washed with moonshine, and the walls were rubbed with witches' fat, so that they shone in the light like tulip-leaves. In the kitchen there were a great quantity of frogs among the dishes; adders' skins, with little children's fingers inside; salad of mushroom-seed; wet mice's snouts and hemlock; beer, from the brewery of the old Witch of the Moor; sparkling saltpetre wine from a grave-cellar,—all very substantial eating: rusty nails and church-window glass were among the delicacies and kick-shaws.

The Old Elfin King had his golden crown polished with pounded slate-pencil. It was the pencil of the head-scholar; and to obtain this one is very difficult for the Elfin King.

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They hung up the curtains in the bed-chamber, and fastened them with adder spittle. There was, indeed, a humming and a buzzing in the Elfin mound!

“Now we must perfume the place with singed hair and pig’s bristles; and then I think I shall have done my share of the business,” said the little Elfin damsel.

“Dear papa,” said the least of the daughters, “shall I now know who the high visitors are?”

“Well then,” said he, “I suppose I must tell you. Two of my daughters are to show themselves off, in order to get married. Two will certainly be married. The aged Mountain Elf of Norway, who lives in the old Dovre-field, and possesses many craggy castles, and a gold-mine too,—which is a better thing than one imagines,—is coming here with his two sons; and they are to choose themselves wives. The hoary Elf is an honest old Norwegian, merry and straightforward. I have known him since many a long day, when we drank together to better acquaintance, and good fellowship. He

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came here to fetch his wife,—she is dead now,—who was the daughter of the Rock-King. Oh, how I long to see the old northern Elf! His sons, people say, are coarse, blustering fellows; but maybe one wrongs them, and when older they will improve.”

“And when will they come?” asked his daughter.

“That depends on wind and weather,” said the Elfin King. “They travel economically; they will come here by water. I wish they would go through Sweden; but the old gentleman has no inclination that way. He does not keep pace with the time; and that I can’t bear.”

At the same moment two Jacks-o’-the-lantern came hopping in, one faster than the other, and for that reason one was first.

“They’re coming! they’re coming!” cried they.

“Give me my crown; and let me stand in the moonshine,” said the Elfin King.

The daughters held up their long shawls and bowed to the earth.

There stood the hoary Mountain Elf

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with a crown of hardened icicles and polished fir-cones on his head, and wrapped up in a mantle of fur and boots of the same. His sons, on the contrary, went with open throats, for they disdained the cold.

“Is that a mound?” asked the lesser of the youths, pointing to Elfin-home. “In Norway we call such a thing a hole.”

“Boy,” said the father, “a mound rises upwards, and a hole goes inwards. Have you no eyes in your head?”

Now they went in to the Elfin mound, where there was very choice company, certainly; and had come together with such speed, one might have thought they had been borne thither on the breeze; however, the arrangements for every one were neat and pretty. The sea-folk sat at table in large water-butts; and they said they felt just as if they were at home. All observed good manners at the table, except the two little Norwegian Mountain Elves, who put their feet on the board, for they thought that all they did was becoming.

“Take your feet away from the plates,”

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said the old Elf; and then they obeyed, although not immediately. They tickled the ladies next them with fir-cones; then they pulled off their boots, to be more at ease, and gave them to the ladies to hold for them; but their father was very different. He told about the proud Norwegian rocks, and of the waterfalls, which, covered with foam, dashed downwards, raging and roaring like thunder; he told about the salmon, that leaps up against the falling waters, when the Spirit of the flood plays on her golden harp. He related about the clear winter nights, when the bells on the sledges jingle, and the youths run with flaming torches over the smooth ice, which is so transparent that they could see how affrighted the fishes were beneath their feet. He, indeed, could recount so that one saw and heard the things he described; when, huzza! all of a sudden, the old Elf gave one of the Elfin damsels a smacking kiss; and yet they were not even distantly related.

The Elfin maidens were now to dance, simple as well as stamping dances; and then

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came the most difficult one of all, the so-called "Dance out the dance." Confound it! their legs grew so long, one did not know which was the beginning nor which was the end—one could not distinguish legs from arms, all was twirling about in the air like saw-dust; and they went whizzing round to such a degree that the Skeleton Horse grew quite sick, and was obliged to leave the table.

"Brrrrr!" said the grey-headed Elf, "that's a regular Highland fling, as it's called. But what can they do besides spinning about like a whirlwind?"

"That you shall see," said the King, calling the youngest of his daughters. She was as delicate and fair as moonlight, and was the daintiest of all the sisters. She put a white wand in her mouth, and vanished. That was her art.

But the old Mountain Elf said, "This was an art he should not at all like in his wife, nor did he think his sons would either."

The other could walk beside her own self,

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as though she had a shadow, which is a thing Elves never have.

The third one's talent was of a very different kind; she had learned in the brewery of the Witch of the Moor, and she knew how to lard alder-wood with glow-worms.

"She would make a good housewife," said the Mountain Elf, blinking, for he did not at all like drinking so much.

Then came the fourth Elfin maiden; she had a large golden harp, and when she touched the first string, every body lifted up the left foot, for the Elves are all left-sided; and when she touched the next, everybody was forced to do whatever she pleased.

"That is a dangerous damsel," said the Mountain Elf; but both his sons went out of the Elfin mound, for they were tired of it.

"What can the next daughter do!" asked the old Elf.

"I have learned to love the Norwegians," said she; "and I will not marry unless I can go to Norway."

But the youngest of the sisters whispered into the old Elfin's ear, "She only says that,

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because she has heard, in an old Norwegian rhyme, that when even the world is at an end, the rocks of Norway will stand firm; and that's the reason she wants to go there, for she is greatly afraid of death."

"Ho! ho!" said the old Elf; "that's the way the wind blows, is it! But what can the seventh and last do?"

"The sixth comes before the seventh," said the Elfin King, for he knew how to count; but the sixth at first would not come forward.

"I can do nothing except tell people the truth," said she. "No one troubles about me, and I have enough to do to get my shroud ready."

Now came the seventh and last. And what could she do? She could tell as many fairy-tales as she chose.

"Here are my five fingers," said the old Mountain Elf. "For each one tell me a story."

And the Elfin maiden took hold of him by the wrist, and he laughed till he was almost choked; and when she came to the

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finger that wore a golden ring, just as if it knew that matrimony was going on, the old Elf said, "Hold fast what you have! The hand is yours! I will take you myself to wife!"

And the Elfin maiden said that the fairy-tale to the ring-finger and to the little finger were wanting.

"Oh, we'll hear them in winter," said the old Elf; "and about the fir-tree too, and about the birch, and the gifts of the wood-nymphs, and about the crackling frost. You shall have opportunities enough of telling stories, for no one understands that yonder. And there we will sit in our rocky dwelling, where the pine-torch is burning, and where we drink mead out of the golden horns of the old Norwegian kings; I got some as a present from the Water-spirit. And when we are sitting so together, Garbo will come to pay us a visit, and he will sing to you all the songs of the mountain maidens. How merry we shall be! The salmon will leap in the waterfall, and dash against the walls of rock; but he will not be able to

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come in to us, after all! Yes, yes; one leads a happy, comfortable life in dear old Norway! But where are the boys?"

Where were they? Why, they were running about the fields, blowing out the wills-o'-the-wisp that were coming quite orderly to have a procession with torches.

"What's all this harum-scarum about?" said the old Elf. "I have taken a step-mother for you; methinks now you may choose a wife too."

But they said they liked speechifying and boon companionship better, and had no taste for matrimony; and so they made speeches, tossed off their glasses, and turned them topsy-turvy, to show that they were quite empty. They then pulled off their coats, and lay down on the table to sleep. But the old Elf danced round the room with his young bride, and exchanged boots with her; for that is much more genteel than exchanging rings.

"The cock is crowing!" said the elderly damsel who attended to the housekeeping.

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“We must now bolt the shutters, lest the sun should spoil our complexions.”

And then the mound closed.

The Lizards ran about up and down the cleft tree, and one said to the other, “How much I like the old Mountain Elf !”

“I like the merry boys better,” said the Earthworm ; but then he could not see, poor wretch !



The Flying Trunk.



HERE was once, in a town, which it would now perhaps be hard to find on the map, a merchant, who was so rich that he could have paved the whole street, and almost a little alley into the bargain, with silver coin; but he did not do it: he knew better what to do with his money; and when he spent a shilling he gained a crown, so good a trader was he; and—he died.

His son inherited all his money. But he

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led a merry life, went every evening to the masquerade, made kites of bank-notes, and took guineas instead of stones, to play at Duck-and-Drake with on the lake.

It was, therefore, no wonder if the money began to disappear, which it very soon did ; so that at last he had only two-pence in his pocket, and no clothing but a pair of slippers and an old dressing-gown. His friends did not trouble themselves about him any more, now that they could not even walk across the street with him ; but one of these, who was a good-natured fellow and had a kind heart, sent him an old trunk, and said, "Pack up your things, and be off !"

That was all very well, but he had nothing to pack up, so he got into the trunk himself.

'Twas a droll sort of a trunk ! As soon as one pressed the lock, it could fly : the merchant's son did so ; and, halloa ! up flew the trunk with him, straight up the chimney, and away into the clouds, farther and farther off. The bottom cracked, and he was very uneasy ; for if the bottom had

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given way, a pretty tumble he would have had ! But nothing of the sort happened.

Well, in this way he reached Turkey. He hid the trunk in a wood, under the dry leaves, and then went towards the town ; for this he could very well do, as among the Turks every body walked about in dressing-gown and slippers.

Now on his way to the town, he met a nurse with a little child. " I say, nurse," said he, " what castle is that yonder with high windows, just outside the walls ?"

" The King's daughter lives there," said she. " It has been foretold that she will become very unhappy on account of a lover ; and so no one dare come near her when the King and Queen are not present."

" Thank you," said the merchant's son ; and he went out into the wood, seated himself in his trunk, flew up to the roof, and crept through the window to the Princess's apartments.

She lay on a sofa and slept. She was so beautiful that the son of the merchant could not help giving her a kiss. This awoke

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her, nor was she a little afraid ; but he said he was a messenger sent by the Prophet of the Turks, who had come to her through the air to honor her with his presence ; and this satisfied her.

So he sat down, and told her stories about her eyes : these were the most beautiful dark lakes ; and thoughts swam about in them like mermaids. And he told her a story about her forehead : this was a mountain of snow, with glorious vaulted halls. And then he told her about the storks and the sweet little children.

They were such pretty stories ; and then he made the Princess an offer, and she immediately said " Yes."

" But you must come here on Saturday," said she. " The King and the Queen are coming to me to tea at six, as the clock strikes ; they will be so glad to hear that I am to marry a messenger of the Prophet ! But take care to have a very pretty fairy-tale to relate ; for my parents like that above any thing. My mother likes it to be very moral, and very aristocratic ; and my

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father likes it to be merry, so that one may have a hearty laugh."

"Very well; I shall bring no other bridal gift than a fairy-tale," said he.

And so they parted; but before he went, the Princess gave him a very rich sabre, the sheath of which was studded with gold; and a very acceptable present it was.

Now he flew off, bought himself a new dressing-gown, and a few hours afterwards he was sitting out in the wood, composing the fairy-tale, which was to be ready by Saturday evening; and composing, let me tell you, is no easy matter.

But at last it was ready; and Saturday too was come. The King, the Queen, and all the court drank tea that evening at the Princess's! The suitor was extremely well received.

"Will you relate us a fairy-tale?" said the Queen when tea was over; "one that has a profound meaning, and that is instructive—"

"Yes, and let it be one that is laughable too," said the King.

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“Yes, certainly,” said he, and began his tale; and now you must listen very attentively to the story about

The Bundle of Matches.

There was once upon a time a bundle of Matches, and they were very proud of their high descent. Their genealogical tree—that is to say, the great fir tree, of which each of them was a chip—had been once a very stately old tree in the forest. But now these Matches lay on the shelf between a flint and steel and an old iron saucepan, and to them they told most wonderful stories about their younger days.

“Ah, while we were still on the green bough, then were we indeed on the green bough!” said they. “Pearl tea morning and evening,—that was the dew; the sun shone on us the whole day, when he did shine; and all the little birds were obliged to amuse us with many songs or touching sto-

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ries. We could easily see that we were rich; for the other trees were dressed in green only in summer, whilst our family possessed the means of wearing green both winter and summer. But the wood-cutters came, that was the Great Revolution, and our family was divided and split up: he whom we looked upon as our chief support got a place as a mainmast in a large ship, that could sail round the world if it liked; and the other branches were placed in various situations: and now our vocation is to give light; and therefore we, people of high pedigree as we are, have come here into the kitchen."

"Ah! my fate has been very different," said the iron saucepan, near which the matches lay. "From the very moment that I came into the world I've been scoured and boiled, oh, how often! I always side with the respectable and conservative; and belong, in reality, to the very first in the house. My sole pleasure is to lie down, nice and clean, after dinner, and to have a little rational talk with my comrades; but if I except the

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bucket, that now and then goes into the yard, we live here in a very retired and quiet life. Our only newsmonger is the coal-scuttle; but he talks so demagogically about 'the people' and 'the government,' that a short time ago an old earthen pot was so shocked at his conversation that it dropped down and broke into a thousand pieces. Oh, he belongs to the Radicals, let me tell you."

"Now you are talking too much," said the Flint, and it struck against the steel so that the sparks flew out.

"Shall we not have a merry evening?"

"Yes; let us talk about who is of highest rank and most genteel," said the Matches.

"No; I have no wish to talk about myself," said the earthenware Dish; "let us have a refined and sentimental evening. We will all tell things we have seen and gone through. I will begin. I will relate a tale of every-day life: one can fancy one's self so well in similar situations, and that is so interesting.

The Bundle of Matches.

“On the shores of the Baltic, beneath the Danish beeches”——

“That is a splendid beginning!” said all the Plates; “that will certainly be a very interesting story!”

“There, in a quiet family, I passed my youth: the furniture was polished, the floor washed, and clean muslin curtains were put up every fortnight.”

“What an interesting story you are telling us!” said the Duster. “One hears in a moment that it is a young lady who speaks, such an air of purity breathes in every word.”

“Yes, that one does feel indeed,” said the Water-pail, much moved, and in such broken accents that there was quite a splash on the floor.

And the Dish went on with the story, and the end was as good as the beginning.

All the Plates rattled with delight; and the Duster took some green parsley off the dresser, and crowned the Dish, for he knew this would annoy the others; and, thought

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he, if I crown her to-day, she will crown me to-morrow.

“Now let us dance!” said the Tongs, beginning immediately; and, good heavens, how she could fling her leg up in the air, almost as high and as gracefully as Mademoiselle Ellsler! The old Arm-chair-covering in the corner burst at the sight.

“Am I not to be crowned now?” said the Tongs; and so forthwith she got a laurel-wreath too.

“What a low set!” said the Matches to themselves.

It was now the Tea-urn’s turn to sing something; but she said she had taken cold, indeed, she could only sing when excited; but that was nothing but pride; for she *would* only sing when standing on the drawing-room table among ladies and gentlemen.

Behind, in the window, sat an old Pen, that the maid used to write with. There was nothing remarkable about it, except that it was too deeply immersed in ink; but that was just what it was proud of, and

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made a fuss about. "If the tea-urn will not sing," it said, "why, she may leave it alone: but there is a nightingale in a cage; she can sing. It is true she has been taught nothing. However, this evening we will speak ill of nobody."

"I find it most improper," said the Tea-kettle, who was kitchen chorus-singer, and step-brother to the Tea-urn—"I find it most improper that such a foreign bird should be patronized. Is that patriotic? I will ask the Coal-scuttle, and let him decide the matter."

"As to me, I am vexed," said the latter; "thoroughly vexed! Is this the way to spend the evening? Would it not be far better to turn the whole house upside-down, and to establish a new and natural order of things? In this way each one would find his proper place, and I would undertake to direct the change. That would be something like fun for us."

"Yes, let us kick up a row!" cried all at once.

At the same moment the door opened: it

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was the house-maid! All were silent; not one dared to utter a word. Yet there was not a single grease-pot but knew what he could do, and of what consequence he was.

“Yes, if I had chosen,” thought they, “fine work there would have been this evening!”

The maid took the matches to get a light. Bless us, how they sputtered, and then stood all in a blaze!

“Now may every body see,” thought they, “that we are first in rank. How we shine! What lustre! What light!”—and so saying, they went out.

“That was a capital tale,” said the Queen; “I felt as if I were in the kitchen the whole time. Yes, you certainly shall have our daughter.”

“To be sure,” said the King; “next Monday you shall have our daughter.”

All was fixed for the wedding; and the evening before the whole town was illumi-

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nated: nuts and cakes were flung among the people; and the boys in the street stood upon tiptoe, and shouted "Hurrah!" It was magnificent!

"I must also do something to give still greater splendor to the festival," said the merchant's son; and he bought rockets, squibs, crackers, and all imaginable fireworks, seated himself in his trunk, and flew up with them into the air.

Hurrah! that was a sight! how it blazed!

Every Turk, when he beheld it, gave such a jump, that his slippers flew over his ears; for an appearance in the air like this they had never seen before. They now comprehended that it really must be a messenger of the Prophet who was to have the Princess.

As soon as the merchant's son with his trunk was again in the wood, he said to himself, "I think I'll just go into the town, and hear how it looked." And very natural it was that he wished to know.

Well to be sure! What stories the people told! Each one whom he asked had

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seen it in his way; but they all had thought it superb.

“I saw the Prophet himself,” said one; “he had eyes like gleaming stars, and a beard like foaming water.”

“He flew by in a mantle of fire,” said another. “The dearest little cherubs peeped out from beneath its folds.”

True enough he heard the most wonderful things; and on the following day he was to celebrate his wedding.

He now went back to the wood to get into his trunk—but where was it?

The trunk was burnt. A spark from the fireworks had fallen into it unobserved, had set fire to it; and there the trunk lay in ashes! Now the poor merchant's son could fly no longer, and was unable to get to his betrothed.

She stood the whole day on the roof waiting for him; she is waiting there still. As for him, he goes about the world telling stories; but they are not so amusing as the one of the Bundle of Matches.

Little Viggo.

TRANSLATED BY MARY HOWITT,

MY little Viggo wilt thou ride on horseback?
Then seat thee on my knee, my first, my best;
I am, like thee, a child in soul and body,
Then let us play till thou must go to rest.

See, I will be thy playmate as thou willest;
I will forget my tears, my heart-wrung sighs,
Let me upon thy rosy cheeks shower kisses,
And let me gaze into thy dear, brown eyes.

Now let me see how tall thou art, my jewel!
—And what a soft round little hand is thine!
Sweet smiles are nestling in each lovely dimple,
And O, thy mouth is sweet, thou dove of mine

Little Viggo.

Each little flower thou lovest as thy brother,
And as a friend thou tell'st it that and this ;
The whole wide world to thee is in thy mother,
And on her knee thou findest Eden's bliss.

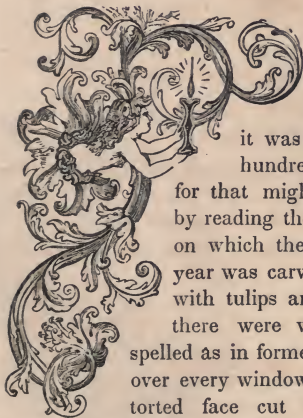
Come, I will tell thee now a pretty story,
All in this twilight of the eventide,
Will sing a low, sweet song until thou slumberest
My little Viggo, my delight and pride!

Perhaps when thou art older, my beloved,
And I have journeyed to the land of shade,
When the green sods are piled above my coffin,
Then thou may'st sing the low, sad songs I made—

May'st think of her who oft and oft has borne thee
Within her arms, as loving mothers do ;—
The world it will forget me and my singing,
And how I loved! wilt thou forget them too ?



THE OLD HOUSE.



N the street, up there, was an old, a very old house,— it was almost three hundred years old, for that might be known by reading the great beam on which the date of the year was carved: together with tulips and hop-binds there were whole verses spelled as in former times, and over every window was a distorted face cut out in the beam. The one story stood forward a great

way over the other; and directly under the eaves was a leaden spout with a dragon's head; the rain-water should have run out of the mouth, but it ran out of the belly, for there was a hole in the spout.

All the other houses in the street were so new and so neat, with large window-panes and smooth walls, one could easily see that they would have nothing to do with the old house: they certainly thought, "How long is that old decayed thing to stand here as a spectacle in the street? And then the projecting windows stand so far out, that no one can see from our windows what happens in that direction! The steps are as broad as those of a palace, and as high as to a church tower. The iron railings look just like the door to an old family vault, and then they have brass tops,—that's so stupid!"

On the other side of the street were also new and neat houses, and they thought just as the others did; but at the window opposite the old house there sat a little boy with fresh rosy cheeks and bright beaming eyes: he certainly liked the old house best, and

that both in sunshine and moonshine. And when he looked across at the wall where the mortar had fallen out, he could sit and find out there the strangest figures imaginable; exactly as the street had appeared before, with steps, projecting windows, and pointed gables; he could see soldiers with halberds, and spouts where the water ran, like dragons and serpents. *That* was a house to look at; and there lived an old man, who wore plush breeches; and he had a coat with large brass buttons, and a wig that one could see was a real wig. Every morning there came an old fellow to him who put his rooms in order, and went on errands; otherwise, the old man in the plush breeches was quite alone in the old house. Now and then he came to the window and looked out, and the little boy nodded to him, and the old man nodded again, and so they became acquaintances, and then they were friends, although they had never spoken to each other,—but that made no difference. The little boy heard his parents say, “The old man opposite is very well off, but he is so very, very lonely!”

The Sunday following, the little boy took

something, and wrapped it up in a piece of paper, went down stairs, and stood in the doorway; and when the man who went on errands came past, he said to him—

“I say, master! will you give this to the old man over the way from me? I have two pewter soldiers—this is one of them, and he shall have it, for I know he is so very, very lonely.”

And the old errand man looked quite pleased, nodded, and took the pewter soldier over to the old house. Afterwards there came a message; it was to ask if the little boy himself had not a wish to come over and pay a visit; and so he got permission of his parents, and then went over to the old house.

And the brass balls on the iron railings shone much brighter than ever; one would have thought they were polished on account of the visit; and it was as if the carved-out trumpeters—for there were trumpeters, who stood in tulips, carved out on the door—blew with all their might, their cheeks appeared so much rounder than before. Yes, they blew—“Trateratra! the little boy comes trateratra!”—and then the door opened.

The whole passage was hung with portraits of knights in armor, and ladies in silken gowns; and the armor rattled, and the silken gowns rustled! And then there was a flight of stairs which went a good way upwards, and a little way downwards, and then one came on a balcony which was in a very dilapidated state, sure enough, with large holes and long crevices, but grass grew there and leaves out of them altogether, for the whole balcony outside, the yard, and the walls, were overgrown with so much green stuff, that it looked like a garden; but it was only a balcony. Here stood old flower-pots with faces and asses' ears, and the flowers grew just as they liked. One of the pots was quite overrun on all sides with pinks, that is to say, with the green part; shoot stood by shoot, and it said quite distinctly, "The air has cherished me, the sun has kissed me, and promised me a little flower on Sunday!—a little flower on Sunday!"

And then they entered a chamber where the walls were covered with hog's leather, and printed with gold flowers.

“The gilding decays,
But hog’s leather stays!”

said the walls.

And there stood easy chairs, with such high backs, and so carved out, and with arms on both sides. “Sit down! sit down!” said they. “Ugh! how I creak; now I shall certainly get the gout, like the old clothes-press, ugh!”

And then the little boy came into the room where the projecting windows were, and where the old man sat.

“I thank you for the pewter soldier, my little friend!” said the old man, “and I thank you because you come over to me.”

“Thankee! thankee!” or “cranky! cranky!” sounded from all the furniture; there was so much of it, that each article stood in the other’s way, to get a look at the little boy.

In the middle of the wall hung a picture representing a beautiful lady, so young, so glad, but dressed quite as in former times, with clothes that stood quite stiff, and with powder in her hair; she neither said “thankee, thankee!” nor “cranky, cranky” but looked with her mild eyes at the little boy, who

directly asked the old man, "Where did you get her?"

"Yonder, at the broker's," said the old man, "where there are so many pictures hanging. No one knows or cares about them, for they are all of them buried; but I knew her in by-gone days, and now she has been dead and gone these fifty years!"

Under the picture, in a glazed frame, there hung a *bouquet* of withered flowers; they were almost fifty years old; they looked so very old!

The pendulum of the great clock went to and fro, and the hands turned, and every thing in the room became still older; but they did not observe it.

"They say at home," said the little boy, "that you are so very, very lonely!"

"Oh!" said he, "the old thoughts, with what they may bring with them, come and visit me, and now you also come! I am very well off!"

Then he took a book with pictures in it down from the shelf; there were whole long processions and pageants, with the strangest characters, which one never sees

now-a-days; soldiers like the knave of clubs, and citizens with waving flags: the tailors had theirs, with a pair of shears held by two lions,—and the shoemakers theirs, without boots, but with an eagle that had two heads, for the shoemakers must have everything so that they can say, it is a pair!—Yes, that was a picture book!

The old man now went into the other room to fetch preserves, apples, and nuts;—yes, it was delightful over there in the old house.

“I cannot bear it any longer!” said the pewter soldier, who sat on the drawers; “it is so lonely and melancholy here! but when one has been in a family circle one cannot accustom oneself to this life! I cannot bear it any longer! the whole day is so long, and the evenings are still longer! here it is not at all as it is over the way at your home, where your father and mother spoke so pleasantly, and where you and all your sweet children made such a delightful noise. Nay, how lonely the old man is!—do you think that he gets kisses? do you think he gets mild eyes,

or a Christmas tree?—He will get nothing but a grave.—I can bear it no longer!”

“You must not let it grieve you so much,” said the little boy; “I find it so very delightful here, and then all the old thoughts, with what they may bring with them, they come and visit here.”

“Yes, it’s all very well, but I see nothing of them, and I don’t know them!” said the pewter soldier, “I cannot bear it!”

“But you must!” said the little boy.

Then in came the old man with the most pleased and happy face, the most delicious preserves, apples, and nuts, and so the little boy thought no more about the pewter soldier.

The little boy returned home happy and pleased, and weeks and days passed away, and nods were made to the old house, and from the old house, and then the little boy went over there again.

The carved trumpeters blew, “trateratra! there is the little boy! trateratra!” and the swords and armor on the knights’ portraits rattled, and the silk gowns rustled; the hog’s-leather spoke, and the old chairs had the gout

in their legs and rheumatism in their backs : Ugh !—it was exactly like the first time, for over there one day and hour was just like another.

“ I cannot bear it ! ” said the pewter soldier, “ I have shed pewter tears ! it is too melancholy ! rather let me go to the wars and lose arms and legs ! it would at least be a change. I cannot bear it longer !—Now, I know what it is to have a visit from one’s old thoughts, with what they may bring with them ! I have had a visit from mine, and you may be sure it is no pleasant thing in the end ; I was at last about to jump down from the drawers.

“ I saw you all over there at home so distinctly, as if you really were here ; it was again that Sunday morning ; all you children stood before the table and sung your Psalms, as you do every morning. You stood devoutly with folded hands ; and father and mother were just as pious ; and then the door was opened, and little sister Mary, who is not two years old yet, and who always dances when she hears music or singing, of whatever kind it may be, was put into the room—though she ought not to have been there—and then she

began to dance, but could not keep time, because the tones were so long; and then she stood, first on the one leg, and bent her head forwards, and then on the other leg, and bent her head forwards—but all would not do. You stood very seriously all together, although it was difficult enough; but I laughed to myself, and then I fell off the table, and got a bump, which I have still—for it was not right of me to laugh. But the whole now passes before me again in thought, and everything that I have lived to see; and these are the old thoughts, with what they may bring with them.

“Tell me if you still sing on Sundays? Tell me something about little Mary! and how my comrade, the other pewter soldier, lives! Yes, he is happy enough, that’s sure! I cannot bear it any longer!”

“You are given away as a present!” said the little boy; “you must remain. Can you not understand that?”

The old man now came with a drawer, in which there was much to be seen, both “tin boxes” and “balsam boxes,” old cards, so large and so gilded, such as one never sees

them now. And several drawers were opened, and the piano was opened; it had landscapes on the inside of the lid, and it was so hoarse when the old man played on it! and then he hummed a song.

“Yes, she could sing that!” said he, and nodded to the portrait, which he had bought at the broker’s, and the old man’s eyes shone so bright!

“I will go to the wars! I will go to the wars!” shouted the pewter soldier as loud as he could, and threw himself off the drawers right down on the floor.

What became of him? The old man sought, and the little boy sought; he was away, and he stayed away.

“I shall find him!” said the old man; but he never found him. The floor was too open—the pewter soldier had fallen through a crevice, and there he lay as in an open tomb.

That day passed, and the little boy went home, and that week passed, and several weeks too. The windows were quite frozen, the little boy was obliged to sit and breathe on them to get a peep-hole over to the old house, and there the snow had been blown

into all the carved work and inscriptions; it lay quite up over the steps, just as if there was no one at home;—nor was there any one at home—the old man was dead!

In the evening there was a hearse seen before the door, and he was borne into it in his coffin: he was now to go out into the country, to lie in his grave. He was driven out there, but no one followed; all his friends were dead, and the little boy kissed his hand to the coffin as it was driven away.

Some days afterwards there was an auction at the old house, and the little boy saw from his window how they carried the old knights and the old ladies away, the flower-pots with the long ears, the old chairs, and the old clothes-presses. Something came here, and something came there; the portrait of her who had been found at the broker's came to the broker's again; and there it hung, for no one knew her more—no one cared about the old picture.

In the spring they pulled the house down, for, as people said, it was a ruin. One could see from the street right into the room with the hog's-leather hanging, which was slashed

and torn ; and the green grass and leaves about the balcony hung quite wild about the falling beams.—And then it was put to rights.

“That was a relief,” said the neighboring houses.

* * * * *

A fine house was built there, with large windows, and smooth white walls ; but before it, where the old house had in fact stood, was a little garden laid out, and a wild grape-vine ran up the wall of the neighboring house. Before the garden there was a large iron railing with an iron door, it looked quite splendid, and people stood still and peeped in, and the sparrows hung by scores in the vine, and chattered away at each other as well as they could, but it was not about the old house, for they could not remember it, so many years had passed,—so many that the little boy had grown up to a whole man, yes, a clever man, and a pleasure to his parents ; and he had just been married, and, together with his little wife, had come to live in the house here, where the garden was ; and he stood by her there whilst she planted a field-flower that she found so pretty ; she planted it with her

little hand, and pressed the earth around it with her fingers. Oh! what was that? She had stuck herself. There sat something pointed, straight out of the soft mould.

It was —— yes, guess!—it was the pewter soldier, he that was lost up at the old man's, and had tumbled and turned about amongst the timber and the rubbish, and had at last laid for many years in the ground.

The young wife wiped the dirt off the soldier, first with a green leaf, and then with her fine handkerchief—it had such a delightful smell, that it was to the pewter soldier just as if he had awaked from a trance.

“Let me see him,” said the young man. He laughed, and then skook his head. “Nay, it cannot be he; but he reminds me of a story about a pewter soldier which I had when I was a little boy!” And then he told his wife about the old house, and the old man, and about the pewter soldier that he sent over to him because he was so very, very lonely; and he told it as correctly as it had really been, so that the tears came into the eyes of his young wife, on account of the old house and the old man.

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“It may possibly be, however, that it is the same pewter soldier!” said she, “I will take care of it, and remember all that you have told me; but you must show me the old man’s grave!”

“But I do not know it,” said he, “and no one knows it! all his friends were dead, no one took care of it, and I was then a little boy!”

“How very, very lonely he must have been!” said she.

“Very, very lonely!” said the pewter soldier; “but it is delightful not to be forgotten!”

“Delightful!” shouted something close by; but no one, except the pewter soldier, saw that it was a piece of the hog’s-leather hangings; it had lost all its gilding, it looked like a piece of wet clay, but it had an opinion, and it gave it:

“The gilding decays,
But hog’s leather stays!”

This the pewter soldier did not believe.

THE DROP OF WATER.



HAT a magnifying glass is, you surely know—such a round sort of spectacle-glass that makes everything full a hundred times larger than it really is. When one holds it before the eye, and looks at a drop of water out of the pond, then one sees above a thousand strange creatures. It looks almost like a whole plateful of shrimps springing about among each other, and they are so ravenous, they tear one another's arms and legs, tails and sides, and yet they are glad and pleased in their way.

Now, there was once an old man, who was called by every body Creep-and-Crawl; for that was his name. He would always make the best out of everything, and when he could not make anything out of it, he resorted to witchcraft.

Now, one day he sat and held his magnifying glass before his eye, and looked at a drop of water that was taken out of a little pool in the ditch. What a creeping and crawling was there! all the thousands of small creatures hopped and jumped about, pulled one another, and pecked one another.

“But this is abominable!” said Creep-and-Crawl, “Can one not get them to live in peace and quiet, and each mind his own business?” And he thought and thought, but he could come to no conclusion, and so he was obliged to conjure. “I must give them a color, that they may be more discernible!” said he; and so he poured something like a little drop of red wine into the drop of water, but it was bewitched blood from the lobe of the ear—the very finest sort for a penny; and then all the strange creatures became rose-colored

over the whole body. It looked like a whole town of naked savages.

“What have you got there?” said another old wizard, who had no name, and that was just the best of it.

“Why,” said Creep-and-Crawl, “if you can guess what it is, I will make you a present of it; but it is not so easy to find out when one does not know it!”

The wizard who had no name looked through the magnifying glass. It actually appeared like a whole town, where all the inhabitants ran about without clothes! it was terrible, but still more terrible to see how the one knocked and pushed the other, bit each other, and drew one another about. What was undermost should be topmost, and what was topmost should be undermost!—See there, now! his leg is longer than mine!—whip it off, and away with it! There is one that has a little lump behind the ear, a little innocent lump, but it pains him, and so it shall pain him still more! And they pecked at it, and they dragged him about, and they ate him, and all on account of the little lump. There sat one as still as a little maid, who

only wished for peace and quietness, but she must be brought out and they dragged her, and they pulled her, and they devoured her!

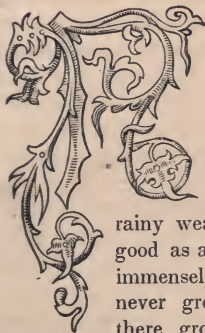
“It is quite amusing!” said the wizard.

“Yes; but what do you think it is?” asked Creep-and-Crawl. “Can you find it out?”

“It is very easy to see,” said the other, “it is some great city, they all resemble each other. A great city it is, that’s sure!”

“It is ditch-water!” said Creep-and-Crawl.

THE HAPPY FAMILY.



EALLY, the largest green leaf in this country is a dock-leaf; if one holds it before one, it is like a whole apron, and if one holds it over one's head in rainy weather, it is almost as good as an umbrella, for it is so immensely large. The burdock never grows alone, but where there grows one there always grow several: it is a great delight, and all this delightfulness is snails' food. The great white snails which persons of quality in former times made fricassees of, ate, and said, "Hem, hem! how delicious!" for they thought

it tasted so delicate—lived on dock leaves, and therefore burdock seeds were sown.

Now, there was an old nanor-house, where they no longer ate snails, they were quite extinct; but the burdocks were not extinct, they grew and grew all over the walks and all the beds; they could not get the mastery over them—it was a whole forest of burdocks. Here and there stood an apple and a plumb-tree, or else one never would have thought that it was a garden; all was burdocks, and there lived the two last venerable old snails.

They themselves knew not how old they were, but they could remember very well that there had been many more; that they were of a family from foreign lands, and that for them and theirs the whole forest was planted. They had never been outside it, but they knew that there was still something more in the world, which was called the manor-house, and that there they were boiled, and then they became black, and were then placed on a silver dish; but what happened further they knew not; or, in fact, what it was to be boiled, and to lie on a silver dish, they could not possibly imagine; but it was said to be

delightful, and particularly genteel. Neither the chafers, the toads, nor the earth-worms, whom they asked about it could give them any information,—none of them had been boiled or laid on a silver dish.

The old white snails were the first persons of distinction in the world, that they knew; the forest was planted for their sake, and the manor-house was there that they might be boiled and laid on a silver dish.

Now they lived a very lonely and happy life; and as they had no children themselves, they had adopted a little common snail, which they brought up as their own; but the little one would not grow, for he was of a common family; but the old ones, especially Dame Mother-Snail, thought they could observe how he increased in size, and she begged father, if he could not see it, that he would at least feel the little snail's shell; and then he felt it, and found the good dame was right.

One day there was a heavy storm of rain.

"Hear how it beats like a drum on the dock leaves!" said Father Snail.

"There are also rain-drops!" said Mother Snail; "and now the rain pours right down

the stalk! You will see that it will be wet here! I am very happy to think that we have our good house, and the little one has his also! There is more done for us than for all other creatures, sure enough; but can you not see that we are folks of quality in the world? We are provided with a house from our birth, and the burdock forest is planted for our sakes! I should like to know how far it extends, and what there is outside!"

"There is nothing at all," said Father Snail. "No place can be better than ours, and I have nothing to wish for!"

"Yes," said the dame. "I would willingly go to the manor-house, be boiled, and laid on a silver dish; all our forefathers have been treated so; there is something extraordinary in it, you may be sure!"

"The manor-house has most likely fallen to ruin!" said Father Snail, "or the burdocks have grown up over it, so that they cannot come out. There need not, however, be any haste about that; but you are always in such a tremendous hurry, and the little one is beginning to be the same. Has he not been

creeping up that stalk these three days? It gives me a headache when I look up to him!"

"You must not scold him," said Mother Snail; "he creeps so carefully; he will afford us much pleasure—and we have nothing but him to live for! But have you not thought of it?—where shall we get a wife for him? Do you not think that there are some of our species at a great distance in the interior of the burdock forest?"

"Black snails, I dare say, there are enough of," said the old one—"black snails without a house—but they are so common, and so conceited. But we might give the ants a commission to look out for us; they run to and fro as if they had something to do, and they certainly know of a wife for our little snail!"

"I know one, sure enough—the most charming one!" said one of the ants; "but I am afraid we shall hardly succeed, for she is a queen!"

"That is nothing!" said the old folks; "has she a house?"

"She has a palace!" said the ant—"the finest ant's palace, with seven hundred passages!"

“I thank you!” said Mother Snail; “our son shall not go into an ant-hill; if you know nothing better than that, we shall give the commission to the white gnats. They fly far and wide, in rain and sunshine; they know the whole forest here, both within and without.”

“We have a wife for him,” said the gnats; “at a hundred human paces from here there sits a little snail in her house, on a goose-berry bush; she is quite lonely, and old enough to be married. It is only a hundred human paces!”

“Well, then, let her come to him!” said the old ones; “he has a whole forest of burdocks, she has only a bush!”

And so they went and fetched little Miss Snail. It was a whole week before she arrived; but therein was just the very best of it, for one could thus see that she was of the same species.

And then the marriage was celebrated. Six earth-worms shone as well as they could. In other respects the whole went off very quietly, for the old folks could not bear noise and merriment; but old Dame Snail made

a brilliant speech. Father Snail could not speak, he was too much affected; and so they gave them as a dowry and inheritance, the whole forest of burdocks, and said—what they had always said—that it was the best in the world; and if they lived honestly and decently, and increased and multiplied, they and their children would once in the course of time come to the manor-house, be boiled black, and laid on silver dishes. After this speech was made, the old ones crept into their shells, and never more came out. They slept; the young couple governed in the forest, and had a numerous progeny, but they were never boiled, and never came on the silver dishes; so from this they concluded that the manor-house had fallen to ruins, and that all the men in the world were extinct; and as no one contradicted them, so, of course it was so. And the rain beat on the dock-leaves to make drum-music for their sake, and the sun shone in order to give the burdock forest a color for their sakes; and they were very happy, and the whole family was happy; for they, indeed were so.

THE STORY OF A MOTHER



MOTHER sat there with her little child. She was so down-cast, so afraid that it should die! It was so pale, the small eyes had closed themselves, and it drew its breath so softly, now and then, with a deep respiration, as if it sighed; and the mother looked still more sorrowfully on the little creature.

Then a knocking was heard at the door, and in came a poor old man wrapped up as in a large horse-cloth, for it warms one, and he needed it, as it was the cold winter season! Every thing out of doors was covered with ice and snow, and the wind blew so that it cut the face.

As the old man trembled with cold, and the little child slept a moment, the mother went and poured some ale into a pot and set it on the stove, that it might be warm for him; the old man sat and rocked the cradle, and the mother sat down on a chair close by him, and looked at her little sick child that drew its breath so deep, and raised its little hand.

“Do you not think that I shall save him?” said she, “*Our Lord* will not take him from me!”

And the old man,—it was Death himself,—he nodded so strangely, it could just as well signify yes as no. And the mother looked down in her lap, and the tears ran down over her cheeks; her head became so heavy—she had not closed her eyes for three days and nights; and now she slept, but only for a minute, when she started up and trembled with cold: “What is that?” said she, and looked on all sides; but the old man was gone, and her little child was gone—he had taken it with him; and the old clock in the corner burred, and burred, the great leaden

weight ran down to the floor, bump! and then the clock also stood still.

But the poor mother ran out of the house and cried aloud for her child.

Out there, in the midst of the snow, there sat a woman in long, black clothes; and she said, "Death has been in thy chamber, and I saw him hasten away with thy little child; he goes faster than the wind, and he never brings back what he takes!"

"Oh, only tell me which way he went!" said the mother: "Tell me the way, and I shall find him!"

"I know it!" said the woman in the black clothes, "but before I tell it, thou must first sing for me all the songs thou hast sung for thy child!—I am fond of them; I have heard them before; I am Night; I saw thy tears whilst thou sang'st them!"

"I will sing them all, all!" said the mother; "but do not stop me now;—I may overtake him—I may find my child!"

But Night stood still and mute. Then the mother wrung her hands, sang and wept, and there were many songs, but yet many more tears; and then Night said, "Go to the right,

into the dark pine forest ; thither I saw Death take his way with thy little child !”

The roads crossed each other in the depths of the forest, and she no longer knew whither she should go ; then there stood a thorn-bush ; there was neither leaf nor flower on it, it was also in the cold winter season, and ice-flakes hung on the branches.

“Hast thou not seen Death go past with my little child ?” said the mother.

“Yes,” said the thorn-bush ; “but I will not tell thee which way he took, unless thou wilt first warm me up at thy heart. I am freezing to death ; I shall become a lump of ice !”

And she pressed the thorn-bush to her breast, so firmly, that it might be thoroughly warmed, and the thorns went right into her flesh, and her blood flowed in large drops, but the thorn-bush shot forth fresh green leaves, and there came flowers on it in the cold winter night, the heart of the afflicted mother was so warm ; and the thorn-bush told her the way she should go.

She then came to a large lake, where there was neither ship nor boat. The lake was

not frozen sufficiently to bear her ; neither was it open, nor low enough that she could wade through it ; and across it she must go if she would find her child ! Then she lay down to drink up the lake, and that was an impossibility for a human being, but the afflicted mother thought that a miracle might happen nevertheless.

“ Oh, what would I not give to come to my child ! ” said the weeping mother ; and she wept still more, and her eyes sunk down in the depths of the waters, and became two precious pearls ; but the water bore her up, as if she sat in a swing, and she flew in the rocking waves to the shore on the opposite side, where there stood a mile-broad, strange house, one knew not if it were a mountain with forests and caverns, or if it were built up ; but the poor mother could not see it ; she had wept her eyes out.

“ Where shall I find Death, who took away my little child ? ” said she.

“ He has not come here yet ! ” said the old grave woman, who was appointed to look after Death’s great greenhouse ! “ How have

you been able to find the way hither? and who has helped you?"

"*Our Lord* has helped me," said she. "He is merciful, and you will also be so! Where shall I find my little child?"

"Nay, I know not," said the woman, "and you cannot see! Many flowers and trees have withered this night; Death will soon come and plant them over again! You certainly know that every person has his or her life's tree or flower, just as every one happens to be settled; they look like other plants, but they have pulsations of the heart. Children's hearts can also beat; go after yours, perhaps you may know your child's; but what will you give me if I tell you what you shall do more?"

"I have nothing to give," said the afflicted mother, "but I will go to the world's end for you!"

"Nay, I have nothing to do there!" said the woman, "but you can give me your long black hair; you know yourself that it is fine, and that I like! You shall have my white hair instead!" and that's always something!"

"Do you demand nothing else?" said she,

—“that I will gladly give you!” And she gave her her fine black hair, and got the old woman’s snow-white hair instead.

So they went into Death’s great greenhouse, where flowers and trees grew strangely into one another. There stood fine hyacinths under glass bells, and there stood strong-stemmed peonies; there grew water plants, some so fresh, others half sick, the water-snakes lay down on them, and black crabs pinched their stalks. There stood beautiful palm-trees, oaks, and plantains; there stood parsley and flowering thyme: every tree and every flower had its name; each of them was a human life, the human frame still lived—one in China, and another in Greenland—round about in the world. There were large trees in small pots, so that they stood so stunted in growth, and ready to burst the pots; in other places, there was a little dull flower in rich mould, with moss round about it, and it was so petted and nursed. But the distressed mother bent down over all the smallest plants, and heard within them how the human heart beat; and amongst millions she knew her child’s.

"There it is!" cried she, and stretched her hands out over a little blue crocus, that hung quite sickly on one side.

"Don't touch the flower!" said the old woman, "but place yourself here, and when Death comes,—I expect him every moment,—do not let him pluck the flower up, but threaten him that you will do the same with the others. Then he will be afraid! he is responsible for them to *Our Lord*, and no one dares to pluck them up before *He* gives leave."

All at once an icy cold rushed through the great hall, and the blind mother could feel that it was Death that came.

"How hast thou been able to find thy way hither?" he asked. "How couldst thou come quicker than I?"

"I am a mother," said she.

And Death stretched out his long hand towards the fine little flower, but she held her hands fast around his, so tight, and yet afraid that she should touch one of the leaves. Then Death blew on her hands, and she felt that it was colder than the cold wind, and her hands fell down powerless.

“Thou canst not do anything against me!” said Death.

“But that *Our Lord* can!” said she.

“I only do His bidding!” said Death. “I am His gardener, I take all His flowers and trees, and plant them out in the great garden of Paradise, in the unknown land; but how they grow there, and how it is there I dare not tell thee.”

“Give me back my child!” said the mother, and she wept and prayed. At once she seized hold of two beautiful flowers close by, with each hand, and cried out to Death, “I will tear all thy flowers off, for I am in despair.”

“Touch them not!” said Death. “Thou say’st that thou art so unhappy, and now thou wilt make another mother equally unhappy.”

“Another mother!” said the poor woman, and directly let go her hold of both the flowers.

“There, thou hast thine eyes,” said Death; “I fished them up from the lake, they shone so bright; I knew not they were thine. Take them again, they are now brighter than be

fore ; now look down into the deep well close by ; I shall tell thee the names of the two flowers thou wouldst have torn up, and thou wilt see their whole future life—their whole human existence : and see what thou wast about to disturb and destroy.”

And she looked down into the well ; and it was a happiness to see how the one became a blessing to the world, to see how much happiness and joy were felt everywhere. And she saw the other's life, and it was sorrow and distress, horror, and wretchedness.

“Both of them are God's will !” said Death.

“Which of them is Misfortune's flower ? and which is that of Happiness ?” asked she.

“That I will not tell thee,” said Death ; “but this thou shalt know from me, that the one flower was thy own child ! it was thy child's fate thou saw'st,—thy own child's future life !”

Then the mother screamed with terror, “Which of them was my child ? Tell it me ! save the innocent ! save my child from all that misery ! rather take it away ! take it into God's kingdom ! Forget my tears, forget my prayers, and all that I have done !”

“I do not understand thee!” said Death.
“Wilt thou have thy child again, or shall I go with it there, where thou dost not know?”

Then the mother wrung her hands, fell on her knees, and prayed to our Lord: “Oh, hear me not when I pray against Thy will, which is the best! hear me not! hear me not!”

And she bowed her head down in her lap, and Death took her child and went with it into the unknown land.





THE FALSE COLLAR.



HERE was once a fine gentleman, all of whose moveables were a boot-jack and a hair-comb : but he had the finest false collars in the world ; and it is about one of these collars that we are now to hear a story.

It was so old, that it began to think of marriage ; and it happened that it came to be washed in company with a garter.

“Nay !” said the collar, “I never did see anything so slender and so fine, so soft and so neat. May I not ask your name ?”

“That I shall not tell you !” said the

"Where do you live?" asked the collar.

But the garter was so bashful, so modest, and thought it was a strange question to answer.

"You are certainly a girdle," said the collar; "that is to say an inside girdle. I see well that you are both for use and ornament, my dear young lady."

"I will thank you not to speak to me," said the garter. "I think I have not given the least occasion for it."

"Yes! when one is as handsome as you," said the collar, "that is occasion enough."

"Don't come so near me, I beg of you!" said the garter. "You look so much like those men-folks."

"I am also a fine gentleman," said the collar. "I have a boot-jack and a hair-comb."

But that was not true, for it was his master who had them: but he boasted.

"Don't come so near me," said the garter: "I am not accustomed to it."

"Prude!" exclaimed the collar; and then it was taken out of the washing-tub. It was starched, hung over the back of a chair in the sunshine, and was then laid on the ironing-

blanket ; then came the warm box-iron. "Dear lady !" said the collar. "Dear widow-lady ! I feel quite hot. I am quite changed. I begin to unfold myself. You will burn a hole in me. Oh ! I offer you my hand."

"Rag !" said the box-iron ; and went proudly over the collar : for she fancied she was a steam-engine, that would go on the railroad and draw the waggons. "Rag !" said the box-iron.

The collar was a little jagged at the edge, and so came the long scissors to cut off the jagged part.

"Oh !" said the collar, "you are certainly the first opera dancer. How well you can stretch your legs out ! It is the most graceful performance I have ever seen. No one can imitate you."

"I know it," said the scissors.

"You deserve to be a baroness," said the collar. "All that I have, is, a fine gentleman, a boot-jack, and a hair-comb. If I only had the barony !"

"Do you seek my hand ?" said the scissors ; for she was angry ; and without more ado, she *cut him*, and then he was condemned.

“I shall now be obliged to ask the hair-comb. It is surprising how well you preserve your teeth, Miss,” said the collar. “Have you never thought of being betrothed?”

“Yes, of course! you may be sure of that,” said the hair comb. “I *am* betrothed—to the boot-jack!”

“Betrothed!” exclaimed the collar. Now there was no other to court, and so he desisted it.

A long time passed away, then the collar came into the rag chest at the paper mill; there was a large company of rags, the fine by themselves, and the coarse by themselves, just as it should be. They all had much to say, but the collar the most; for he was a real boaster.

“I have had such an immense number of sweet-hearts!” said the collar, “I could not be in peace! It is true, I was always a fine starched-up gentleman! I had both a boot-jack and a hair-comb, which I never used! You should have seen me then, you should have seen me when I lay down!—I shall never forget *my first love*—she was a girdle, so fine, so soft, and so charming, she threw

herself into a tub of water for my sake! There was also a widow, who became glowing hot, but I left her standing till she got black again; there was also the first opera dancer, she gave me that cut which I now go with, she was so ferocious! my own hair-comb was in love with me, she lost all her teeth from the heart-ache; yes, I have lived to see much of that sort of thing; but I am extremely sorry for the garter—I mean the girdle—that went into the water-tub. I have much on my conscience, I want to become white paper!"

And it became so, all the rags were turned into white paper; but the collar came to be just this very piece of white paper we here see, and on which the story is printed; and that was because it boasted so terribly afterwards of what had never happened to it. It would be well for us to beware, that we may not act in a similar manner, for we can never know if we may not, in the course of time, also come into the rag chest, and be made into white paper, and then have our whole life's history printed on it, even the most secret, and be obliged to run about and tell it ourselves, just like this collar.

THE SHADOW.



T is in the hot lands that the sun burns, sure enough!—there the people become quite a mahogany brown, ay, and in the *hottest* lands they are burnt to negroes.

But now it was only to the *hot* lands that a learned man had come from the cold; there he thought that he could run about just as when at home, but he soon found out his mistake.

He, and all sensible folks, were obliged to stay within doors,—the window-shutters and doors were closed the whole day; it looked as if the whole house slept, or there was no one at home.

The narrow street with the high houses, was built so that the sunshine must fall there from morning till evening—it was really not to be borne.

The learned man from the cold lands—he was a young man, and seemed to be a clever man—sat in a glowing oven; it took effect on him, he became quite meagre—even his shadow shrunk in, for the sun had also an effect on it. It was first towards evening when the sun was down, that they began to freshen up again.

In the warm lands every window has a balcony, and the people came out on all the balconies in the street—for one must have air, even if one be accustomed to be mahogany!* It was lively both up and down the street. Tailors, and shoemakers, and all the

* The word *mahogany* can be understood, in Danish, as having two meanings. In general, it means the reddish-brown wood itself; but in jest, it signifies “excessively fine,” which arose from an anecdote of Nyboder, in Copenhagen, (the seamen’s quarter.) A sailor’s wife who was always proud and fine, in her way, came to her neighbor, and complained that she had got a splinter in her finger. “What of?” asked the neighbor’s wife. “It is a mahogany splinter,” said the other. “Mahoga-

folks, moved out into the street—chairs and tables were brought forth—and candles burnt—yes, above a thousand lights were burning—and the one talked and the other sung; and people walked and church-bells rang, and asses went along with a dingle-dingle-dong! for they too had bells on. The street boys were screaming and hooting, and shouting and shooting, with devils and detonating balls:—and there came corpse bearers and hood wearers,—for there were funerals with psalm and hymn,—and then the din of carriages driving and company arriving:—yes, it was, in truth, lively enough down in the street. Only in that single house, which stood opposite that in which the learned foreigner lived, it was quite still; and yet some one lived there, for there stood flowers in the balcony—they grew so well in the sun's heat!—and that they could not do unless they were watered—and some one must water them—there must be somebody there. The door opposite was also opened late in the evening,

ny! it cannot be less with you!" exclaimed the woman;—and thence the proverb, "It is so mahogany!"—(that is, so excessively fine)—is derived.

out it was dark within, at least in the front room; further in there was heard the sound of music. The learned foreigner thought it quite marvellous, but now—it might be that he only imagined it—for he found everything marvellous out there, in the warm lands, if there had only been no sun. The stranger's landlord said that he didn't know who had taken the house opposite, one saw no person about, and as to the music, it appeared to him to be extremely tiresome. "It is as if some one sat there, and practised a piece that he could not master—always the same piece. 'I shall master it!' says he; but yet he cannot master it, however long he plays."

One night the stranger awoke—he slept with the doors of the balcony open—the curtain before it was raised by the wind, and he thought that a strange lustre came from the opposite neighbor's house; all the flowers shone like flames, in the most beautiful colors, and in the midst of the flowers stood a slender, graceful maiden,—it was as if she also shone; the light really hurt his eyes. He now opened them quite wide—yes, he was quite awake; with one spring he was on

the floor ; he crept gently behind the curtain, but the maiden was gone ; the flowers shone no longer, but there they stood, fresh and blooming as ever ; the door was ajar, and, far within, the music sounded so soft and delightful, one could really melt away in sweet thoughts from it. Yet it was like a piece of enchantment. And who lived there ? Where was the actual entrance ? The whole of the ground-floor was a row of shops, and there people could not always be running through.

One evening the stranger sat out on the balcony. The light burnt in the room behind him ; and thus it was quite natural that his shadow should fall on his opposite neighbor's wall. Yes ! there it sat, directly opposite, between the flowers on the balcony ; and when the stranger moved, the shadow also moved : for that it always does.

“ I think my shadow is the only living thing one sees over there,” said the learned man. “ See ! how nicely it sits between the flowers. The door stands half-open : now the shadow should be cunning, and go into the room, look about, and then come and tell me what it had seen. Come, now ! be useful and do me a

service," said he, in jest. "Have the kindness to step in. Now! art thou going?" and then he nodded to the shadow, and the shadow nodded again. "Well then, go! but don't stay away."

The stranger rose, and his shadow on the opposite neighbor's balcony rose also; the stranger turned round and the shadow also turned round. Yes! if any one had paid particular attention to it, they would have seen, quite distinctly, that the shadow went in through the half-open balcony-door of their opposite neighbor, just as the stranger went into his own room, and let the long curtain fall down after him.

Next morning, the learned man went out to drink coffee and read the newspapers.

"What is that?" said he, as he came out into the sunshine. "I have no shadow! So then, it has actually gone last night, and not come again. It is really tiresome!"

This annoyed him: not so much because the shadow was gone, but because he knew there was a story about a man without a shadow.* It was known to everybody at

* Peter Schlemihl, the shadowless man.

home, in the cold lands; and if the learned man now came there and told his story, they would say that he was imitating it, and that he had no need to do. He would, therefore, not talk about it at all; and that was wisely thought.

In the evening he went out again on the balcony. He had placed the light directly behind him, for he knew that the shadow would always have its master for a screen, but he could not entice it. He made himself little; he made himself great: but no shadow came again. He said, "Hem! hem!" but it was of no use.

It was vexatious; but in the warm lands every thing grows so quickly; and after the lapse of eight days he observed, to his great joy, that a new shadow came in the sunshine. In the course of three weeks he had a very fair shadow, which, when he set out for his home in the northern lands, grew more and more in the journey, so that at last it was so long and so large, that it was more than sufficient.

The learned man then came home, and he wrote books about what was true in the

world, and about what was good and what was beautiful; and there passed days and years,—yes! many years passed away.

One evening, as he was sitting in his room, there was a gentle knocking at the door.

“Come in!” said he; but no one came in; so he opened the door, and there stood before him such an extremely lean man, that he felt quite strange. As to the rest, the man was very finely dressed,—he must be a gentleman.

“Whom have I the honor of speaking to?” asked the learned man.

“Yes! I thought as much,” said the fine man. “I thought you would not know me. I have got so much body. I have even got flesh and clothes. You certainly never thought of seeing me so well off. Do you not know your old shadow? You certainly thought I should never more return. Things have gone on well with me since I was last with you. I have, in all respects, become very well off. Shall I purchase my freedom from service? If so, I can do it;” and then he rattled a whole bunch of valuable seals that hung to his watch, and he stuck his

hand in the thick gold chain he wore around his neck ;—nay ! how all his fingers glittered with diamond rings ; and then all were pure gems.

“Nay ; I cannot recover from my surprise !” said the learned man : “what is the meaning of all this ?”

“Something common, is it not,” said the shadow : “but you yourself do not belong to the common order ; and I, as you know well, have from a child followed in your footsteps, As soon as you found I was capable to go out alone in the world, I went my own way. I am in the most brilliant circumstances, but there came a sort of desire over me to see you once more before you die ; you will die, I suppose ? I also wished to see this land again,—for you know we always love our native land. I know you have got another shadow again ; have I anything to pay to it or you ? If so, you will oblige me by saying what it is.”

“Nay, is it really thou ?” said the learned man : “it is most remarkable : I never imagined that one’s old shadow could come again as a man.”

“Tell me what I have to pay,” said the shadow; “for I don’t like to be in any sort of debt.”

“How canst thou talk so?” said the learned man; “what debt is there to talk about? Make thyself as free as any one else. I am extremely glad to hear of thy good fortune: sit down, old friend, and tell me a little how it has gone with thee, and what thou hast seen at our opposite neighbor’s there—in the warm lands.”

“Yes, I will tell you all about it,” said the shadow, and sat down: “but then you must also promise me, that, wherever you may meet me, you will never say to any one here in the town that I have been your shadow. I intend to get betrothed, for I can provide for more than one family.”

“Be quite at thy ease about that,” said the learned man; “I shall not say to any one who thou actually art: here is my hand—I promise it, and a man’s bond is his word.”

“A word is a shadow,” said the shadow, “and as such it must speak.”

It was really quite astonishing how much of a man it was. It was dressed entirely in

black, and of the very finest cloth; it had patent leather boots, and a hat that could be folded together, so that it was bare crown and brim; not to speak of what we already know it had—seals, gold neck-chain, and diamond rings; yes, the shadow was well-dressed, and it was just that which made it quite a man.

“Now I shall tell you my adventures,” said the shadow; and then he sat, with the polished boots, as heavily as he could, on the arm of the learned man’s new shadow, which lay like a poodle-dog at his feet. Now this was perhaps from arrogance; and the shadow on the ground kept itself so still and quiet, that it might hear all that passed: it wished to know how it could get free, and work its way up, so as to become its own master.

“Do you know who lived in our opposite neighbor’s house?” said the shadow; “it was the most charming of all beings, it was Poesy! I was there for three weeks, and that has as much effect as if one had lived three thousand years, and read all that was composed and written; that is what I say, and

it is right. I have seen everything and I know everything!"

"Poesy!" cried the learned man; "yes, yes, she often dwells a recluse in large cities! Poesy! yes, I have seen her,—a single short moment, but sleep came into my eyes! She stood on the balcony and shone as the aurora borealis shines. Go on, go on!—thou wert on the balcony, and went through the doorway, and then ——"

"Then I was in the antechamber," said the shadow. "You always sat and looked over to the antechamber. There was no light; there was a sort of twilight, but the one door stood open directly opposite the other through a long row of rooms and saloons, and there it was lighted up. I should have been completely killed if I had gone over to the maiden; but I was circumspect, I took time to think, and that one must always do."

"And what didst thou then see?" asked the learned man.

"I saw everything, and I shall tell all to you: but,—it is no pride on my part,—as a free man, and with the knowledge I have,

not to speak of my position in life, my excellent circumstances,—I certainly wish that you would say *you** to me !”

“I beg your pardon,” said the learned man ; “it is an old habit with me. *You* are perfectly right, and I shall remember it ; but now *you* must tell me all *you* saw !”

“Everything !” said the shadow, “for I saw everything, and I know everything !”

“How did it look in the furthest saloon ?” asked the learned man. “Was it there as in

* It is the custom in Denmark for intimate acquaintances to use the second person singular, “Du,” (thou) when speaking to each other. When a friendship is formed between men, they generally affirm it, when occasion offers, either in public or private, by drinking to each other and exclaiming, “*thy health*,” at the same time striking their glasses together.—This is called drinking “*Duus* :”—they are then, “*Duus Brodre*,” (thou brothers,) and ever afterwards use the pronoun “*thou*,” to each other, it being regarded as more familiar than “*De*,” (you). Father and mother, sister and brother, say *thou* to one another—without regard to age or rank. Master and mistress say *thou* to their servants—the superior to the inferior. But servants and inferiors do not use the same term to their masters, or superiors—nor is it ever used when speaking to a stranger, or any one with whom they are but slightly acquainted—they then say as in English—*you*.

the fresh woods? Was it there as in a holy church? Were the saloons like the starlit firmament when we stand on the high mountains?"

"Everything was there!" said the shadow. "I did not go quite in, I remained in the foremost room, in the twilight, but I stood there quite well; I saw everything, and I know everything! I have been in the ante-chamber at the court of Poesy."

"But *what did* you see? Did all the gods of the olden times pass through the large saloons? Did the old heroes combat there? Did sweet children play there, and relate their dreams?"

"I tell you I was there, and you can conceive that I saw everything there was to be seen. Had you come over there, you would not have been a man; but I became so! And besides, I learned to know my inward nature, my innate qualities, the relationship I had with Poesy. At the time I was with you, I thought not of that, but always—you know it well—when the sun rose, and when the sun went down, I became so strangely great; in the moonlight I was very near being

more distinct than yourself; at that time I did not understand my nature; it was revealed to me in the antechamber! I became a man!—I came out matured; but you were no longer in the warm lands;—as a man I was ashamed to go as I did. I was in want of boots, of clothes, of the whole human varnish that makes a man perceptible. I took my way—I tell it to you, but you will not put it in any book—I took my way to the cake woman—I hid myself behind her; the woman didn't think how much she concealed. I went out first in the evening; I ran about the streets in the moonlight; I made myself long up the walls—it tickles the back so delightfully! I ran up, and ran down, peeped into the highest windows, into the saloons, and on the roofs, I peeped in where no one could peep, and I saw what no one else saw, what no one else should see! This is, in fact, a base world! I would not be a man if it were not now once accepted and regarded as something to be so! I saw the most unimaginable things with the women, with the men, with parents, and with the sweet, matchless children; I saw," said the shadow

“what no human being must know, but what they would all so willingly know—what is bad in their neighbor. Had I written a newspaper, it would have been read! but I wrote direct to the persons themselves, and there was consternation in all the towns where I came. They were so afraid of me, and yet they were so excessively fond of me. The professors made a professor of me; the tailors gave me new clothes—I am well furnished; the master of the mint struck new coin for me, and the women said I was so handsome! and so I became the man I am. And I now bid you farewell;—here is my card—I live on the sunny side of the street, and am always at home in rainy weather!” And so away went the shadow.

“That was most extraordinary!” said the learned man

Years and days passed away, then the shadow came again.

“How goes it?” said the shadow.

“Alas!” said the learned man, “I write about the true, and the good, and the beautiful, but no one cares to hear such things; I

am quite desperate, for I take it so much to heart !”

“But I don’t !” said the shadow, “I become fat, and it is that one wants to become ! You do not understand the world. You will become ill by it. You must travel ! I shall make a tour this summer ; will you go with me ?—I should like to have a travelling companion ! will you go with me, as shadow ? It will be a great pleasure for me to have you with me ; I shall pay the travelling expenses !”

“Nay, this is too much !” said the learned man.

“It is just as one takes it !”—said the shadow. “It will do you much good to travel !—will you be my shadow ?—you shall have everything free on the journey !”

“Nay, that is too bad !” said the learned man.

“But it is just so with the world !” said the shadow,—“and so it will be !”—and away it went again.

The learned man was not at all in the most enviable state ; grief and torment followed him, and what he said about the true, and the good, and the beautiful, was, to most

persons, like roses for a cow!—he was quite ill at last.

“You really look like a shadow!” said his friends to him; and the learned man trembled, for he thought of it.

“You must go to a watering-place!” said the shadow, who came and visited him; “there is nothing else for it! I will take you with me for old acquaintance’ sake; I will pay the travelling expenses, and you write the descriptions—and if they are a little amusing for me on the way! I will go to a watering-place,—my beard does not grow out as it ought—that is also a sickness—and one must have a beard! Now you be wise and accept the offer; we shall travel as comrades!”

And so they travelled; the shadow was master, and the master was the shadow; they drove with each other, they rode and walked together, side by side, before and behind, just as the sun was; the shadow always took care to keep itself in the master’s place. Now the learned man didn’t think much about that; he was a very kind-hearted man, and particularly mild and friendly, and so he said one day to the shadow: “As we have now

become companions, and in this way have grown up together from childhood, shall we not drink '*thou*' together, it is more familiar?"

"You are right," said the shadow, who was now the proper master. "It is said in a very straight-forward and well-meant manner. You, as a learned man, certainly know how strange nature is. Some persons cannot bear to touch grey paper, or they become ill; others shiver in every limb if one rub a pane of glass with a nail: I have just such a feeling on hearing you say *thou* to me; I feel myself as if pressed to the earth in my first situation with you. You see that it is a feeling; that it is not pride: I cannot allow you to say *thou* to me, but I will willingly say *thou* to you, so it is half done!"

So the shadow said *thou* to its former master.

"This is rather too bad," thought he, that I must say *you* and he say *thou*," but he was now obliged to put up with it.

So they came to a watering-place where there were many strangers, and amongst

there was a princess, who was troubled with seeing too well ; and that was so alarming !

She directly observed that the stranger who had just come was quite a different sort of person to all the others ;—"He has come here in order to get his beard to grow, they say, but I see the real cause, he cannot cast a shadow."

She had become inquisitive ; and so she entered into conversation directly with the strange gentleman, on their promenades. As the daughter of a king, she needed not to stand upon trifles, so she said, "Your complaint is, that you cannot cast a shadow?"

"Your Royal Highness must be improving considerably," said the shadow,—“I know your complaint is, that you see too clearly, but it has decreased, you are cured. I just happen to have a very unusual shadow ! Do you not see that person who always goes with me ? Other persons have a common shadow, but I do not like what is common to all. We give our servants finer cloth for their livery than we ourselves use, and so I had my shadow trimmed up into a man : yes, you see I have even given him a shadow. It

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is somewhat expensive, but I like to have something for myself!"

"What!" thought the princess, "should I really be cured! These baths are the first in the world! In our time water has wonderful powers. But I shall not leave the place, for it now begins to be amusing here. I am extremely fond of that stranger: would that his beard should not grow! for in that case he will leave us."

In the evening, the princess and the shadow danced together in the large ball-room. She was light, but he was still lighter; she had never had such a partner in the dance. She told him from what land she came, and he knew that land; he had been there, but then she was not at home; he had peeped in at the window, above and below—he had seen both the one and the other, and so he could answer the princess, and make insinuations, so that she was quite astonished; he must be the wisest man in the whole world! she felt such respect for what he knew. So that when they again danced together she fell in love with him; and that the shadow could remark, for she almost pierced him

through with her eyes. So they danced once more together ; and she was about to declare herself, but she was discreet ; she thought of her country and kingdom, and of the many persons she would have to reign over.

“He is a wise man,” said she to herself—
“It is well ; and he dances delightfully—that is also good ; but has he solid knowledge ?—that is just as important !—he must be examined.”

So she began, by degrees, to question him about the most difficult things she could think of, and which she herself could not have answered ; so that the shadow made a strange face.

“You cannot answer these questions ?” said the princess.

“They belong to my childhood’s learning,” said the shadow. “I really believe my shadow, by the door there, can answer them !”

“Your shadow !” said the princess ; “that would indeed be marvellous !”

“I will not say for a certainty that he can,” said the shadow, “but I think so ; he has now followed me for so many years, and listened to my conversation—I should think it

possible. But your royal highness will permit me to observe, that he is so proud of passing himself off for a man, that when he is to be in a proper humor—and he must be so to answer well—he must be treated quite like a man.”

“Oh! I like that!” said the princess.

So she went to the learned man by the door, and she spoke to him about the sun and the moon, and about persons out of and in the world, and he answered with wisdom and prudence.

“What a man that must be who has so wise a shadow!” thought she; “It will be a real blessing to my people and kingdom if I choose him for my consort—I will do it!”

They were soon agreed, both the princess and the shadow; but no one was to know about it before she arrived in her own kingdom.

“No one—not even my shadow!” said the shadow, and he had his own thoughts about it!

Now they were in the country where the princess reigned when she was at home.

“Listen, my good friend,” said the shadow to the learned man. “I have now become

as happy and mighty as any one can be ; I will, therefore, do something particular for thee ! Thou shalt always live with me in the palace, drive with me in my royal carriage, and have ten thousand pounds a year ; but then thou must submit to be called *shadow* by all and every one ; thou must not say that thou hast ever been a man ; and once a-year, when I sit on the balcony in the sunshine, thou must lie at my feet, as a shadow shall do ! I must tell thee : I am going to marry the king's daughter, and the nuptials are to take place this evening !”

“Nay, this is going too far !” said the learned man ; “I will not have it ; I will not do it ! it is to deceive the whole country and the princess too ! I will tell every thing !—that I am a man, and that thou art a shadow—thou art only dressed up !”

“There is no one who will believe it !” said the shadow ; “be reasonable, or I will call the guard !”

“I will go directly to the princess !” said the learned man.

“But I will go first !” said the shadow, “and thou wilt go to prison !” and that he

was obliged to do—for the sentinels obeyed him whom they knew the king's daughter was to marry.

“You tremble!” said the princess, as the shadow came into her chamber; “has anything happened? You must not be unwell this evening, now that we are to have our nuptials celebrated.”

“I have lived to see the most cruel thing that any one can live to see!” said the shadow. “Only imagine—yes, it is true, such a poor shadow-skull cannot bear much—only think, my shadow has become mad; he thinks that he is a man, and that I—now only think—that I am his shadow!”

“It is terrible!” said the princess; “but he is confined, is he not?”

“That he is. I am afraid that he will never recover.”

“Poor shadow!” said the princess, he is very unfortunate; it would be a real work of charity to deliver him from the little life he has, and, when I think properly over the matter, I am of opinion that it will be necessary to do away with him in all stillness!”

“It is certainly hard!” said the shadow,

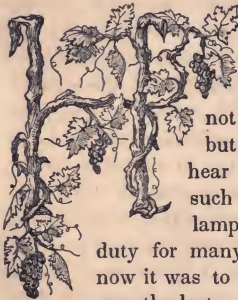
“for he was a faithful servant!” and then he gave a sort of sigh.

“You are a noble character!” said the princess.

The whole city was illuminated in the evening, and the cannons went off with a bum! bum! and the soldiers presented arms. That was a marriage! The princess and the shadow went out on the balcony to show themselves, and get another hurrah!

The learned man heard nothing of all this—for they had deprived him of life.

THE OLD STREET-LAMP.



AVE you heard the story about the old street lamp? It is not so very amusing, but one may very well hear it once. It was such a decent old street-lamp, that had done its duty for many, many years, but now it was to be condemned. It was the last evening,—it sat there on the post and lighted the street; and it was in just such a humor as an old figurante in a ballet, who dances for the last evening, and knows that she is to be put on the shelf to-morrow. The lamp had such a fear of the coming day, for it knew that it should then

be carried to the town-hall for the first time, and examined by the authorities of the city, who should decide if it could be used or not. It would then be determined whether it should be sent out to one of the suburbs, or in to the country to a manufactory ; perhaps it would be sent direct to the ironfounder's and be re-cast ; in that case it could certainly be all sorts of things : but it pained it not to know whether it would then retain the remembrance of its having been a street-lamp.

However it might be, whether it went into the country or not, it would be separated from the watchman and his wife, whom it regarded as its family. It became a street-lamp when he became watchman. His wife was a very fine woman at that time ; it was only in the evening when she went past the lamp that she looked at it, but never in the daytime. Now, on the contrary, of late years, as they had all three grown old,—the watchman, his wife, and the lamp,—the wife had always attended to it, polished it up, and put oil in it. They were honest folks that married couple, they had not cheated the lamp of a single drop. It was its last evening

in the street, and to-morrow it was to be taken to the town-hall; these were two dark thoughts in the lamp, and so one can know how it burnt. But other thoughts also passed through it; there was so much it had seen, so much it had a desire for, perhaps just as much as the whole of the city authorities; but it didn't say so, for it was a well-behaved old lamp—it would not insult any one, least of all its superiors. It remembered so much, and now and then the flames within it blazed up,—it was as if it had a feeling of—yes, they will also remember me! There was now that handsome young man—but that is many years since,—he came with a letter, it was on rose-colored paper; so fine—so fine! and with a gilt edge; it was so neatly written, it was a lady's hand; he read it twice, and he kissed it, and he looked up to me with his two bright eyes—they said, "I am the happiest of men!" Yes, only he and I knew what stood in that first letter from his beloved.

I also remember two other eyes—it is strange how one's thoughts fly about!—there was a grand funeral here in the street, the

beautiful young wife lay in the coffin on the velvet-covered funeral car; there were so many flowers and wreaths, there were so many torches burning, that I was quite forgotten—out of sight; the whole footpath was filled with persons; they all followed in the procession; but when the torches were out of sight, and I looked about, there stood one who leaned against my post and wept. I shall never forget those two sorrowful eyes that looked into me. Thus there passed many thoughts through the old street-lamp, which this evening burnt for the last time. The sentinel who is relieved from his post knows his successor, and can say a few words to him, but the lamp knew not its successor; and yet it could have given him a hint about rain and drizzle, and how far the moon shone on the footpath, and from what corner the wind blew.

Now, there stood three on the kerb-stone; they had presented themselves before the lamp, because they thought it was the street lamp who gave away the office; the one of these three was a herring's head, for it shines in the dark, and it thought that it could be of

great service, and a real saving of oil, if it came to be placed on the lamp-post. The other was a piece of touchwood, which also shines, and always more than a stock-fish; besides, it said so itself, it was the last piece of a tree that had once been the pride of the forest. The third was a glow-worm; but where it had come from the lamp could not imagine; but the glow-worm was there, and it also shone, but the touchwood and the herring's head took their oaths that it only shone at certain times, and therefore it could never be taken into consideration.

The old lamp said that none of them shone well enough to be a street-lamp; but not one of them thought so; and as they heard that it was not the lamp itself that gave away the office, they said that it was a very happy thing, for that it was too infirm and broken down to be able to choose.

At the same moment the wind came from the street corner, it whistled through the cowl of the old lamp, and said to it, "What is it that I hear, are you going away to-morrow? Is it the last evening I shall meet you here? Then you shall have a present!—now I will

blow up your brain-box so that you shall not only remember, clearly and distinctly, what you have seen and heard, but when anything is told or read in your presence, you shall be so clear-headed that you will also see it."

"That is certainly much!" said the old street-lamp; "I thank you much; if I be only not re-cast."

"It will not happen yet awhile," said the wind; "and now I will blow up your memory; if you get more presents than that you may have quite a pleasant old age."

"If I be only not re-cast," said the lamp; "or can you then assure me my memory?"

"Old lamp, be reasonable!" said the wind, and then it blew. The moon came forth at the same time. "What do you give?" asked the wind.

"I give nothing!" said the moon; "I am waning, and the lamps have never shone for me, but I have shone for the lamps."* So the moon went behind the clouds

* It is the custom in Denmark, and one deserving the severest censure, that, on those nights in which the moon shines, or, according to almanac authority, ought to shine, the street lamps are not lighted; so that, as it too frequently happens, when the moon is over-

again, for it would not be plagued. A drop of rain then fell straight down on the lamp's cowl, it was like a drop of water from the eaves, but the drop said that it came from the grey clouds, and was also a present,—and perhaps the best of all. “I penetrate into you, so that you have the power, if you wish it, in one night to pass over to rust, so that you may fall in pieces and become dust.” But the lamp thought this was a poor present, and the wind thought the same. “Is there no better—is there no better?” it whistled, as loud as it could. A shooting-star then fell, it shone in a long stripe.

“What was that?” exclaimed the herring's head; “did not a star fall right down? I think it went into the lamp! Well, if persons who stand so high seek the office, we may as well take ourselves off.”

And it did so, and the others did so too;

clouded. or on rainy evenings when she is totally obscured, the streets are for the most part in perfect darkness. This petty economy is called “the magistrates' light,” they having the direction of the lighting, paving, and cleansing of towns.

The same management may be met with in some other countries besides Denmark.

but the old lamp shone all at once so singularly bright."

"That was a fine present!" it said; "the bright stars which I have always pleased myself so much about, and which shine so beautifully,—as I really have never been able to shine, although it was my whole aim and endeavor,—have noticed me, a poor old-lamp, and sent one down with a present to me, which consists of that quality, that everything I myself remember and see quite distinctly, shall also be seen by those I am fond of; and that is, above all, a true pleasure, for what one cannot share with others is but a half delight."

"It is a very estimable thought," said the wind; "but you certainly don't know that there must be wax-candles; for unless a wax-candle be lighted in you there are none of the others that will be able to see anything particular about you. The stars have not thought of that; they think that everything which shines has, at least, a wax-candle in it. But now I am tired," said the wind, "I will now lie down;" and so it lay down to rest.

The next day—yes, the next day we will spring over: the next evening the lamp lay in the arm chair,—and where? At the old watchman's. He had, for his long and faithful services, begged of the authorities that he might be allowed to keep the old lamp; they laughed at him when he begged for it, and then gave him it; and now the lamp lay in the arm-chair, close by the warm stove, and it was really just as if it had become larger on that account,—it almost filled the whole chair. The old folks now sat at their supper, and cast mild looks at the old lamp, which they would willingly have given a place at the table with them. It is true they lived in a cellar, a yard or so below ground: one had to go through a paved front-room to come into the room they lived in; but it was warm here, for there was list round the door to keep it so. It looked clean and neat, with curtains round the bed and over the small windows, where two strange-looking flower-pots stood on the sill. Christian, the sailor, had brought them from the East or West Indies; they were of clay in the form of two elephants, the backs of which were wanting:

but in their place there came flourishing plants out of the earth that was in them ; in the one was the finest chive,—it was the old folks' kitchen-garden,—and in the other was a large flowering geranium—this was their flower-garden. On the wall hung a large colored print of “The Congress of Vienna ;” there they had all the kings and emperors at once. A Bornholm* clock, with heavy leaden weights went “tic-tac !” and always too fast ; but the old folks said it was better than if it went too slow. They ate their suppers, and the old lamp, as we have said, lay in the arm-chair close by the warm stove. It was, for the old lamp, as if the whole world was turned upside down. But when the old watchman looked at it, and spoke about what they had lived to see with each other, in rain and

* Bornholm, a Danish island in the Baltic is famous for its manufactures of clocks, potteries, and cement ; it contains also considerable coal mines, though not worked to any extent. It is fertile in minerals, chalks, potters' clay of the finest quality, and other valuable natural productions ; but, on account of the jealous nature of the inhabitants, which deters foreigners from settling there, these productions are not made so available or profitable as they otherwise might be.

drizzle, in the clear, short summer nights, and when the snow drove about so that it was good to get into the pent-house of the cellar,—then all was again in order for the old lamp, it saw it all just as if it were now present;—yes! the wind had blown it up right well,—it had enlightened it.

The old folks were so clever and industrious, not an hour was quietly dozed away; on Sunday afternoons some book was always brought forth, particularly a book of travels, and the old man read aloud about Africa, about the great forests and the elephants that were there quite wild; and the old woman listened so attentively, and now and then took a side glance at the clay elephants—her flower-pots. “I can almost imagine it!” said she; and the lamp wished so much that there was a wax candle to light and be put in it, so that she could plainly see everything just as the lamp saw it; the tall trees, the thick branches twining into one another, the black men on horseback, and whole trains of elephants, which, with their broad feet, crushed the canes and bushes.

“Of what use are all my abilities when

there is no wax candle?" sighed the lamp; "they have only train oil and tallow candles, and they are not sufficient."

One day there came a whole bundle of stumps of wax candles into the cellar, the largest pieces were burnt, and the old woman used the smaller pieces to wax her thread with when she sewed; there were wax candle ends, but they never thought of putting a little piece in the lamp.

"Here I stand with my rare abilities," said the lamp; "I have everything within me, but I cannot share any part with them. They know not that I can transform the white walls to the prettiest paper-hangings, to rich forests, to everything that they may wish for. They know it not!"

For the rest, the lamp stood in a corner, where it always met the eye, and it was neat and well scoured; folks certainly said it was an old piece of rubbish; but the old man and his wife didn't care about that, they were fond of the lamp.

One day it was the old watchman's birth day; the old woman came up to the lamp, smiled and said, "I will illuminate for him,"

and the lamp's cowl creaked, for it thought, "They will now be enlightened!" But she put in train oil, and no wax candle; it burnt the whole evening; but now it knew that the gift which the stars had given it, the best gift of all, was a dead treasure for this life. It then dreamt—and when one has such abilities, one can surely dream,—that the old folks were dead, and that it had come to an ironfounder's to be cast anew; it was in as much anxiety as when it had to go to the town-hall to be examined by the authorities; but although it had the power to fall to pieces in rust and dust, when it wished it, yet it did not do it; and so it came into the furnace and was re-cast as a pretty iron candlestick, in which any one might set a wax candle. It had the form of an angel, bearing a nosegay, and in the centre of the nosegay they put a wax taper, and it was placed on a green writing-table; and the room was so snug and comfortable: there hung beautiful pictures—there stood many books; it was at a poet's, and everything that he wrote, unveiled itself round about: the room became a deep, dark forest,—a sun-lit meadow,

where the stork stalked about ; and a ship's deck high aloft on the swelling sea !

“ What power I have ! ” said the old lamp, as it awoke. “ I almost long to be re-cast ;—but no, it must not be as long as the old folks live. They are fond of me for the sake of my person. I am to them as a child, and they have scoured me, and they have given me train oil. After all, I am as well off as ‘ The Congress, ’—which is something so very grand.”

From that time it had more inward peace, which was merited by the old street-lamp.

THE DREAM OF LITTLE TUK.



H! yes, that was little Tuk :
in reality his name was not
Tuk, but that was what he
called himself before he could
speak plain : he meant it
for Charles, and it is
all well enough if one
do but know it. He
had now to take care of his
little sister Augusta, who was much
less than himself, and he was, besides, to
learn his lesson at the same time ; but these
two things would not do together at all.
There sat the poor little fellow with his sister
on his lap, and he sang to her all the songs
he knew ; and he glanced the while from .

time to time into the geography-book that lay open before him. By the next morning he was to have learnt all the towns in Zealand by heart, and to know about them all that is possible to be known.

His mother now came home, for she had been out, and took little Augusta on her arm. Tuk ran quickly to the window, and read so eagerly that he pretty nearly read his eyes out; for it got darker and darker, but his mother had no money to buy a candle.

"There goes the old washerwoman over the way," said his mother, as she looked out of the window. "The poor woman can hardly drag herself along, and she must now drag the pail home from the fountain: be a good boy, Tukey, and run across and help the old woman, won't you?"

So Tuk ran over quickly and helped her; but when he came back again into the room it was quite dark, and as to a light, there was no thought of such a thing. He was now to go to bed; that was an old turn-up bedstead; in it he lay and thought about his geography lesson, and of Zealand, and of all that his master had told him. He ought, to be sure,

to have read over his lesson again, but that, you know, he could not do. He therefore put his geography-book under his pillow, because he had heard that was a very good thing to do when one wants to learn one's lesson; but one cannot, however, rely upon it entirely. Well there he lay, and thought and thought, and all at once it was just as if some one kissed his eyes and mouth: he slept, and yet he did not sleep; it was as though the old washerwoman gazed on him with her mild eyes and said, "It were a great sin if you were not to know your lesson tomorrow morning. You have aided me, I therefore will now help you; and the loving God will do so at all times." And all of a sudden the book under Tuk's pillow began scraping and scratching.

"Kickery-ki! kluk! kluk! kluk!"—that was an old hen who came creeping along, and she was from Kjöge. I am a Kjöger hen,"* said she, and then she related how

* Kjöge, a town in the bay of Kjöge. "To see the Kjöge hens," is an expression similar to "showing a child London," which is said to be done by taking his head in both hands, and so lifting him off the ground. At the in-



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many inhabitants there were there, and about the battle that had taken place, and which, after all, was hardly worth talking about.

“Kribledy, krabledy—plump!” down fell somebody: it was a wooden bird, the popin-jay used at the shooting-matches at Præstøe. Now *he* said that there were just as many inhabitants as he had nails in his body; and he was very proud. “Thorwaldsen lived almost next door to me.* Plump! here I lie capitally.”

But little Tuk was no longer lying down: all at once he was on horseback. On he went at full gallop, still galloping on and on. A knight with a gleaming plume, and most magnificently dressed, held him before him on the horse, and thus they rode through the wood to the old town of Bordingborg, and

vasion of the English in 1807, an encounter of a no very glorious nature took place between the British troops and the undisciplined Danish militia.

* Præstøe, a still smaller town than Kjøge. Some hundred paces from it lies the manor-house Ny Søe, where Thorwaldsen generally sojourned during his stay in Denmark, and where he called many of his immortal works into existence.

that was a large and very lively town. High towers rose from the castle of the king, and the brightness of many candles streamed from all the windows ; within was dance and song, and King Waldemar and the young, richly-attired maids of honor danced together. The morn'now came ; and as soon as the sun appeared, the whole town and the king's palace crumbled together, and one tower after the other ; and at last only a single one remained standing where the castle had been before,* and the town was so small and poor, and the school boys came along with their books under their arms, and said, "2000 inhabitants !" but that was not true, for there were not so many.

And little Tukey lay in his bed : it seemed to him as if he dreamed, and yet as if he were not dreaming ; however, somebody was close beside him.

"Little Tukey ! little Tukey !" cried some one near. It was a seaman, quite a little

* Bordingborg, in the reign of King Waldemar a considerable place, now an unimportant little town. One solitary tower only, and some remains of a wall, show where the castle once stood.

personage, so little as if he were a midshipman ; but a midshipman it was not.

“ Many remembrances from Cörsör.* That is a town that is just rising into importance ; a lively town that has steam-boats and stage-coaches : formerly people called it ugly, but that is no longer true. I lie on the sea,” said Cörsör ; “ I have high roads and gardens, and I have given birth to a poet who was witty and amusing, which all poets are not. I once intended to equip a ship that was to sail all round the earth ; but I did not do it, although I could have done so : and then, too, I smell so deliciously, for close before the gate bloom the most beautiful roses.”

Little Tuk looked, and all was red and green before his eyes ; but as soon as the confusion of colors was somewhat over, all of a sudden there appeared a wooded slope close to the bay, and high up above stood a magnificent old church, with two high pointed

* Cörsör, on the Great Belt, called, formerly, before the introduction of steam-vessels, when travellers were often obliged to wait a long time for a favorable wind, “ the most tiresome of towns.” The poet Baggesen was born here.

towers. From out the hill-side spouted fountains in thick streams of water, so that there was a continual splashing; and close beside them sat an old king with a golden crown upon his white head: that was King Hroar, near the fountains, close to the town of Roeskilde, as it is now called. And up the slope into the old church went all the kings and queens of Denmark, hand in hand, all with their golden crowns; and the organ played and the fountains rustled. Little Tuk saw all, heard all. "Do not forget the diet," said King Hroar.*

Again all suddenly disappeared. Yes, and whither? It seemed to him just as if one turned over a leaf in a book. And now stood there an old peasant-woman, who came from Sorøe,† where grass grows in the market-

* Roeskilde, once the capital of Denmark. The town takes its name from King Hroar, and the many fountains in the neighborhood. In the beautiful cathedral the greater number of the kings and queens of Denmark are interred. In Roeskilde, too, the members of the Danish Diet assemble.

† Sorøe, a very quiet little town, beautifully situated, surrounded by woods and lakes. Holberg, Denmark's Molière, founded here an academy for the sons of the

place. She had an old grey linen apron hanging over her head and back: it was so wet, it certainly must have been raining "Yes, that it has," said she; and she now related many pretty things out of Holberg's comedies, and about Waldemar and Absalon; but all at once she cowered together, and her head began shaking backwards and forwards, and she looked as she were going to make a spring. "Croak! croak!" said she: "it is wet, it is wet; there is such a pleasant death-like stillness in Sorøe!" She was now suddenly a frog, "Croak;" and now she was an old woman. "One must dress according to the weather," said she. "It is wet, it is wet. My town is just like a bottle; and one gets in by the neck, and by the neck one must get out again! In former times I had the finest fish, and now I have fresh rosy-cheeked boys at the bottom of the bottle, who learn wisdom, Hebrew, Greek,—Croak!" When she spoke it sounded just like the noise of frogs, or as if one walked with great boots over a

nobles. The poets Hauch and Ingemann were appointed professors here. The latter lives there still.

moor ; always the same tone, so uniform and so tiring that little Tuk fell into a good sound sleep, which, by the bye, could not do him any harm.

But even in this sleep there came a dream, or whatever else it was : his little sister Augusta, she with the blue eyes and the fair curling hair, was suddenly a tall, beautiful girl, and without having wings was yet able to fly ; and she now flew over Zealand—over the green woods and the blue lakes.

“Do you hear the cock crow, Tukey ? cock-a-doodle-doo ! The cocks are flying up from Kjöge ! You will have a farm-yard, so large, oh ! so very large ! You will suffer neither hunger nor thirst ! You will get on in the world ! You will be a rich and happy man ! Your house will exalt itself like King Waldemar’s tower, and will be richly decorated with marble statues, like that at Prästöe. You understand what I mean. Your name shall circulate with renown all round the earth, like unto the ship that was to have sailed from Cörsör ; and in Roeskilde”——

“Do not forget the diet !” said King Hroar.

“Then you will speak well and wisely,

little Tukey ; and when at last you sink into your grave, you shall sleep as quietly"—

“As if I lay in Soröe,” said Tuk, awaking. It was bright day, and he was now quite unable to call to mind his dream ; that, however, was not at all necessary, for one may not know what the future will bring.

And out of bed he jumped, and read in his book, and now all at once he knew his whole lesson. And the old washerwoman popped her head in at the door, nodded to him friendly, and said, “Thanks, many thanks, my good child, for your help ! May the good ever-loving God fulfil your loveliest dream !”

Little Tukey did not at all know what he had dreamed, but the loving God knew it.

THE NAUGHTY BOY.



LONG time ago, there lived an old poet, a thoroughly kind old poet. As he was sitting one evening in his room, a dreadful storm arose with-

out, and the rain streamed down from heaven; but the old poet sat warm and comfortable in his chimney-corner, where the fire blazed and the roasting apple hissed.

“Those who have not a roof over their heads will be wetted to the skin,” said the good old poet.

“Oh let me in! let me in! I am cold, and

"I'm so wet!" exclaimed suddenly a child that stood crying at the door and knocking for admittance, while the rain poured down, and the wind made all the windows rattle.

"Poor thing!" said the old poet, as he went to open the door. There stood a little boy, quite naked, and the water ran down from his long golden hair; he trembled with cold, and had he not come into a warm room he would most certainly have perished in the frightful tempest.

"Poor child!" said the old poet, as he took the boy by the hand. "Come in, come in, and I will soon restore thee! Thou shalt have wine and roasted apples, for thou art verily a charming child!" And the boy was so really. His eyes were like two bright stars; and although the water trickled down his hair, it waved in beautiful curls. He looked exactly like a little angel, but he was so pale, and his whole body trembled with cold. He had a nice little bow in his hand, but it was quite spoiled by the rain, and the tints of his many-colored arrows ran one into the other.

The old poet seated himself beside his

hearth, and took the little fellow on his lap ; he squeezed the water out of his dripping hair, warmed his hands between his own, and boiled for him some sweet wine. Then the boy recovered, his cheeks again grew rosy, he jumped down from the lap where he was sitting, and danced round the kind old poet.

“ You are a merry fellow,” said the old man ; “ what’s your name ? ”

“ My name is Cupid,” answered the boy. “ Don’t you know me ? There lies my bow ; it shoots well, I can assure you ! Look, the weather is now clearing up, and the moon is shining clear again through the window.”

“ Why, your bow is quite spoiled,” said the old poet.

“ That were sad indeed,” said the boy, and he took the bow in his hand and examined it on every side. “ Oh, it is dry again, and is not hurt at all ; the string is quite tight. I will try it directly.” And he bent his bow, took aim, and shot an arrow at the old poet, right into his heart. “ You see now that my bow was not spoiled,” said he, laughing ; and away he ran.

The naughty boy! to shoot the old poet in that way; he who had taken him into his warm room, who had treated him so kindly, and who had given him warm wine and the very best apples!

The poor poet lay on the earth and wept, for the arrow had really flown into his heart.

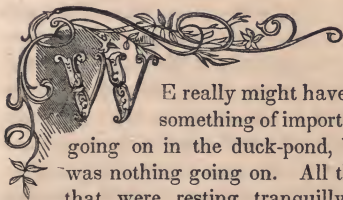
“Fie!” said he, “how naughty a boy Cupid is! I will tell all children about him, that they may take care and not play with him, for he will only cause them sorrow and many a heart-ache.”

And all good children to whom he related this story, took great heed of this naughty Cupid; but he made fools of them still, for he is astonishingly cunning. When the university students come from the lectures, he runs beside them in a black coat, and with a book under his arm. It is quite impossible for them to know him, and they walk along with him arm in arm, as if he, too, were a student like themselves; and then, unperceived, he thrusts an arrow to their bosom. When the young maidens come from being examined by the clergyman, or go to church to be confirmed, there

he is again close behind them. Yes, he is for ever following people. At the play he sits in the great chandelier and burns in bright flames, so that people think it is really a flame, but they soon discover it is something else. He roves about in the garden of the palace and upon the ramparts: yes, once he even shot your father and mother right in the heart. Ask them only, and you will hear what they'll tell you. Oh, he is a naughty boy, that Cupid; you must never have anything to do with him. He is for ever running after everybody. Only think, he shot an arrow once at your old grandmother! But that is a long time ago, and it is all past now; however, a thing of that sort she never forgets. Fie, naughty Cupid! But now you know him, and you know, too, how ill-behaved he is!



THE TWO NEIGHBORING FAMILIES.



WE really might have thought something of importance was going on in the duck-pond, but there was nothing going on. All the ducks, that were resting tranquilly on the water, or were standing in it on their heads—for that they were able to do—swam suddenly to the shore: you could see in the wet ground the traces of their feet, and hear their quacking far and near. The water, which but just now was smooth and bright as a mirror, was quite put into commotion. Before, one saw every tree reflected

in it, every bush that was near: the old farm-house, with the holes in the roof and with the swallow's nest under the eaves; but principally, however, the great rose-bush, sown, as it were, with flowers. It covered the wall, and hung forwards over the water, in which one beheld the whole as in a picture, except that everything was upside down; but when the water was agitated, all swam away and the picture was gone. Two duck's feathers, which the fluttering ducks had lost, were rocking to and fro: suddenly they flew forwards as if the wind were coming, but it did not come: they were, therefore, obliged to remain where they were, and the water grew quiet and smooth again, and again the roses reflected themselves—they were so beautiful, but that they did not know, for nobody had told them. The sun shone in between the tender leaves—all breathed the most beautiful fragrance; and to them it was as with us, when right joyfully we are filled with the thought of our happiness.

“How beautiful is existence!” said each rose. “There is but one thing I should wish for,—to kiss the sun, because it is so bright

and warm.* The roses yonder, too, below in the water, the exact image of ourselves—them also I should like to kiss, and the nice little birds below in their nest. There are some above, too; they stretch out their heads and chirrup quite loud: they have no feathers at all, as their fathers and mothers have. They are good neighbors, those below as well as those above. How beautiful existence is!"

The young birds above and below—those below of course the reflection only in the water—were sparrows: their parents were likewise sparrows; and they had taken possession of the empty swallow's nest of the preceding year, and now dwelt therein as if it had been their own property.

"Are those little duck children that are swimming there?" asked the young spar-

* In Danish the sun is of the feminine gender, and not, as with us, when personified, spoken of as "he." We beg to make this observation, lest the roses' wish "to kiss the sun," be thought unmaidenly. We are anxious, also, to remove a stumbling block, which might perchance trip up exquisitely-refined modern notions, sadly shocked, no doubt, as they would be, at such an apparent breach of modesty and decorum.—(Note of the Translator.)

rows, when they discovered the duck's feathers on the water.

"If you *will* ask questions, do let them be a little rational at least," said the mother. "Don't you see that they are feathers, living stuff for clothing such as I wear, and such as you will wear also? But ours is finer. I should, however, be glad if we had it up here in our nest, for it keeps one warm. I am curious to know at what the ducks were so frightened; at us, surely not; 'tis true I said 'chirp,' to you rather loud. In reality, the thick-headed roses ought to know, but they know nothing; they only gaze on themselves and smell: for my part, I am heartily tired of these neighbors."

"Listen to the charming little birds above," said the roses, "they begin to want to sing too, but they cannot as yet. However, they will do so by and by: what pleasure that must afford! It is so pleasant to have such merry neighbors!"

Suddenly two horses came galloping along to be watered. A peasant boy rode on one, and he had taken off all his clothes except his large broad black hat. The youth whistled

like a bird, and rode into the pond where it was deepest; and as he passed by the rose-bush he gathered a rose and stuck it in his hat; and now he fancied himself very fine, and rode on. The other roses looked after their sister, and asked each other, "Whither is she going?" but that no one knew.

"I should like to go out into the world," thought one; "yet here at home amid our foliage it is also beautiful. By day the sun shines so warm, and in the night the sky shines still more beautifully: we can see that through all the little holes that are in it." By this they meant the stars, but they did not know any better.

"We enliven the place," said the mamma sparrow; "and the swallow's nest brings luck, so people say, and therefore people are pleased to have us. But our neighbors! Such a rose-bush against the wall produces damp; it will doubtless be cleared away, and then, perhaps, some corn at least may grow there. The roses are good for nothing except to look at and to smell, and, at most to put into one's hat. Every year—that I know from my mother—they fall away; the pea

sants wife collects them together and strews salt among them ; they then receive a French name which I neither can nor care to pronounce, and are put upon the fire, when they are to give a pleasant odor. Look ye, such is their life ; they are only here to please the eye and nose ! And so now you know the whole matter."

As the evening came on, and the gnats played in the warm air and in the red clouds, the nightingale came and sang to the roses ; sang that the beautiful is as the sunshine in this world, and that the beautiful lives for ever. But the roses thought that the nightingale sang his own praise, which one might very well have fancied ; for that the song related to them, of that they never thought : they rejoiced in it, however, and meditated if perhaps all the little sparrows could become nightingales too.

"I understood *the song of that bird quite well*," said the young sparrows ; "one word only was not quite clear to me. What was the meaning of 'the beautiful ?'"

"That is nothing," said the mamma sparrow, "that is only something external. You-

der at the mansion, where the pigeons have a house of their own, and where every day peas and corn is strewn before them—I have myself eaten there with them, and you shall, too, in time; tell me what company you keep, and I'll tell you who you are—yes, yonder at the mansion they have got two birds with green necks and a comb on their head; they can spread out their tail like a great wheel, and in it plays every color, that it quite hurts one's eyes to look at it. These birds are called peacocks, and that is 'THE BEAUTIFUL.' They only want to be plucked a little, and then they would not look at all different from the rest of us. I would already have plucked them, if they had not been quite so big."

"I will pluck them," chirped the smallest sparrow, that as yet had not a single feather.

In the peasant's cottage dwelt a young married couple; they loved each other dearly, and were industrious and active: everything in their house looked so neat and pretty. On Sunday morning early the young woman came out, gathered a handful of the most

beautiful roses, and put them into a glass of water, which she placed on the shelf.

"Now I see that it is Sunday," said the man, and kissed his little wife. They sat down, read in the hymn-book, and held each other by the hand: the sun beamed on the fresh roses and on the young married couple.

"This is really too tiring a sight," said the mamma sparrow, who from her nest could look into the room, and away she flew.

The next Sunday it was the same, for every Sunday fresh roses were put in the glass: yet the rose-tree bloomed on equally beautiful. The young sparrows had now feathers, and wanted much to fly with their mother; she, however, would not allow it, so they were forced to remain. Off she flew; but, however, it happened, before she was aware, she got entangled in a springe of horse-hair, which some boys had set upon a bough. The horse-hair drew itself tightly round her leg, so tightly as though it would cut it in two. That was an agony, a fright! The boys ran to the spot and caught hold of the bird, and that too in no very gentle manner.

"It's only a sparrow," said they; but they, nevertheless, did not let her fly, but took her home with them, and every time she cried they gave her a tap on the beak.

There stood in the farm-yard an old man, who knew how to make shaving-soap and soap for washing, in square cakes as well as in round balls. He was a merry, wandering old man. When he saw the sparrow that the boys had caught, and which, as they said, they did not care about at all, he asked, "Shall we make something very fine of him?" Mamma sparrow felt an icy coldness creep over her. Out of the box, in which were the most beautiful colors, the old man took a quantity of gold leaf, and the boys were obliged to go and fetch the white of an egg, with which the sparrow was painted all over; on this the gold was stuck, and mamma sparrow was now entirely gilded; but she did not think of adornment, for she trembled in every limb. And the soap-dealer tore a bit off the lining of his old jacket, cut scollops in it so that it might look like a cock's comb, and stuck it on the head of the bird.

“Now, then, you shall see master gold-coat fly,” said the old man, and let the sparrow go, who, in deadly fright, flew off, illumined by the beaming sun. How she shone! All the sparrows, even a crow, although an old fellow, were much frightened at the sight; they, however flew on after him, in order to learn what foreign bird it was.

Impelled by anguish and terror, he flew homewards: he was near falling exhausted to the earth. The crowd of pursuing birds increased; yes, some indeed even tried to peck at him.

“Look! there’s a fellow! Look! there’s a fellow!” screamed they all.

“Look! there’s a fellow! Look! there’s a fellow!” cried the young sparrows, as the old one approached the nest. “That, for certain, is a young peacock; all sorts of colors are playing in his feathers: it quite hurts one’s eyes to look at him, just as our mother told us. Chirp! chirp! That is the beautiful!” And now they began pecking at the bird with their little beaks, so that it was quite impossible for the sparrow to get into the nest: she was so sadly used that she

could not even say "Chirrup," still less, "Why, I am your own mother!" The other birds, too, now set upon the sparrow, and plucked out feather after feather; so that at last she fell bleeding in the rose-bush below.

"Oh! poor thing!" said all the roses, "be quieted; we will hide you. Lean your little head on us:"

The sparrow spread out her wings once more, then folded them close to her body, and lay dead in the midst of the family who were her neighbors,—the beautiful fresh roses.

"Chirp! chirp!" sounded from the nest. "Where can our mother be? It is quite inconceivable! It cannot surely be a trick of hers by which she means to tell us that we are now to provide for ourselves? She has left us the house as an inheritance; but to which of us is it exclusively to belong, when we ourselves have families?"

"Yes, that will never do that you stay here with me when my household is increased by the addition of a wife and children," said the smallest.

"I shall have, I should think, more wives and children than you," said the second.

“But I am the eldest,” said the third. They all now grew passionate; they beat each other with their wings, pecked with their beaks, when, plump! one after the other was tumbled out of the nest. There they lay with their rage; they turned their heads on one side, and winked their eyes as they looked upward: that was their way of playing the simpleton. They could fly a little, and by practice they learned to do so still better; and they finally were unanimous as to a sign by which, when at some future time they should meet again in the world, they might recognise each other. It was to consist in a “Chirrup!” and in a thrice-repeated scratching on the ground with the left leg.

The young sparrow that had been left behind in the nest spread himself out to his full size. He was now, you know, a householder; but his grandeur did not last long: in the night red fire broke through the windows, the flames seized on the roof, the dry thatch blazed up high, the whole house was burnt, and the young sparrow with it; but the young married couple escaped, fortunately, with life. When the sun rose again, and

every thing looked so refreshed and invigorated, as after a peaceful sleep, there was nothing left of the cottage except some charred black beams leaning against the chimney, which now was its own master. A great deal of smoke still rose from the ground, but without, quite uninjured, stood the rose-bush, fresh and blooming, and mirrored every flower, every branch, in the clear water.

“Oh! how beautifully the roses are blooming in front of the burnt-down house!” cried a passer-by. “It is impossible to fancy a more lovely picture. I must have that!”

And the man took a little book with white leaves out of his pocket: he was a painter, and with a pencil he drew the smoking house, the charred beams, and the toppling chimney, which now hung over more and more. But the large and blooming rose-tree, quite in the foreground, afforded a magnificent sight; it was on its account alone that the whole picture had been made.

Later in the day two of the sparrows who had been born here passed by. “Where is the house?” asked they. “Where the nest?”

Chirp! chirp! All is burnt down, and our strong brother,—that is what he has got for keeping the nest. The roses have escaped well; there they are yet standing with their red cheeks. They, forsooth, do not mourn at the misfortune of their neighbors. I have no wish whatever to address them; and, besides, it is very ugly here, that's my opinion." And off and away they flew.

On a beautiful, bright, sunny autumn day—one might almost have thought it was still the middle of summer—the pigeons were strutting about the dry and nicely-swept court-yard in front of the great steps—black and white and party-colored—and they shone in the sunshine. The old mamma pigeon said to the young ones: "Form yourselves in groups, form yourselves in groups, for that makes a much better appearance."

"What little brown creatures are those running about amongst us?" asked an old pigeon, whose eyes were green and yellow. "Poor little brownies! poor little brownies!"

"They are sparrows: we have always had the reputation of being kind and gentle; we

will, therefore, allow them to pick up the grain with us. They never mix in the conversation, and they scrape a leg so prettily."

"Yes, they scratched three times with their leg, and with the left leg too, and said also "Chirrup!" It is by this they recognised each other; for they were three sparrows out of the nest of the house that had been burnt down.

"Very good eating here," said one of the sparrows. The pigeons strutted round each other, drew themselves up, and had inwardly their own views and opinions.

"Do you see the cropper pigeon?" said one of the others. "Do you see how she swallows the peas? She takes too many, and the very best into the bargain!"—"Coo! coo!"—"How she puts up her top-knot, the ugly, mischievous creature!" "Coo! coo! coo!"

And every eye sparkled with malice. "Form yourselves in groups! form yourselves in groups! Little brown creatures! Poor little brownies! Coo! coo!" So it went on unceasingly, and so will they go on chattering in a thousand years to come.

The sparrows ate right bravely. They

listened attentively to what was said, and even placed themselves in a row side by side, with the others. It was not at all becoming to them, however. They were not satisfied, and they therefore quitted the pigeons, and exchanged opinions about them; nestled along under the garden palisades, and, as they found the door of the room open that led upon the lawn, one of them, who was filled to satiety, and was therefore over-bold, hopped upon the threshold. "Chirrup!" said he, "I dare to venture!"

"Chirrup!" said another, "I dare, too, and more besides!" and he hopped into the chamber. No one was present: the third saw this, and flew still further into the room, calling out, "Either all or nothing! However, 'tis a curious human nest that we have here; and what have they put up there? What is that?"

Close in front of the sparrows bloomed the roses; they mirrored themselves in the water, and the charred rafters leaned against the over-hanging chimney. But what can that be? how comes this in the room of the mansion? And all three sparrows were about to

fly away over the roses and the chimney, but they flew against a flat wall. It was all a picture, a large, beautiful picture, which the painter had executed after the little sketch.

“Chirrup!” said the sparrows, “it is nothing! It only looks like something. Chirrup! That is beautiful! Can you comprehend it? I cannot!” And away they flew, for people came into the room.

Days and months passed, the pigeons had often cooed, the sparrows had suffered cold in winter, and in summer lived right jollily; they were all betrothed and married, or whatever you choose to call it. They had young ones, and each naturally considered his the handsomest and the cleverest: one flew here, another there; and if they met they recognised each other by the “Chirrup?” and by the thrice-repeated scratching with the left leg. The eldest sparrow had remained an old maid, who had no nest and no family; her favorite notion was to see a large town, so away she flew to Copenhagen.

There one beheld a large house, painted with many bright colors, quite close to the canal, in which lay many barges laden with

earthen pots and apples. The windows were broader below than above, and when the sparrow pressed through, every room appeared like a tulip, with the most varied colors and shades, but in the middle of the tulip white men were standing: they were of marble, some, too, were of plaister; but when viewed with a sparrow's eyes, they are the same. Up above on the roof stood a metal chariot, with metal horses harnessed to it; and the goddess of victory, also of metal, held the reins. It was THORWALDSEN'S MUSEUM.

"How it shines! How it shines!" said the old maiden sparrow. That, doubtless, is 'the beautiful.' Chirrup! But here it is larger than a peacock!" She remembered still what her mother, when she was a child, had looked upon as the grandest among all beautiful things. The sparrow fled down into the court: all was so magnificent. Palms and foliage were painted on the walls. In the middle of the court stood a large, blooming rose-tree; it spread out its fresh branches, with its many roses, over a grave. Thither flew the old maiden sparrow, for she saw there many of her sort. "Chirrup!"

and three scrapes with the left leg. Thus had she often saluted, from one year's end to the other, and nobody had answered the greeting—for those who are once separated do not meet again every day—till at last the salutation had grown into a habit. But to-day, however, two old sparrows and one young one answered with a "Chirrup!" and with a thrice-repeated scrape of the left leg.

"Ah, good day, good day!" It was two old birds from the nest, and a little one besides, of the family. "That we should meet here! It is a very grand sort of place, but there is nothing to eat here: that is 'the beautiful! Chirrup!"

And many persons advanced from the side apartments, where the magnificent marble figures stood, and approached the grave that hid the great master who had formed the marble figures. All stood with glorified countenances around Thorwaldsen's grave, and some picked up the shed rose-leaves and carefully guarded them. They had come from far—one from mighty England, others from Germany and France: the most lovely lady gathered one of the roses and hid it in

her bosom. Then the sparrows thought that the roses governed here, and that the whole house had been built on account of them. Now, this seemed to them, at all events, too much ; however, as it was for the roses that the persons showed all their love, they would remain no longer. "Chirrup!" said they, and swept the floor with their tails, and winked with one eye at the roses. They had not looked at them long before they convinced themselves that they were their old neighbors. And they really were so. The painter who had drawn the rose-bush beside the burned-down house, had afterwards obtained permission to dig it up, and had given it to the architect—for more beautiful roses had never been seen—and the architect had planted it on Thorwaldsen's grave, where it bloomed as a symbol of the beautiful, and gave up its red fragrant leaves to be carried to distant lands as a remembrance.

"Have you got an appointment here in town?" asked the sparrows.

And the roses nodded: they recognised their brown neighbors, and rejoiced to see them again. "How delightful it is to live

and to bloom, to see old friends again, and every day to look on happy faces! It is as if every day were a holy-day."

"Chirrup!" said the sparrows. "Yes, it is in truth our old neighbors; their origin—from the pond—is still quite clear in our memory! Chirrup! How they have risen in the world! Yes, Fortune favors some while they sleep! Ah! there is a withered leaf that I see quite plainly." And they pecked at it so long till the leaf fell off; and the tree stood there greener and more fresh, the roses gave forth their fragrance in the sunshine over Thorwaldsen's grave, with whose immortal name they were united.

THE DARNING-NEEDLE.



HERE was once upon a time a darning needle, that imagined itself so fine, that at last it fancied it was a sewing-needle.

“Now, pay attention, and hold me firmly !” said the darning-needle to the fingers that were taking it out. “Do not let me fall ! If I fall on the ground, I shall certainly never be found again, so fine am I.”

“Pretty well as to that,” answered the fingers ; and so saying, they took hold of it by the body.

“Look, I come with a train !” said the darning-needle, drawing a long thread after it, but there was no knot to the thread.

The fingers directed the needle against

an old pair of shoes belonging to the cook. The upper-leather was torn, and it was now to be sewed together.

“That is vulgar work,” said the needle; “I can never get through it. I shall break! I shall break!” And it really did break. “Did I not say so?” said the needle; “I am too delicate.”

“Now it’s good for nothing,” said the fingers, but they were obliged to hold it still; the cook dropped sealing-wax upon it, and pinned her neckerchief together with it.

“Well, now I am a breast-pin,” said the darning-needle. “I was sure I should be raised to honor: if one is something, one is sure to get on!” and at the same time it laughed inwardly; for one can never see when a darning-needle laughs. So there it sat now as proudly as in a state-carriage, and looked around on every side.

“May I take the liberty to inquire if you are of gold?” asked the needle of a pin that was its neighbor. You have a splendid exterior, and a head of your own, but it is small, however. You must do what you can to grow, for it is not every one that is

oedropped with sealing-wax!" And then the darning-needle drew itself up so high that it fell out of the kerchief, and tumbled right into the sink, which the cook was at that moment rinsing out.

"Now we are going on our travels," said the needle. "If only I do not get lost!" But it really did get lost.

"I am too delicate for this world!" said the needle, as it lay in the sink, "but I know who I am, and that is always a consolation;" and the darning-needle maintained its proud demeanor, and lost none of its good-humor.

And all sorts of things swam over it—shavings, straws, and scraps of old newspapers.

"Only look how they sail by," said the needle. "They do not know what is hidden below them! I stick fast here: here I sit. Look! there goes a shaving: it thinks of nothing in the world but of itself—but of a shaving! There drifts a straw; and how it tacks about, how it turns round! Think of something else besides yourself, or else perhaps you'll run against a stone! There swims a bit of a newspaper. What's written there is long

ago forgotten, and yet out it spreads itself, as if it were mighty important ! I sit here patient and still : I know who I am, and that I shall remain after all !”

One day there lay something close beside the needle. It glittered so splendidly, that the needle thought it must be a diamond : but it was only a bit of a broken bottle, and because it glittered the darning-needle addressed it, and introduced itself to the other as a breast-pin.

“ You are, no doubt, a diamond ?”

“ Yes, something of that sort.” And so each thought the other something very precious, and they talked together of the world, and of how haughty it is.

“ I was with a certain miss, in a little box,” said the darning-needle, “ and this miss was cook ; and on each hand she had five fingers. In my whole life I have never seen anything so conceited as these fingers ! And yet they were only there to take me out of the box and to put me back into it again !”

“ Were they, then, of noble birth ?” asked the broken bottle.

“ Noble !” said the darning-needle ; “ no,

out high-minded ! There were five brothers, all descendants of the 'Finger' family. They always kept together, although they were of different lengths. The outermost one, little Thumb, was short and stout ; he went at the side, a little in front of the ranks : he had, too, but one joint in his back, so that he could only make one bow ; but he said, if a man were to cut him off, such an one were no longer fit for military service. Sweet-tooth, the second finger, pryed into what was sweet, as well as into what was sour, pointed to the sun and moon, and he it was that gave stress when they wrote. Longman, the third brother, looked at the others contemptuously over his shoulder. Goldrim, the fourth, wore a golden girdle round his body ! and the little Peter Playallday did nothing at all, of which he was very proud. 'Twas boasting, and boasting, and nothing but boasting, and so away I went."

"And now we sit here and glitter," said the broken glass bottle.

At the same moment more water came along the gutter ; it streamed over the sides and carried the bit of bottle away with it.

“Well, that’s an advancement,” said the darning-needle. “I remain where I am: I am too fine; but that is just my pride, and as such is to be respected.” And there it sat so proudly, and had many grand thoughts.

“I should almost think that I was born of a sunbeam, so fine am I! It seems to me, too, as if the sunbeams were always seeking me beneath the surface of the water. Ah! I am so fine, that my mother is unable to find me! Had I my old eye that broke, I verily think I could weep; but I would not—weep! no, it’s not genteel to weep!”

One day two boys came rummaging about in the sink, where they found old nails, farthings, and such sort of things. It was dirty work; however, they took pleasure in it.

“Oh!” cried one who had pricked himself with the needle, “there’s a fellow for you.”

“I am no fellow, I am a lady!” said the darning-needle; but no one heard it. The ealing-wax had worn off, and it had become uite black; but black makes one look more slender, and the needle fancied it looked more delicate than ever.

“Here comes an egg-shell sailing along!”

said the boys ; and then they stuck the needle upright in the egg-shell.

“The walls white and myself black,” said the needle. “That is becoming! People can see me now! If only I do not get sea-sick, for then I shall snap.”

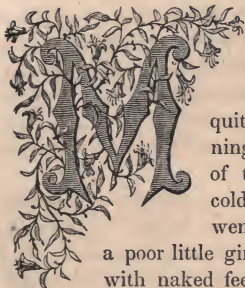
But it was not sea-sick, and did not snap.

“It is good for sea-sickness to have a stomach of steel, and not to forget that one is something more than a human being! Now my sea-sickness is over. The finer one is, the more one can endure!”

“Crack!” said the egg-shell: a wheel went over it.

“Good heavens! how heavy that presses!” said the needle. Now I shall be sea-sick! I snap!” But it did not snap, although a wheel went over it. It lay there at full length, and there it may lie still.

THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL.



OST terribly cold it was; it snowed, and was nearly quite dark, and evening—the last evening of the year. In this cold and darkness there went along the street

a poor little girl, bareheaded, and with naked feet. When she left home she had slippers on, it is true; but what was the good of that? They were very large slippers, which her mother had hitherto worn; so large were they; and the poor little thing lost them as she scuffled away across the street, because of two carriages that rolled by dreadfully fast

One slipper was nowhere to be found; the other had been laid hold of by an urchin, and off he ran with it; he thought it would do capitally for a cradle when he some day or other should have children himself. So the little maiden walked on with her tiny naked feet, that were quite red and blue from cold. She carried a quantity of matches in an old apron, and she held a bundle of them in her hand. Nobody had bought anything of her the whole livelong day; no one had given her a single farthing.

She crept along trembling with cold and hunger—a very picture of sorrow, the poor little thing!

The flakes of snow covered her long fair hair, which fell in beautiful curls around her neck; but of that, of course, she never once now thought. From all the windows the candles were gleaming, and it smelt so deliciously of roast goose, for you know it was new year's eve; yes, of that she thought.

In a corner formed by two houses, of which one advanced more than the other, she seated herself down and cowered together. Her little feet she had drawn close up to her, but

she grew colder and colder, and to go home she did not venture, for she had not sold any matches and could not bring a farthing of money : from her father she would certainly get blows, and at home it was cold too, for above her she had only the roof, through which the wind whistled, even though the largest cracks were stopped up with straw and rags.

Her little hands were almost numbed with cold. Oh ! a match might afford her a world of comfort, if she only dared take a single one out of the bundle, draw it against the wall, and warm her fingers by it. She drew one out. "Rischt !" how it blazed, how it burnt ! It was a warm, bright flame, like a candle, as she held her hands over it : it was a wonderful light. It seemed really to the little maiden as though she were sitting before a large iron stove, with burnished brass feet and a brass ornament at top. The fire burned with such blessed influence ; it warmed so delightfully. The little girl had already stretched out her feet to warm them too ; but —the small flame went out. the stove vanish-

ed: she had only the remains of the burnt-out match in her hand.

She rubbed another against the wall: it burned brightly, and where the light fell on the wall, there the wall became transparent like a veil, so that she could see into the room. On the table was spread a snow-white tablecloth; upon it was a splendid porcelain service, and the roast goose was steaming famously with its stuffing of apple and dried plums. And what was still more capital to behold was, the goose hopped down from the dish, reeled about on the floor with knife and fork in its breast, till it came up to the poor little girl; when—the match went out and nothing but the thick, cold, damp wall was left behind. She lighted another match. Now there she was sitting under the most magnificent Christmas trees: it was still larger, and more decorated than the one which she had seen through the glass door in the rich merchant's house.

Thousands of lights were burning on the green branches, and gaily-colored pictures, such as she had seen in the shop-windows,



looked down upon her. The little maiden stretched out her hands towards them when—the match went out. The lights of the Christmas tree rose higher and higher, she saw them now as stars in heaven; one fell down and formed a long trail of fire.

“Some one is just dead!” said the little girl; for her old grandmother, the only person who had loved her, and who was now no more, had told her, that when a star falls, a soul ascends to God.

She drew another match against the wall: it was again light, and in the lustre there stood the old grandmother, so bright and radiant, so mild, and with such an expression of love.

“Grandmother!” cried the little one; “oh, take me with you! You go away when the match burns out; you vanish like the warm stove, like the delicious roast goose, and like the magnificent Christmas tree!” And she rubbed the whole bundle of matches quickly against the wall, for she wanted to be quite sure of keeping her grandmother near her. And the matches gave such a brilliant light that it was brighter than at noon-day: never

formerly had the grandmother been so beautiful and so tall. She took the little maiden, on her arm, and both flew in brightness and in joy so high, so very high, and then above was neither cold, nor hunger, nor anxiety—they were with God.

But in the corner, at the cold hour of dawn, sat the poor girl, with rosy cheeks and with a smiling mouth, leaning against the wall—frozen to death on the last evening of the old year. Stiff and stark sat the child there with her matches, of which one bundle had been burnt. “She wanted to warm herself,” people said: no one had the slightest suspicion of what beautiful things she had seen; no one even dreamed of the splendor in which, with her grandmother she had entered on the joys of a new year.

THE RED SHOES.



HERE was once a little girl who was very pretty and delicate, but in summer she was forced to run about with bare feet, she was so poor, and in winter wear very

large wooden shoes, which made her little insteps quite red, and that looked so dangerous!

In the middle of the village lived old Dame Shoemaker; she sate and sewed together, as well as she could, a little pair of shoes out of old red strips of cloth; they were very clumsy, but it was a kind thought. They were meant for the little girl. The little girl was called Karen.

On the very day her mother was buried, Karen received the red shoes, and wore them for the first time. They were certainly not intended for mourning, but she had no others, and with stockingless feet she followed the poor straw coffin in them.

Suddenly a large old carriage drove up, and a large old lady sate in it: she looked at the little girl, felt compassion for her, and then said to the clergyman:

“Here, give me the little girl, I will adopt her!”

And Karen believed all this happened on account of the red shoes, but the old lady thought they were horrible, and they were burnt. But Karen herself was cleanly and nicely dressed; she must learn to read and sew; and people said she was a nice little thing, but the looking-glass said: “Thou art more than nice, thou art beautiful!”

Now the queen once traveled through the land, and she had her little daughter with her. And this little daughter was a princess, and people streamed to the castle, and Karen was there also, and the little princess stood in her fine white dress, in a window, and let

herself be stared at; she had neither a train nor a golden crown, but splendid red morocco shoes. They were certainly far handsomer than those Dame Shoemaker had made for little Karen. Nothing in the world can be compared with red shoes.

Now Karen was old enough to be confirmed; she had new clothes and was to have new shoes also. The rich shoemaker in the city took the measure of her little foot. This took place at his house, in his room; where stood large glass-cases, filled with elegant shoes and brilliant boots. All this looked charming, but the old lady could not see well, and so had no pleasure in them. In the midst of the shoes stood a pair of red ones, just like those the princess had worn. How beautiful they were! The shoemaker said also they had been made for the child of a count, but had not fitted.

“That must be patent leather!” said the old lady, “they shine so!”

“Yes, they shine!” said Karen, and they fitted, and were bought, but the old lady knew nothing about their being red, else she would never have allowed Karen to have gone in

red shoes to be confirmed. Yet such was the case.

Everybody looked at her feet; and when she stepped through the chancel door on the church pavement, it seemed to her as if the old figures on the tombs, those portraits of old preachers and preachers' wives, with stiff ruffs, and long black dresses, fixed their eyes on her red shoes. And she thought only of them as the clergyman laid his hand upon her head, and spoke of the holy baptism, of the covenant with God, and how she should be now a matured Christian; and the organ pealed so solemnly; the sweet children's voices sang, and the old music-directors sang, but Karen only thought of her red shoes.

In the afternoon, the old lady heard from every one that the shoes had been red, and she said that it was very wrong of Karen, that it was not at all becoming, and that in future Karen should only go in black shoes to church, even when she should be older.

The next Sunday there was the sacrament, and Karen looked at the black shoes, looked at the red ones—looked at them again, and put on the red shoes.

The sun shone gloriously ; Karen and the old lady walked along the path through the corn ; it was rather dusty there.

At the church door stood an old soldier with a crutch, and with a wonderfully long beard, which was more red than white, and he bowed to the ground, and asked the old lady whether he might dust her shoes. And Karen stretched out her little foot.

“ See ! what beautiful dancing-shoes ! ” said the soldier, “ sit firm when you dance ; ” and he put his hand out towards the soles.

And the old lady gave the old soldier an alms, and went into the church with Karen.

And all the people in the church looked at Karen's red shoes, and all the pictures, and as Karen knelt before the altar, and raised the cup to her lips, she only thought of the red shoes, and they seemed to swim in it ; and she forgot to sing her psalm, and she forgot to pray, “ Our father in Heaven ! ”

Now all the people went out of church, and the old lady got into her carriage. Karen raised her foot to get in after her, when the old soldier said,

“ Look, what beautiful dancing shoes ! ”

And Karen could not help dancing a step or two, and when she began her feet continued to dance; it was just as though the shoes had power over them. She danced round the church corner, she could not leave off; the coachman was obliged to run after and catch hold of her, and he lifted her in the carriage, but her feet continued to dance so that she trod on the old lady dreadfully. At length she took the shoes off, and then her legs had peace.

The shoes were placed in a closet at home, but Karen could not avoid looking at them.

Now the old lady was sick, and it was said she could not recover? She must be nursed and waited upon, and there was no one whose duty it was so much as Karen's. But there was a great ball in the city, to which Karen was invited. She looked at the old lady, who could not recover, she looked at the red shoes, and she thought there could be no sin in it;—she put on the red shoes, she might do that also, she thought. But then she went to the ball and began to dance.

When she wanted to dance to the right, the shoes would dance to the left. and when

she wanted to dance up the room, the shoes danced back again, down the steps, into the street, and out of the city gate. She danced, and was forced to dance straight out into the gloomy wood.

Then it was suddenly light up among the trees, and she fancied it must be the moon, for there was a face; but it was the old soldier with the red beard; he sat there, nodded his head, and said, "Look, what beautiful dancing shoes!"

Then she was terrified, and wanted to fling off the red shoes, but they clung fast; and she pulled down her stockings, but the shoes seemed to have grown to her feet. And she danced, and must dance, over fields and meadows, in rain and sunshine, by night and day; but at night it was the most fearful.

She danced over the churchyard, but the dead did not dance,—they had something better to do than to dance. She wished to seat herself on a poor man's grave, where the bitter tansy grew; but for her there was neither peace nor rest; and when she danced towards the open church door, she saw an angel standing there. He wore long, white

garments ; he had wings which reached from his shoulders to the earth ; his countenance was severe and grave ; and in his hand he held a sword, broad and glittering.

“Dance shalt thou !” said he,—“dance in thy red shoes till thou art pale and cold ! till thy skin shrivels up and thou art a skeleton ! Dance shalt thou from door to door, and where proud, vain children dwell, thou shalt knock, that they may hear thee and tremble ! Dance shalt thou —— !”

“Mercy !” cried Karen. But she did not hear the angel’s reply, for the shoes carried her through the gate into the fields, across roads and bridges, and she must keep ever dancing.

One morning she danced past a door which she well knew. Within sounded a psalm ; a coffin, decked with flowers, was borne forth. Then she knew that the old lady was dead, and felt that she was abandoned by all, and condemned by the angel of God.

She danced, and she was forced to dance through the gloomy night. The shoes carried her over stack and stone ; she was torn till she bled ; she danced over the heath till she

came to a little house. Here, she knew, dwelt the executioner; and she tapped with her fingers at the window, and said, "Come out! come out! I cannot come in, for I am forced to dance!"

And the executioner said, "Thou dost not know who I am, I fancy? I strike bad people's heads off; and I hear that my axe rings!"

"Don't strike my head off!" said Karen, "then I can't repent of my sins! But strike off my feet in the red shoes!"

And then she confessed her entire sin, and the executioner struck off her feet with the red shoes, but the shoes danced away with the little feet across the field into the deep wood.

And he carved out little wooden feet for her, and crutches, taught her the psalm criminals always sing; and she kissed the hand which had wielded the axe, and went over the heath.

"Now I have suffered enough for the red shoes!" said she; "now I will go into the church that people may see me!" And she

hastened towards the church door : but when she was near it, the red shoes danced before her, and she was terrified, and turned round. The whole week she was unhappy, and wept many bitter tears ; but when Sunday returned, she said, " Well, now I have suffered and struggled enough ! I really believe I am as good as many a one who sits in the church, and holds her head so high ! "

And away she went boldly ; but she had not got farther than the churchyard gate before she saw the red shoes dancing before her ; and she was frightened, and turned back, and repented of her sin from her heart.

And she went to the parsonage, and begged that they would take her into service ; she would be very industrious, she said, and would do everything she could ; she did not care about the wages, only she wished to have a home, and be with good people. And the clergyman's wife was sorry for her and took her into service ; and she was industrious and thoughtful. She sate still and listened when the clergyman read the Bible in the evenings. All the children thought a

deal of her; but when they spoke of dress, and grandeur, and beauty, she shook her head.

The following Sunday, when the family was going to church, they asked her whether she would not go with them; but she glanced sorrowfully, with tears in her eyes, at her crutches. The family went to hear the word of God; but she went alone into her little chamber; there was only room for a bed and chair to stand in it; and here she sate down with her prayer-book; and whilst she read with a pious mind, the wind bore the strains of the organ towards her, and she raised her tearful countenance, and said, "O God, help me!"

And the sun shone so clearly! and straight before her stood the angel of God in white garments, the same she had seen that night at the church door; but he no longer carried the sharp sword, but in its stead a splendid green spray, full of roses. And he touched the ceiling with the spray, and the ceiling rose so high, and where he had touched it there gleamed a golden star. And he touched the walls, and they widened out, and she

saw the organ which was playing ; she saw the old pictures of the preachers and the preachers' wives. The congregation sat in cushioned seats, and sang out of their prayer-books. For the church itself had come to the poor girl in her narrow chamber, or else she had come into the church. She sate in the pew with the clergyman's family, and when they had ended the psalm and looked up, they nodded and said, "It is right that thou art come !"

"It was through mercy !" she said.

And the organ pealed, and the children's voices in the choir sounded so sweet and soft ! The clear sunshine streamed so warmly through the window into the pew where Karen sate ! Her heart was so full of sunshine, peace, and joy, that it broke. Her soul flew on the sunshine to God, and there no one asked after the RED SHOES.

TO THE YOUNG READERS

HERE is another volume of ANDERSEN'S charming stories for you ; and I am sure you will be glad to get it. For my part, I am always delighted to find one that I do not happen to have yet seen ; and as I know the others pleased you—for I have heard so, both directly and indirectly, from a great many people, there can be no doubt that you all will be overjoyed to have a few more of these stories told you.

And there is no one who participates in this delight more than—whom do you think ? Why, than Andersen himself ! He is so happy that his Tales have been thus joyfully received, and that they have found their way to the hearts and sympathies of you all. He speaks of it with evident pleasure ; and it is not vanity, but his kind affectionate nature,

which inclines him to mention such little occurrences as prove how firm a hold his writings have taken on the minds of the young and gentle-natured. "So much praise might," he says, "spoil a man, and make him vain. Yet no, it does not spoil him: on the contrary, it makes him better; it purifies his thoughts, and this must give one the impulse and the will to deserve it all." He was so pleased to hear, and I, you may be sure was equally pleased to tell him, what had been written 'o me by a friend a short time before—that several little boys and girls, Miss Edgeworth's nephews and nieces were so delighted with the "TALES FROM DENMARK," that they not only read and re-read them continually, but used *to act the stories* together in their play-hours!

And a certain little dark-eyed thing of my acquaintance, "little Nelly," or "the little gipsey," as I sometimes call her, knows the whole story of "Ellie and the Pretty Swallow," by heart; and another "wee thing," that cannot yet read, but is always wanting to have stories told her, knows all about Kay and Gerda, and the flower-garden, and how

Gerda went to look for her brother, inquiring of every body she met, and how at last the good sister found him.

In Copenhagan, as Andersen himself told me, all the children know him. "And," he said, with such a countenance that showed such homage was dearer to him than the more splendid honors paid as tributes to his genius, "as I walk along the street, the little darlings nod and kiss their hands to me; and they say to one another, 'There's Andersen!' and then some more run and wave their hands. Oh yes, they all know me. But sometimes, if there be one who does not, then, perhaps, his mamma will say, 'Look, that is he who wrote the story you read the other day, and that you liked so much;' and so we soon get acquainted." And *this* popularity delights him more than anything; and you surely cannot call it vanity.

In the account he has written of his life, he relates a circumstance that happened to him at Dresden; and it is so pretty that I insert it here. He writes: "An evening that for me was particularly interesting I spent with the royal family, who received me most

graciously. Here reigned the same quiet that is found in private life in a happy family. A whole troop of amiable children, all belonging to Prince John, were present. The youngest of the princesses, a little girl who knew that I had written the story of 'The Fir-tree,' began familiarly her conversation with me in these words: 'Last Christmas we also had a fir-tree, and it stood here in this very room.' Afterwards, when she was taken to bed earlier than the others, and had wished her parents and the king and queen 'Good night,' she turned round once more at the half-closed door, and nodded to me in a friendly manner, and as though we were old acquaintance. I was her prince of the fairy tale."

But it is not the praise of the great, or the admiration of a court, on which he sets most value, as you will see by the following extract from a letter which I received from him to-day, only an hour or two ago. It is about his stay in England, and his visit to the north, after I had left him, and I am sure he will not mind my sharing thus much of what he writes to me with you. "The

hearty welcome I met with in Scotland moved me greatly. My writings were so well known, I found so many friends, that I can hardly take in so much happiness. But I must relate you one instance: in Edinburgh I went with a party of friends to Herriot's Hospital, where orphan children are taken care of and educated. We were all obliged to inscribe our names in the visitors' book. The porter read the names, and asked if that was Andersen the author: and when some one answered 'Yes,' the old man folded his hands and gazed quite in ecstasy at an old gentleman who was with us, and said: 'Yes, yes! he is just as I had always fancied him to myself—the venerable white hair—the mild expression—yes, that is Andersen!' They then explained to him that I was the person. 'That young man?' he exclaimed; 'Why generally such people, when one hears about them, are either dead or very old.' When the story was told me, I at first thought it was a joke; but the porter came up to me in a most touching manner, and told me how he and all the boys entered so entirely and

heartily into my stories. It so affected me that I almost shed tears.”

This is indeed popularity !

Now I dare say you thought that the little princes and princesses in a king's palace had tastes and feelings very different from a poor charity-boy ; but you see, although so different in rank, they were alike in one thing—they were both children ; and childhood, if left to itself, is in all situations the same.

And do you know, too, my little friends, that you are very excellent critics ? Yes, most sage and excellent critics ; though I dare say not one of you even ever dreamt of such a thing. But it is, nevertheless, true ; and not some, but all of you, whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland—the little boys in Heriot's Hospital, and the little princess at Dresden who knew the story of “ The Fir-Tree.” For without one dissentient voice you have passed favorable judgment on these stories : in your estimation of them you were unanimous.

Yet when they first appeared in Denmark

some of the critics by profession found fault with them, and wondered, as they said, how an author who had written works of greater pretension, could think of making his appearance with something so childish as these tales. And some kind friends, grown-up people, whose opinion was not unimportant, advised him by all means to give up writing such stories as he had no talent for them; and it was only later, that, to use Andersen's own words, "every door and heart in Denmark was open to them." But all of you, not critics by profession, you welcomed them at once; as soon as you saw them you perceived their beauty—you cherished and gave them a place in your heart. And this is the reason why I say that you are sage and excellent critics; and if you can preserve the same simple-heartedness, finding pleasure in what is natural and truthful, and allow yourselves to be guided by the instincts of your pure uncorrupted nature, you may *always* be so.

You will like to know that Thorwaldsen, the great Thorwaldsen, loved to hear Andersen repeat these tales. It is true he has

quite a peculiar way of relating them, which adds greatly to their charm. I begged him one day to tell me the story of "The Top and Ball," and he immediately sat down on the sofa and began. Though I knew it by heart from beginning to end, so often had I read it over, yet it now seemed quite new, from his manner of telling it; and I was as amused and laughed as much as though I had never heard it before. That very pretty one, "Ole Luckoie," was written when in the society of Thorwaldsen; and "often at dusk," so Andersen relates, "when the family circle were sitting in the summer house, would Thorwaldsen glide gently in, and, tapping me on the shoulder, ask, 'Are we little ones to have no story tonight?' It pleased him to hear the same story over and over again; and often, while employed on his grandest works, he would stand with a smiling countenance and listen to the tale of 'Top and Ball,' and 'The Ugly Duck.'" The last is my favorite also.

From Rome, where this occurred, you must now take a jump with me to Hamburg; for I have to tell you an anecdote that happened there to Andersen, also, about his sto-

ries, which he relates in his "Life." He had gone to see Otto Speckter, whose clever and characteristic pictures most of you will certainly know, and he intended to go afterwards to the play. Speckter accompanied him. "We passed an elegant house. 'We must first go in here, my dear friend,' said he; 'a very rich family lives there, friends of mine, friends of your tales; the children will be overjoyed—' 'But the opera,' said I. 'Only for two minutes,' he replied, and drew me into the house, told my name, and the circle of children collected round me. 'And now repeat a story,' he said: 'only a single one.' I did so, and hurried to the theatre. 'That was a strange visit,' I said. 'A capital one! a most excellent one!' shouted he. 'Only think! the children are full of Andersen and his fairy tales: all of a sudden he stands in the midst of them, and relates one himself, and then he is gone—vanished. Why, that very circumstance is a fairy tale for the children, and will remain vividly in their memory.' It amused me too."

You will be getting impatient, I am afraid. However, before I finish I must tell you some

thing about the stories in this volume. The translation of them I had begun in Andersen's room, and when he came in we began talking about them, one of which, "The Little Girl with the Matches," I had read in his absence. I told him how delighted I was with it—that I found it most exquisitely narrated; but that how such a thing came into his head, I could not conceive. He then said, "That was written when I was on a visit at the Duke of Augustenburg's. I received a letter from Copenhagen from the editor of a Danish almanac for the people, in which he said he was very anxious to have something of mine for it, but that the book was already nearly printed. In the letter were two woodcuts, and these he wished to make use of, if only I would write something to which they might serve as illustrations. One was the picture of a little match-girl, exactly as I have described her. It was from the picture that I wrote the story—wrote it surrounded by splendor and rejoicing, at the castle of Graustein, in Schleswig."

"And Little Tuk," said I.—"Oh! 'Little Tuk,'" answered he, laughing; "I will tell

you all about him. When in Oldenburg I lived for some time at the house of a friend, the Counsellor von E * * *. The children's names were Charles and Gustave (Augusta?) but the little boy always called himself 'Tuk.' He meant to say 'Charles,' but he could not pronounce it otherwise. Now once I promised the dear little things that I would put them in a fairy tale, and so both of them appeared, but as poor children in the story of 'Little Tuk.' So you see, as reward for all the hospitality I received in Germany, I take the German children and make Danes of them."

You see he can make a story out of anything. "They peep over his shoulder," as he once wrote to me, a long time ago. And one time, when he was just going to set off on a journey, his friend said to him, "My little Erich possesses two leaden soldiers, and he has given one of them to me for you, that you may take it with you on your travels."

Now I should not at all wonder if this were the very "Resolute Leaden Soldier" you read of in the "TALES FROM DENMARK;" but this one, it is true, was a Turk, and I

don't think the other was. And then, too, there is nothing said about this one having but one leg. However, it may be the same, after all.

As to the tale called "The Naughty Boy," that, it is true, is an old story. The poet Anacreon wrote it long, long ago; but Andersen has here re-told it in so humorous a manner, that it will no doubt amuse you as much as though it had been written originally by him. He has given the whole, too, quite another dress; and "the naughty boy" himself he has tricked out so drolly, and related such amusing tricks of him, that I think Mr. Andersen had better take care the young rogue does not play him a sly turn some day or other, for the little incorrigible rascal respects nobody.

Before I say farewell, there is one thing I must tell you; which is, there are two persons you certainly little think of, to whom you owe some thanks for the pretty tales of Anderson that have so greatly delighted you, as well as for those he may still write. You will never guess who they are, so I will tell you. They are Frederick VI., the late, and

Christian VIII, the present King of Denmark. The former gave Andersen a pension to relieve him from the necessity of depending on his pen for bread ; so that, free from cares, he was able to pursue his own varied fancies. Though not much, it was sufficient ; but the present king, who has always been most kind to your friend Andersen—for so you surely consider him—increased his pension considerably, in order that he might be able to travel, and follow in full liberty the bent of his genius.

Now do you not like a king who thus holds out his hand to genius, who delights to honor the man who has done honor to their common country, and who is proud to interest himself in his fate as in that of a friend ? And this King Christian VIII. does. Am I not right, then, in saying that you owe him your thanks ?

Farewell, my little friends, and believe that I am always ready and willing to serve you.

CHARLES BONER.*

Donau Stauf, near Ratisbon.

* By whom several of the stories in this volume were translated



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