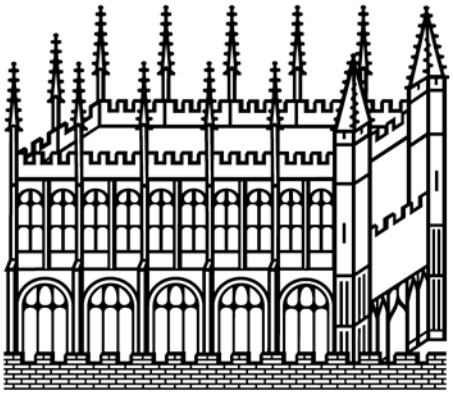

THE LUCK OF THE BEAN-ROWS

A FAIRY-TALE FOR LUCKY CHILDREN

Illustrated by Claud Lovat Fraser

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A FAIRY TALE TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

CHARLES NODIER

ILLUSTRATED BY

CLAUD LOVAT FRASER

LONDON
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90 GREAT RUSSELL ST., W.C.1

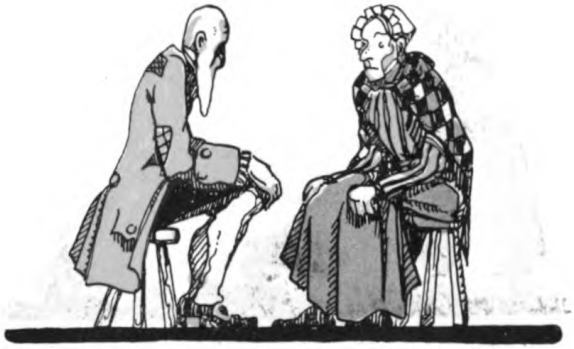
TO THE PRINCESS

THE LASS who leaves her nun-like cells,
And in the World of Wifehood dwells,
Needs light of Heaven and luck of Fairy:
May both be yours, young Princess Mary!

Since gifts go to you—Wedlock's wage—
Accept this Dedication Page
With homage from the hands that give it.
All Life's a Fairy-tale—go live it!

'Henry George Charles'—to you he brings
The threefold names of English kings,
But has himself the merrier part
As monarch of a Maiden's heart.

Christmas, 1921.



ONCE UPON A TIME

there was a man and his wife who were poor and very old. They had never had any children, and this was a great trouble to them, for they foresaw that in a few years more they would not be able to grow their beans and take them to market.

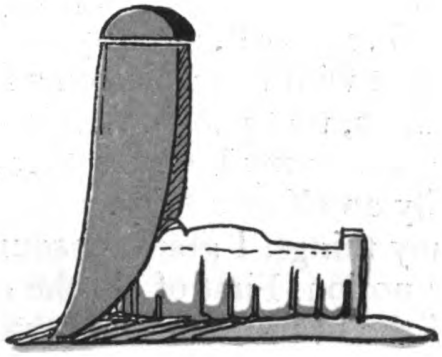
One day while they were weeding in their field (that with a little cabin was all they possessed—I wish *I* owned as much!)—one day, I say, while they were getting rid of the weeds the old woman spied in a corner, where they grew thickest, a small bundle very carefully tied up; and what should she find in it but a lovely boy, eight or ten months old to look at, but quite two years in intelligence! He had been weaned; at all events he needed no pressing to partake of boiled beans, which he raised to his mouth very prettily.

On hearing his wife's cries of surprise, the old man hurried from the end of the field; and when he too had gazed at the beautiful child God had given them these old people embraced each other with tears of joy, and then returned quickly to their cabin lest the falling dew should hurt their boy. When they were snug in the chimney corner it was a fresh delight to them to see the little fellow reach out his hands to them, laughing winsomely, and calling them *mamma* and *pappa*, as though he had known no other father or mother.

The old man took him on his knee and danced him gently up and down, in 'the way the ladies ride in the Park,' and said all sorts of droll things to amuse him; and the child responded in his own prattling fashion, for who would like to seem backward in such jolly talk?

Meanwhile the old woman lit up

the house with a fire of dry bean-pods, which gladdened the little body of the newcomer, and prepared an excellent bean-pap which a spoonful of honey made delicious eating. Then she laid him to sleep in his fine white night-clothes in the best bed of bean-chaff in the house; for these poor folk knew nothing of feather-beds and eider-downs. When he was fast asleep, 'There is one thing that bothers me,' said the old man to his wife, 'and that is what we are to call this bonnie boy, for we know neither his parents nor where he comes from.'



'We must call him,' said the old woman, for though she was but a simple peasant she was quick-witted, 'the Luck of the Bean-rows, for it was in our bean-field he came to us, the best of luck, to comfort us in our old age.'
'There could not be a better name,' the old man agreed.
It would make the story too long to tell what happened in the days and in all the years that followed; it is enough to know that the old people kept getting older and older, while one could almost see Luck of the Bean-rows putting on strength and good looks. Not that he was mighty of his inches, for at twelve he was only two and a half feet, and when he was at work in the bean-field, of which he was very fond, you could hardly have seen him from the road, but his small figure was so shapely, and he was so winning in his looks and ways, so gentle, and yet so sure of his words, and he appeared so gallant in his sky-blue smock, red belt, and gay Sunday bonnet with bean blossoms for feathers, that people wondered at him and many believed that he was really an elf or a fairy.
Many things, I grant, encouraged this notion. First of all, the cabin and the bean-field—the bean-field

in which a few years ago a cow
would have found nothing to graze
on—had become one of the fine
estates of the country-side; and
not a soul could tell how it had
happened. Well, to see beanstalks
sprouting, to see them flowering,
to see the blossom fading and the
beans swelling ripe in the pods—
there is nothing out of the common
in that, but to see a whole bean-
field expanding, spreading out,
with never a strip of land added,
whether bought or knavishly taken
from a neighbour's holding—that
gets beyond understanding.
And all the while the bean-field
went on growing and spreading.
It spread to the south wind, it
spread to the north wind, it spread
towards the dawn, it spread towards
the sunset. And the neighbours
measured their land to no purpose;
they always found it full measure
with a rod or two to the good, so
they naturally concluded that the

whole country was getting bigger. Then again the beans bore so heavily that the cabin could never have contained the crop, had it not also grown larger. And yet for more than five leagues round the bean-crop failed, so that beans had become priceless because of the quantities sought for the tables of lords and kings.

In the midst of this abundance the Luck of the Bean-rows saw to everything himself, turning the soil, sorting the seed, cleansing the plants, weeding, digging, hoeing, harvesting, shelling, and, over and above, trimming hedges and mending wattle-fences. What time was left he spent bargaining with the market people, for he could read, write, and keep accounts, though he had had no schooling. He was indeed a very blessing of a boy.

One night, when the Luck was

asleep, the old man said to his wife: 'There is Luck of the Bean-rows now, who has done so much to make us comfortable that we can spend the few years that are left us in peace and without labour. In making him heir to all we own we have given him only what is already his; and we should be thankless indeed if we did not try to secure him a more becoming position in life than that of a bean-merchant. A pity he is too modest for a professor's chair in the universities, and he is just a trifle too short for a general.'

'It's a pity,' said the old woman, 'he hasn't studied enough to pick up the Latin names for five or six diseases. Eh, but they would be glad to make him a doctor right of!'

'Then as to law-suits,' the old man went on, 'I am afraid he has too much brains and good sense to clear up one of them.'

'I have always had a fancy,' said the old woman, 'that when he came of age he would marry Pea-Blossom.'

'Pea-Blossom,' rejoined the old man, shaking his head, 'is far too great a princess to marry a poor foundling, worth no more than a cabin and a bean-field.

Pea-Blossom, old dear, is a match for a squire or a justice of the peace, or for the king himself, if he came to be a widower. We are talking of a serious matter, do speak sense.'

'Luck of the Bean-rows has more sense than both of us together,' said his wife after a moment's thought. 'Besides, it is his business, and it would not be proper to press it further without asking his opinion.'

Whereupon the old couple turned over and went to sleep.

Day was just breaking when the Luck leaped out of bed to begin work in the field as usual. Who but he was surprised to find his Sunday clothes laid out on the chest where he had left his others at bedtime? 'It is a week-day, anyway,' he said to himself, 'if the almanack hasn't gone wrong. Mother must be keeping some holiday of her own to have set out my best things. Well, let it be as she wishes. I would not cross her in anything at her great age, and after all it is easy to make up for an hour or two by rising earlier or working later.'

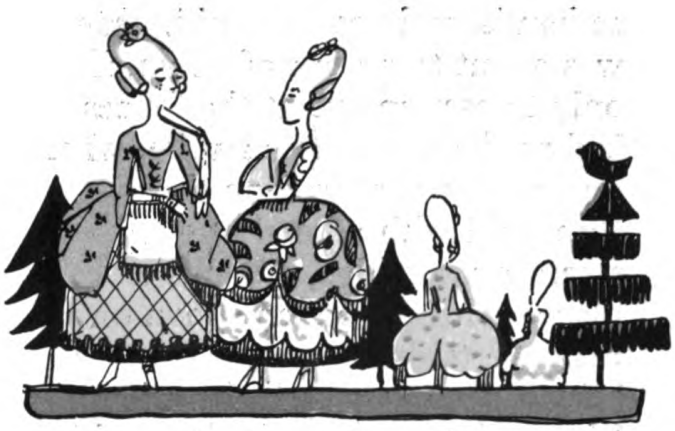
So after a prayer to God for the health of his parents and the progress of the beans, he dressed

as handsomely as he could. He was about to go out of doors, if only to cast an eye at the fences before the old couple awoke, when his mother appeared on the threshold with a bowl of good steaming porridge, which she placed with a wooden spoon on his little table.

'Eat it up, eat it up!' she said; 'do not be sparing of this porridge sweetened with honey and a pinch of green aniseed, just as you liked it when you were a little fellow; for the road is before you, laddie, and it is a long road you will travel to-day.'

'That is good to hear,' said Luck of the Bean-rows, looking at her in surprise; 'and where are you sending me?'

The old woman sat down on a stool, and with her two hands on her knees, replied with a laugh: 'Into the world, into the wide world, little Luck. You have never seen any one but ourselves, and a few poor market folk you sell your beans to, to keep the house going, good lad. Now one day, one day, you will be a big man if the price of beans keeps up, so it will be well for you, dearie, to know some people in good society. I must tell you there is a great city four or



five miles away where at every step one meets lords in cloth of gold and ladies in silver dresses with trails of roses. Your bonnie little face, so pleasant and so lively, will be sure to win them; and I shall be much mistaken if the day goes by without your getting some distinguished appointment at Court or in the public offices, where you may earn much and do little. So eat it up and do not spare the good porridge sweetened with honey and a pinch of green aniseed.

'Now as you know more about the price of beans than about the value of money,' the old woman went on, 'you are to sell in the market these six quart measures of choice beans. I have not put more lest you should be overburdened. Besides, with beans as dear as they are now, you would be hard

set to bring home the price even if they paid you only in gold. So we propose, father and I, that you should keep half of what you get to enjoy yourself properly, as young people should, or in buying yourself some pretty trinket to wear of a Sunday, such as a silver watch with ruby and emerald seals, or an ivory cup and ball, or a Nuremberg humming-top. The rest of the money you can put in the bank.

'So away with you, my little Luck, since you have finished your porridge; and be sure that you do not lose time chasing butterflies, for we should die broken-hearted if you were not home before nightfall. And keep to the roads for fear of the wolves.'

'I will do as you bid me, mother,' replied the Luck of the Bean-rows, hugging the old woman, 'though for my part I would sooner spend the day in the field. As for wolves,

they don't trouble me with my weeding-hook.'
So saying he slung his pronged hoe in his belt, and set out at a steady pace.
'Come back early,' the old woman kept calling after him; she was already feeling sorry that she had let him go.
Luck of the Bean-rows tramped on and on, taking huge strides like a five-foot giant, and staring left and right at the strange things he saw by the way. He had never dreamed that the world was so big and so full of wonders.
When he had walked for an hour or more, as he reckoned by the height of the sun, and was puzzled that he had not yet reached the great city at the rate he was going, he thought he heard some one calling after him: 'Whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, twee! Please do stop, Master Luck of the Bean-rows.'
'Who is it calling me?' cried Luck of the Bean-rows, clapping his hand on his pronged hoe.
'Please do stop at once. Whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, twee! It is I who am calling you.'
'Can it be possible?' asked Luck, raising his eyes to the top of an old pine, hollow and half dead,

on which a great owl was swaying in the wind. 'What is it we two can settle together, my bonnie bird?'

'It would be indeed a wonder if you recognized me,' answered the owl, 'for you had no notion that I was ever helping you, as a modest and honest owl should, by devouring at my own risk the swarms of rats which nibbled away half your crops, good year and bad year. That is why your field now brings you in what will buy you a pretty kingdom, if you know when you have enough.
As for me, who have paid dearly for my care of others, I have not one wretched lean rat on the hooks of the larder against daylight, for now at night, with my eyes grown so dim in your service, I can scarcely see where I am going. So I called to you, generous Luck of the Bean-rows, to beg of you one of those good quart measures of beans hanging from your staff. It will keep me alive till my oldest son comes of age, and on his loyalty to you you may reckon.'
'Why that, Master Owl,' cried Luck of the Bean-rows, taking one of his own three quart measures from the end of his staff, 'is a debt of gratitude, and I am glad to repay it.'
The owl darted down on the measure, caught it in his claws and beak, and with one flap of the wing

carried it off to the tree-top.
'My word, but you are in a hurry to be off!' said the Luck. 'May I ask, Master Owl, if I am still far from the great town mother is sending me to?'
'You are just going into it,' answered the owl, as he flitted off to another tree.
Luck of the Bean-rows went on his way with a lighter staff; he felt sure he must be near the end of his journey, but he had hardly gone a hundred steps when he heard some one else calling:
'Behh, behh, bekky! Please stop, Master Luck of the Bean-rows!'
'I think I know that voice,' said the Luck, turning round. 'Why yes, of course! It is that bare-faced rogue of a mountain she-goat, which prowls around my field with her kids for a toothsome snack. So it is you, is it, my lady raider?'
'What is that about raiding, fair Master Luck? I guess your hedges are too thick, your ditches too deep, your fences too close for any raiding. All one could do was to nip a few leaves that pushed through the chinks of the wattles, and our pruning makes the stalks thrive. You know the old saying:

Sheeps' teeth, loss and trouble,
Goats' teeth pay back double.'

'Say no more,' broke in Luck of the Bean-rows; 'and may all the ill I wished you fall upon my own head. But why did you stop me, and what can I do to please you, Madame Doe?'

'Misery me!' she sobbed, dropping big tears, 'Behh, behh, bekky! it was to tell you that the wicked wolf had killed my husband, the buck; and now my little orphan and I are in sore need, for he will forage for us no more; and I fear my poor little kid will die of hunger if you cannot help her. So I called to you, noble Master Luck of the Bean-rows, to beg of pity one of those good quart measures of beans hanging from your staff. It will keep us till we get help from our kinsfolk.'

'What you ask, Lady Doe,' said the Luck, taking one of his two measures from his staff, 'is an act of compassion and good-will, and I am glad to do it for you.'

The goat caught up the measure in her lips, and one bound carried her into the leafy thicket.

'My word, but you are in a hurry to be off!' cried Luck of the Bean-rows. 'May I ask you, dear lady, if I am still far from the great town mother is sending me to?'

'You are there already,' answered the goat as she buried herself deep among the bushes.

Once more the Luck went on his way, his staff the lighter by two quart measures. He was looking out for the walls of the big town when he noticed by a rustling along the skirt of the woods that some one was following him closely. He turned quickly towards the sound, with his pronged hoe gripped hard in his hand. Well for him that the prongs were open, for the prowler that was tracking

him was a grim old wolf whose
appearance promised no good.

'So it is you, evil beast!' cried Luck. 'You hoped to give me the place of honour at your evening spread! By good fortune my two iron teeth,' and he glanced at his hoe, 'are worth all yours together, though I would not belittle *them*; so you may take it as settled, old crony, that you are to sup this evening without me. Consider yourself in luck, too, if I do not avenge the husband of the she-goat and the father of the kid who have been brought into pitiful straits by your cruelty. Perhaps I ought to, and it would only be justice, but I have been brought up with such a horror of blood that I am loth to shed even a wolf's.'

So far the wolf had listened in deep humility; now he suddenly broke into a long and lamentable howl and turned up his eyes to heaven as if calling on it to bear witness.

'Oh, power divine, who clothed me as a wolf,' he sobbed, 'you know if ever I felt wicked desires in my heart. However, my lord,' he added, with a bow of resignation towards Luck of the Bean-rows, 'it lies with you to dispose of my wretched life. I place it at your mercy without fear and without

remorse. If you think it right to make my death atone for the crimes of my race I shall die at your hands without repining; for ever since I fondled you in your cradle with pure delight, when your lady mother was not there, I have ever loved you dearly and truly honoured you. Then you grew so handsome, so stately, that, only to look at you, one might have guessed you would become a great and magnanimous prince, as you have. Only I beg you to believe, before you condemn me, I did not stain these claws in the blood of the doe's luckless mate.

'I was brought up on principles of restraint and moderation—my fell is sprinkled with grey—but through all the years I have never swerved from them. At the time you mention I was abroad among my scattered tribesfolk, proclaiming sound moral doctrines in the hope of leading them by word and example to a frugal standard of living, that high aim of wolfish character. I will go further, my lord; that mountain goat was my good friend. I encouraged promising qualities in him; often we travelled together, discoursing by the way, for he had a bright

wit and eagerness to learn. In my absence a sad quarrel for precedence (you know how touchy these rock people are on this point) was the cause of his death, which I have never got over.'

The wolf wept—from the very depth of his heart it seemed, as inconsolable as the doe herself.

'For all that and all that,' said the Luck of the Bean-rows, who had kept the prongs of his weeding-hook open, 'you were stalking me.'

'Following you, following you, yes,' replied the wolf in wheedling tones, 'in the hope of interesting you in my benevolent purpose, but in some more suitable place than this for conversation. Ah, I said to myself, if my lord Luck of the Bean-rows, whose reputation is spread far and wide, would but share in my scheme of reform, he would have to-day a splendid opportunity. I warrant that one quart measure of those dainty beans hanging from his staff would convert a tribe of wolves, wolflings, and cubs to a vegetable diet, and preserve countless generations of bucks, does, and kids.'

'It is the last of my measures,' thought the Luck to himself, 'but what do I want with cups and

balls, rubies and humming-tops?
And who would put child's play
before something really useful?
'There are your beans,' he said
as he took the last measure his
mother had given him for his
amusement. All the same he did
not shut the prongs of his hoe.
'It is all that is left of my own,'
said he, 'but I don't regret it;
and I shall be grateful to you,
friend wolf, if you put it to the
good use you have promised.'
The wolf snapped his fangs on it
and bounded away to his den.
'My word,' said Luck of the
Bean-rows, 'you are in a hurry
to be off! May I ask, Master Wolf,
if I am still far from the great
town mother is sending me to?'
'You have been there for long
enough,' replied the wolf, laughing
out of the corners of his eyes;
'and stay there a thousand years
you will see nothing new.'

Yet once more Luck of the Bean-rows went on his way, and kept looking about for the town walls, but never a glimpse of them was to be seen. He was beginning to feel tired when he was startled by piercing cries which came from a leafy by-path. He ran towards the sound.

'What is it?' he shouted, and gripped his weeding-hook. 'Who is it crying for help? Speak; I cannot see you.'

'It is I, it is Pea-Blossom,'

replied a low, sweet voice. 'Oh, do come and get me out of this fix, Master Luck of the Bean-rows. It is easy as wishing and will cost you nothing.'

'Believe me, madam,' said the Luck, 'it is not my way to count the cost when I can help. Whatever I have is yours to command, except these three quart measures of beans on my staff; they are not mine, they belong to father and mother. Mine I have just given away to a venerable owl, to a saintly wolf who is preaching like a hermit, and to the most charming of mountain does. I have not a bean left that I can offer you.'

'You are laughing at me,' returned Pea-Blossom, somewhat displeased. 'Who spoke of beans, sir? I have no need for your beans; they are not known in my household. The service you can do me is to turn the door-handle of my carriage and throw back the hood—it is nearly smothering me.'

'I shall be delighted, madam,' said Luck of the Bean-rows, 'if I could only discover your carriage. No trace of a carriage here! And no room to drive on such a narrow path. Still I shall soon find it, for

I can hear that you are quite close to me.'

'What!' she cried with a merry laugh, 'you cannot see my carriage! Why, you almost trampled on it, running up in your wild way. It is right in front of you, dear Luck of the Bean-rows. You can tell it by its elegant appearance, which is something like a dwarf pea.'

'It is so like a chick pea,' thought the Luck as he bent down, 'that if I hadn't looked very close I should have taken it for nothing but a chick pea.'

One glance, however, showed him that it was really a very large dwarf pea, round as an orange, yellow as a lemon, mounted on four little golden wheels, equipped with a dainty 'boot,' or hold-all, made of a tiny peascod as bright and green as morocco.

He touched the handle; the door flew open; and Pea-Blossom sprang out like a grain of touch-me-not, and lighted nimbly and gaily on her feet.

The Luck stood up in amazement; never had he conceived of any one so lovely as Pea-Blossom. Her face, indeed, was the most perfect a painter could have imagined—sparkling almond eyes of a wonderful violet, and a small frolicsome mouth which showed glimpses of bright teeth as white as alabaster. Her short dress, slightly puffed out and brocaded with sweet-peas, came just below the knee. She wore tight stockings of white silk; and her adorable little feet—why, one envied the lucky shoemaker who shod them in satin.

'What can you be staring at?' she asked, which shows, by the way, that Luck of the Bean-rows was not making a very brilliant appearance.

The Luck blushed, but quickly recovered himself. 'I was wondering,' he said modestly, 'how so beautiful a princess, just about my own size too, could possibly find room in a dwarf pea.'

'What a mistake to speak so slightingly of my carriage, Luck of the Bean-rows. It is a most comfortable carriage when it is open. And it is quite by chance that I have not my equerry, my almoner, my tutor, my secretary,

and two or three of my ladies-in-waiting with me. But I like driving alone, and this fancy of mine caused the accident that has happened to me to-day.

'I don't know whether you have met the king of the crickets in company; no one could mistake his glittering black mask, like Harlequin's, with two straight

movable horns, and his shrill sing-song whenever he speaks. The king of the crickets condescended to fall in love with me. He is quite well aware that I come of age to-day, and that it is the custom for the princesses of our house to choose a husband when they are ten years old. So he put himself in my way—that too is the custom—and beset me with a frightful racket of piercing declarations. I answered him—

also according to custom—by stopping my ears.'

'Oh, joy!' exclaimed the Luck in rapture. 'You are not going to marry the king of the crickets?'

'I am not going to marry him,' Pea-Blossom declared with dignity. 'My choice is made. But no sooner had I given my decision than the odious Crik-Crik (that is his name) flung himself on my carriage like a wild monster, and slammed down the hood. "Get married now, saucy minx," he shrieked, "get married if any one ever comes a-wooing you in this plight. *I* don't care a chick pea either for your kingdom or yourself."'

'But do tell me,' cried Luck of the Bean-rows indignantly, 'in what hole this king of the crickets is skulking. I will quickly hoe him out and fling him bound hand and foot to your mercy. And yet,' he continued, as he rested his head on his hand, 'I can understand his desperation. But is it not my duty, princess, to escort you to your realm and protect you from pursuit?'

'That would certainly be advisable if I were far from the frontier,' answered Pea-Blossom, 'but yonder is a field of sweet-peas

which my enemy dare not
approach, and where I can count
upon my faithful subjects.'
As she spoke she struck the
ground with her foot, and fell,
clinging to two swaying stalks,
which bent under her and then
sprang up again, scattering their
fragrant blossom over her hair.
As Luck of the Bean-rows watched
her with delight—and I assure you
I would have been delighted too—
she pierced him with her bright
eyes, and he was so spell-bound
in the maze of her smile that he
would have been happy to die
watching her. At the least he might
have been still standing there had
she not spoken.
'I have delayed you too long
already,' she said, 'for I know
what a stirring business the trade
in beans must be just at present;
but my carriage—or rather your
carriage—will enable you to
recover the time you have lost.

Please do not hurt my feelings by refusing so slight a gift. I have a thousand carriages like it in the corn-lofts of the castle, and when I would like a new one I pick it out of a handful and throw the rest to the mice.'

'The least of your highness's favours would be the pride and joy of my life,' replied the Luck of the Bean-rows, 'but you have forgotten that I have luggage. I can easily imagine that however closely my bean measures may be filled I could manage to find room for your carriage in one of them, but to get my measures into your carriage, that would be impossible.'

'Try it,' laughed the princess as

she swung up and down on the sprays of the sweet-peas; 'try it, and do not stand amazed at everything, as if you were a little child who had seen nothing.'
And indeed Luck of the Bean-rows had no difficulty in getting his three quart-measures into the body of the carriage—it could have held thirty and more, and he felt rather mortified.
'I am ready to start, madam,' he said, as he took his place on a plump cushion, which was large enough to let him sit comfortably in any position, or even to lie at full length if he had been so minded.
'I owe it to my kind parents,' he continued, 'not to leave them in suspense as to what has become of me this first time of my ever leaving them; so I am waiting only for your coachman, who fled, no doubt in terror at the outbreak of the king of the crickets, and took the horses and shafts with him. I shall then leave this spot with everlasting regret that I should have seen you without hope of ever seeing you again.'
The princess did not appear to notice the marked feeling of the Luck's last words.
'Why,' she said, 'my carriage

does not need either coachman, shafts, or horses; it goes by steam, and at any hour it can easily do fifty thousand miles. You see you will have no trouble in getting home whenever it suits you. You have just to remember the gesture and words with which I start it.

'In the boot you will find various things that may be useful on the journey; they are every one of them yours. You open the boot as you would shell a green pea. There you will see three caskets, the shape and size of a pea, each fastened by a thread which keeps them in their cases like peas in a pod, so that they cannot jolt against each other when you travel or when you remove them. It is a wonderful contrivance!

'They will open at the pressure of your finger—like the hood of my carriage. Then all you have to do is to make a hole in the ground with your hoe, and sow some of their contents in it, to see whatever you may wish spring up, sprout and blossom. Is not that wonderful?

'Only remember this!—when the third casket is empty I have nothing else to offer you; for I have only three green peas, just as you had three measures of

beans; and the prettiest girl in
the world can give you no more
than she has.
'Are you ready to set out now?'
The Luck of the Bean-rows bowed;
he felt that he could not speak.
Pea-Blossom snapped her thumb
and middle finger: 'Off, chick
pea!' she cried; and the field of
sweet-peas was left nine hundred
miles behind, while Luck of the
Bean-rows was still turning this
way and that, looking in vain for
Pea-Blossom.
'Alas!' he sighed.

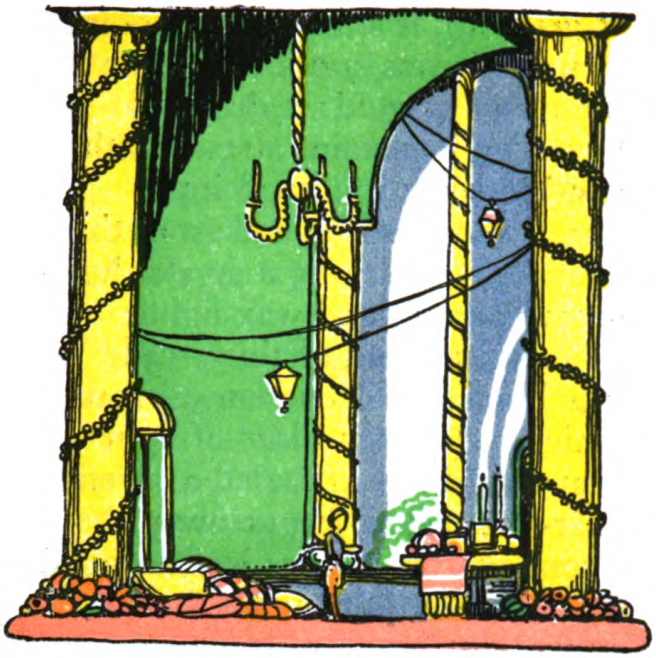
It would be doing scant justice to the speed of the magic carriage to say that it shot through space at the rate of a rifle bullet. Woods, towns, mountains, seas swept by quicker than magic lantern pictures. Far away horizons had scarcely risen in outline from the deep-down distance before they had plunged under the flying carriage. The Luck would have striven in vain to see them; when he turned to look back—flick! they had gone. At last, when he had several times outraced the sun, swept round the globe, caught it up and again outstripped it, with rapid changes from day to night and from night to day, it suddenly struck the Luck of the Bean-rows that he had passed the great town he was going to and the market for his beans.

'The springs of this carriage are a trifle lively,' he thought to himself (he was nimble-witted, remember); 'it started off on its giddy race before Pea-Blossom could tell me whither I was bound. I don't see why this journey should not last for ages and ages, for that lovely princess, who is young enough to be something of a madcap, told me how to start the carriage, but had no time to

say how I was to stop it.'
The Luck of the Bean-rows tried all the cries he had heard from carters, wagoners, and muleteers to bring it to a standstill, but it was all to no purpose. Every shout seemed but to quicken its wild career.
It sped from the tropics to the poles and back from the poles to the tropics, across all the parallels and meridians, quite unconcerned by the unhealthy changes of temperature. It was enough to broil them or to turn them to ice before long, if the Luck had not been gifted, as we have frequently remarked, with admirable intelligence.
'Ay,' he said to himself, 'considering that Pea-Blossom sent her carriage flying through the world with "Off, chick pea!" it is just possible we can stop it by saying the exact opposite.'
It was a logical idea.
'Stop, chick pea!' he cried, snapping his finger and thumb as Pea-Blossom had done.
Could a whole learned society have come to a more sensible conclusion? The fairy carriage came to a standstill so suddenly, you could not have stopped it quicker if you had nailed it down.

It did not even shake.
The Luck of the Bean-rows alighted, picked up the carriage, and let it slip into a leather wallet which he carried at his belt for bean samples, but not before he had taken out the hold-all.
The spot where the flying carriage was pulled up in this fashion has not been described by travellers. Bruce says it was at the sources of the Nile. M. Douville places it on the Congo, and M. Saillé at Timbuctoo. It was a boundless plain, so parched, so stony, so wild that there was never a bush to lie under, not a desert moss to lay one's head upon and sleep, not a leaf to appease hunger or thirst.
But Luck of the Bean-rows was not in the least anxious. He prized open the hold-all with his finger-nail, and untied one of the three little caskets which Pea-Blossom had described to him. He opened it as he had opened the magic carriage, and planted its contents in the sand at the points of his hoe.
'Come of this what must come!' he said, 'but I do badly want a tent to shelter me to-night, were it only a cluster of peas in flower; a little supper to keep me going, were it but a bowl of pea-soup sweetened, and a bed to lie upon,

if only one feather of a humming-bird—and all the more as I cannot get back home to-day, I am so worn out with hunger and aching fatigue.'



The words had scarcely left his lips when he saw rising out of the sand a splendid pavilion in the shape of a pergola of sweet-peas.

It grew up, it spread; from point to point it was supported upon ten props of gold; it dropped down leafy curtains strewn with pea-blossom; it curved into numberless arches, and from the centre of each hung a crystal lustre set with perfumed wax lights. The background of this arcade was lined with Venetian mirrors, which reflected a blaze of light that would have dazzled a seven-year-old eagle a league away. From overhead a pea leaf dropped by chance at the Luck's feet. It spread out into a magnificent carpet variegated with all the colours of the rainbow and many more. Around its border stood little round tables loaded with pastry and sweetmeats; and iced fruits in gilded porcelain cups encircled a brimming bowl of sweet-pea soup, sprinkled over with currants black as jet, green pistachio nuts, coriander comfits and slices of pineapple. Amid all this gorgeous show the Luck quickly discovered his bed, and that was the humming-bird's feather which he had wished for. It sparkled in a corner like a jewel dropped from the crown of the Grand Mogul, although it was so tiny that a grain of millet might have concealed it.

At first he thought this pigmy bed
was not quite in keeping with the
rich furnishing of the pavilion,
but the longer he looked at it the
larger it grew, till humming-birds'
feathers were soon lying knee-deep
on the floor—a dream-couch of
topazes so soft, sapphires so
yielding, opals so elastic, that a
butterfly would have sunk deep
if he had lighted on them.
'That will do, that will do,'
cried the Luck of the Bean-rows;
'I shall sleep too soundly as it is.'
I need not say that our traveller
did justice to the feast that was
spread for him, and lost no time
in preparing for bed. Thoughts of
love ran through his mind, but at
twelve years of age love does not
keep one awake; and Pea-Blossom,
whom he had seen but once,
had left him with no
more than the impression of a
delightful dream, the enchantment
of which could only return in
sleep. Another good reason for
going to sleep if you have
remembrances like mine.
The Luck of the Bean-rows,
however, was too cautious to yield
to these idle fancies until he had
made sure that all was safe outside
the pavilion, the very splendour of
which was likely to attract all the

thieves and vagabonds for miles round. You will find them in every country.

So, with his weeding-hook in his hand as usual, he passed out of the magic circle, to make the round of his tent and see that all was quiet.

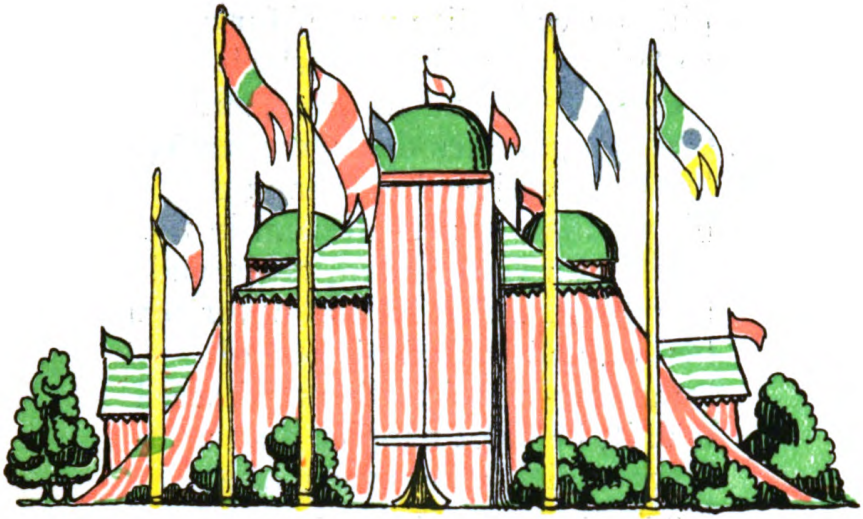
No sooner had he reached the limit of the grounds—a narrow ravine washed out by running water that a kid might have cleared at a bound—than he was brought to a standstill by such a shiver as a brave man feels, for the most valiant has his moments of fright which he can master only by his resolute will. And, faith, there was enough to make one hesitate in what he saw.

It was a battle-front where in the darkness of a starless night glistened two hundred fixed and burning eyes; and along the ranks, from right to left, from left to right, there ran incessantly two keen slanting eyes which bespoke an extremely alert commander.

Luck of the Bean-rows knew nothing of Lavater or Gall or Spurzheim, he had never heard of phrenology, but within him he felt the natural instinct which teaches every living creature to sense an enemy from afar. At a glance he recognized in the leader of this horde of wolves the wheedling coward who had tricked him, with his talk of enlightenment and self-control, out of his last measure of beans.

'Master Wolf has lost no time in setting his lambs on my track,' said Luck of the Bean-rows; 'but by what magic have they overtaken me, every one of them, if these ruffians too have not travelled by chick pea? It is possible,' he added with a sigh, 'that the secrets of science are not unknown to scoundrels, and I dare not be sworn, when I think of it, that it is not they who have invented them so as to persuade simple souls the more easily to take part

in their hateful schemes.'
Though the Luck was cautious in doing, he was quick in planning. He drew the hold-all hastily from his wallet, untied the second pea-casket, opened it as he had done the first, and planted the contents in the sand at the point of his weeding-hook.
'Come of this what must come!' said he; 'but to-night I do badly want a strong wall, were it no thicker than a cabin wall, and a close hedge, if only as strong as my wattle fence, to save me from my good friends the wolves.'
In a twinkle walls arose, not cabin walls, but walls of a palace; hedges sprung up before the porches, not wattle fences, but a high, lordly railing of blue steel with gilded shafts and spear-heads that never a wolf, badger, or fox could have tried to clear without bruising himself or pricking his pointed muzzle. With the art of warfare at the stage it had then reached among the wolves there was nothing to be done. After testing several points the invaders retired in confusion. Thankful for this relief, the Luck returned to his pavilion. But now he passed on over marble pavements, along



pillared walks lit up as if for a wedding, up staircases which seemed to ascend for ever, and through galleries that were endless. He was overjoyed to come upon his pavilion of pea-blossom in the midst of a vast garden, green and blooming, which he had never seen before, and to find his bed of humming-birds' feathers, where, I take it, he slept happier than a king—and I never exaggerate. Next day the first thing he did was to explore the gorgeous dwelling which had sprung out of a little pea. The beauty of the most trifling things in it filled him with astonishment; for the furnishing of it was admirably in keeping with its outward appearance.

He examined, one after another, his gallery of pictures, his cabinet of antiques, his collections of medals, insects, shells, his library, each of them a wonder and a delight quite new to him.
He was especially pleased at the admirable judgment with which the books had been chosen. The finest works in literature, the most useful in science had been gathered together for the entertainment and instruction of a long life—among them the Adventures of the ingenious Don Quixote; fairy tales of every kind, with beautiful engravings; a collection of curious and amusing travels and voyages (those of Gulliver and Robinson Crusoe so far the most authentic); capital almanacks, full of diverting anecdotes and infallible information as to the phases of the moon and the best times for sowing and planting; numberless treatises, very simply and clearly written, on agriculture, gardening, angling, netting game, and the art of taming nightingales—in short, all one can wish for when one has learned to value books and the spirit of their authors. For there have been no other scholars, no other philosophers, no other poets, and for this unquestionable reason,

that all learning, all philosophy, all poetry are to be found in their pages, and to be found only there. I can answer for that.
While he was thus taking account of his wealth, the Luck of the Bean-rows was struck by the

reflection of himself in one of the mirrors with which all the apartments were adorned. If the glass was not fooling him, he must have grown—oh, wonder of wonders!—more than three feet since yesterday. And the brown moustache which darkened his upper lip plainly showed that he was passing from sturdy boyhood to youthful manliness.

He was puzzling over this extraordinary change when, to his great regret, a costly time-piece,

between two pier-glasses, enabled him to solve the riddle. One of the hands pointed to the date of the year, and the Luck saw, without a shadow of doubt, that he had grown six years older.

'Six years!' he exclaimed. 'Unfortunate creature that I am! My poor parents have died of old age, and perhaps in want. Oh, pity me, perhaps they died of grief, fretting over the loss of me. What must they have thought in their last hours of my deserting them or of the misfortune that had befallen me!

'Now I understand, hateful carriage, how you came to travel so fast; days and days were swallowed up in your minutes. Off,

then; off, chick pea!' he
continued as he took the magic
coach from the wallet and flung it
out of the window; 'out of my
sight, and fly so far that no eye
may ever look on you again!'
And to tell the truth, so far as I
know, no one has ever since cast
eyes on a chick pea in the shape
of a post-chaise that went fifty
leagues an hour.
Luck of the Bean-rows descended
the marble steps more sorrowfully
than ever he went down the ladder
of his bean-loft. He turned his
back on the palace without even
seeing it; he traversed those
desert plains with never a thought
of the wolves that might have
encamped there to besiege him.
He tramped on in a dream,
striking his forehead with his hand
and at times weeping.
'What is there to wish for now
that my parents are dead?' he
asked himself as he listlessly
turned the little hold-all in his
fingers, 'now that Pea-Blossom
has been married six years?—
for it was on the day I saw her
that she came of age, and then the
princesses of her house are married.
Besides, she had already made her
choice. What does the whole world
matter—my world, which was made

up of no more than a cabin, a bean-field—which you, little green pea,' and he untied the last of the caskets from its case, 'will never bring back to me! The sweet days of boyhood return no more!

'Go, little green pea, go whither the will of God may carry you, and bring forth what you are destined to bring, to the glory of your mistress. All is over and done with—my old parents, the cabin, the bean-field and Pea-Blossom. Go, little green pea, far and far away.'

He flung it from him with such force that it might have overtaken the magic carriage had it been of that mind; then he sank down on the sand, hopeless and full of sorrow.

When Luck of the Bean-rows raised himself up again the entire appearance of the plain was changed. Right away to the horizon it was a sea of dusky or of sunny green, over which the wind rolled tossing waves of white keel-shaped flowers with butterfly wings. Here they were flecked with violet like bean-blossom, there with rose-like pea-blossom, and when the wind shook them together they were lovelier than the flowers of the loveliest garden plots.

Luck of the Bean-rows sprang forward; he recognized it all—the enlarged field, the improved cabin, his father and mother alive, hastening now to meet him as eagerly as their old limbs would carry them, to tell him that not a day had passed since he went away without their receiving news of him in the evening, and with

the news kindly gifts which had cheered them, and good hopes of his return, which had kept them alive.

The Luck embraced them fondly, and gave them each an arm to accompany him to his palace. Now they wondered more and more as they approached it! Luck of the Bean-rows was afraid of overshadowing their joy, yet he could not help saying: 'Ah, if you had seen Pea-Blossom! But it is six years since she married.' 'Since I married you,' said a gentle voice, and Pea-Blossom threw wide the iron gates: 'My choice was made then, do you not remember? Do come in,' she continued, kissing the old man and the old woman, who could not take their eyes off her, for she too

had grown six years older and was now sixteen; 'do come in! This is your son's home, and it is in the land of the spirit and of day dreams where one no longer grows old and where no one dies.'
It would have been difficult to welcome these poor people with better news.
The marriage festivities were held with all the splendour befitting such high personages; and their lives never ceased to be a perfect example of love, constancy, and happiness.
This is the usual lucky ending of all good fairy tales.

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