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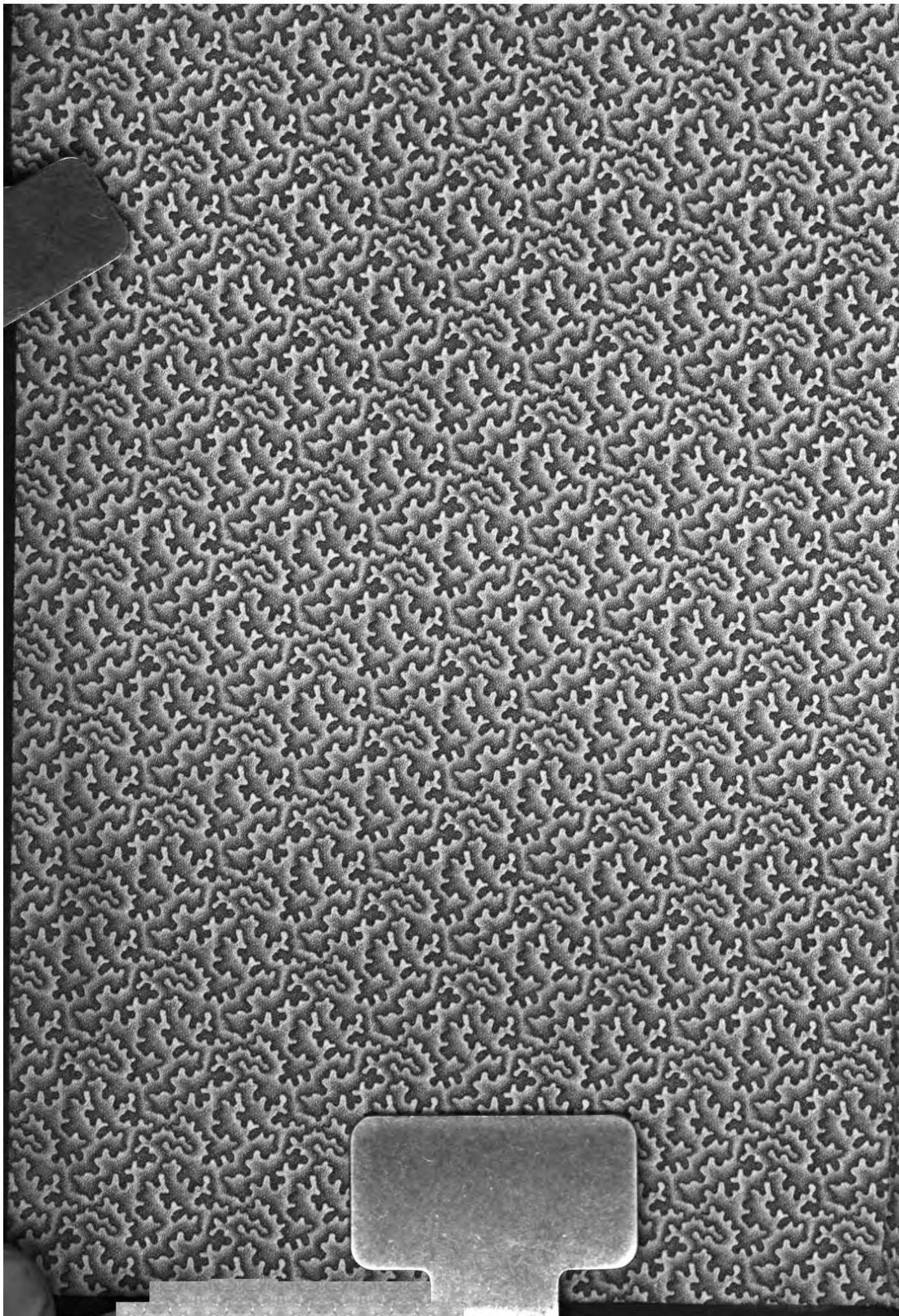
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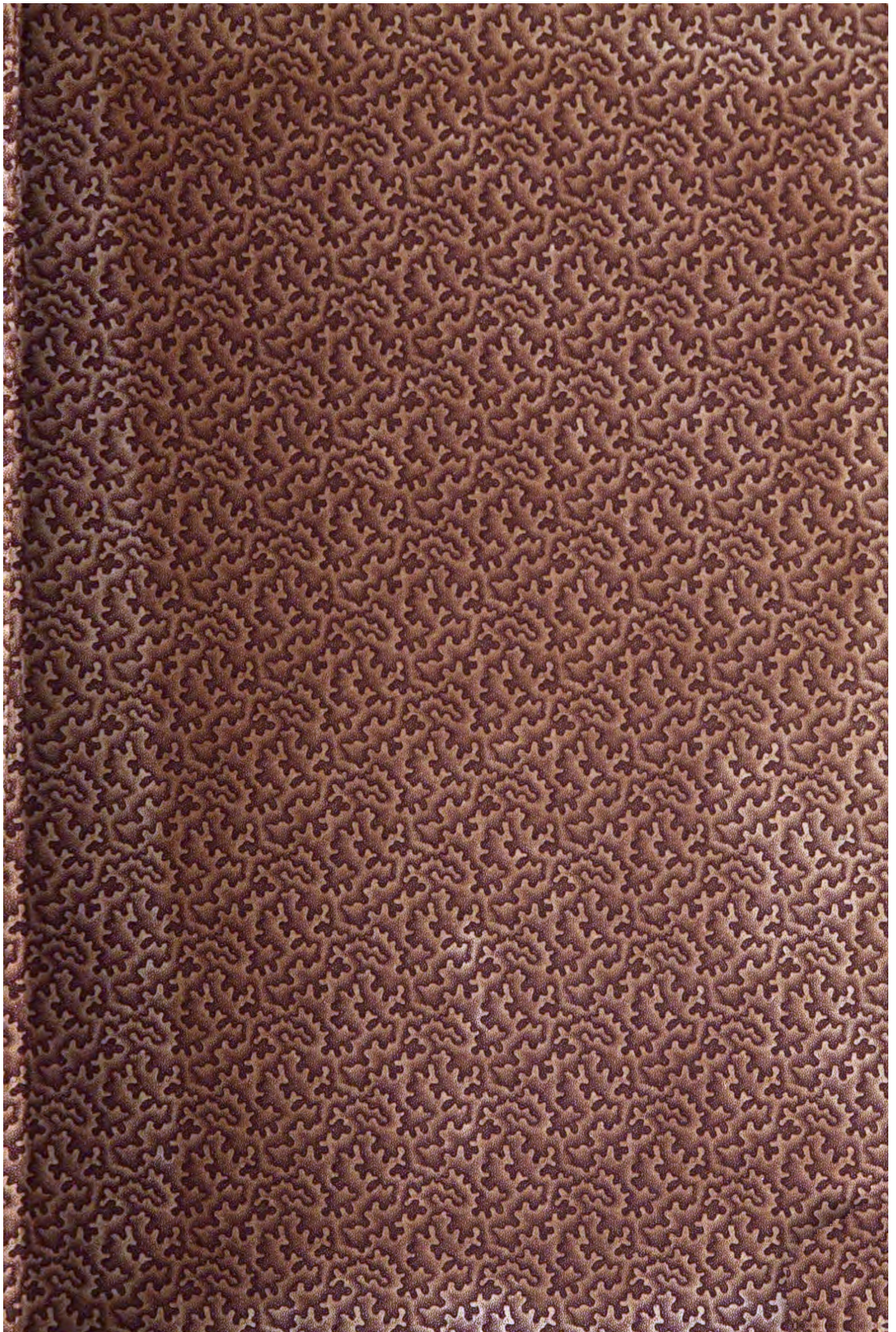


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FAIRY TALES.



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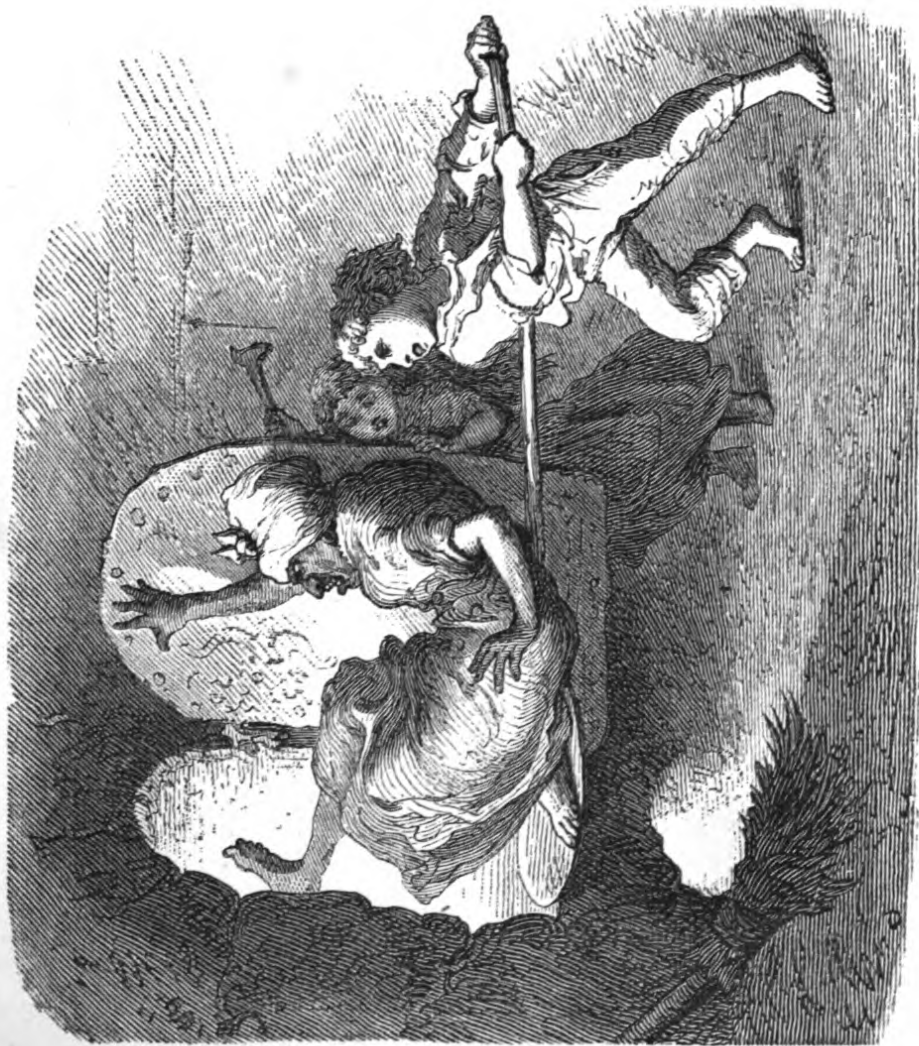
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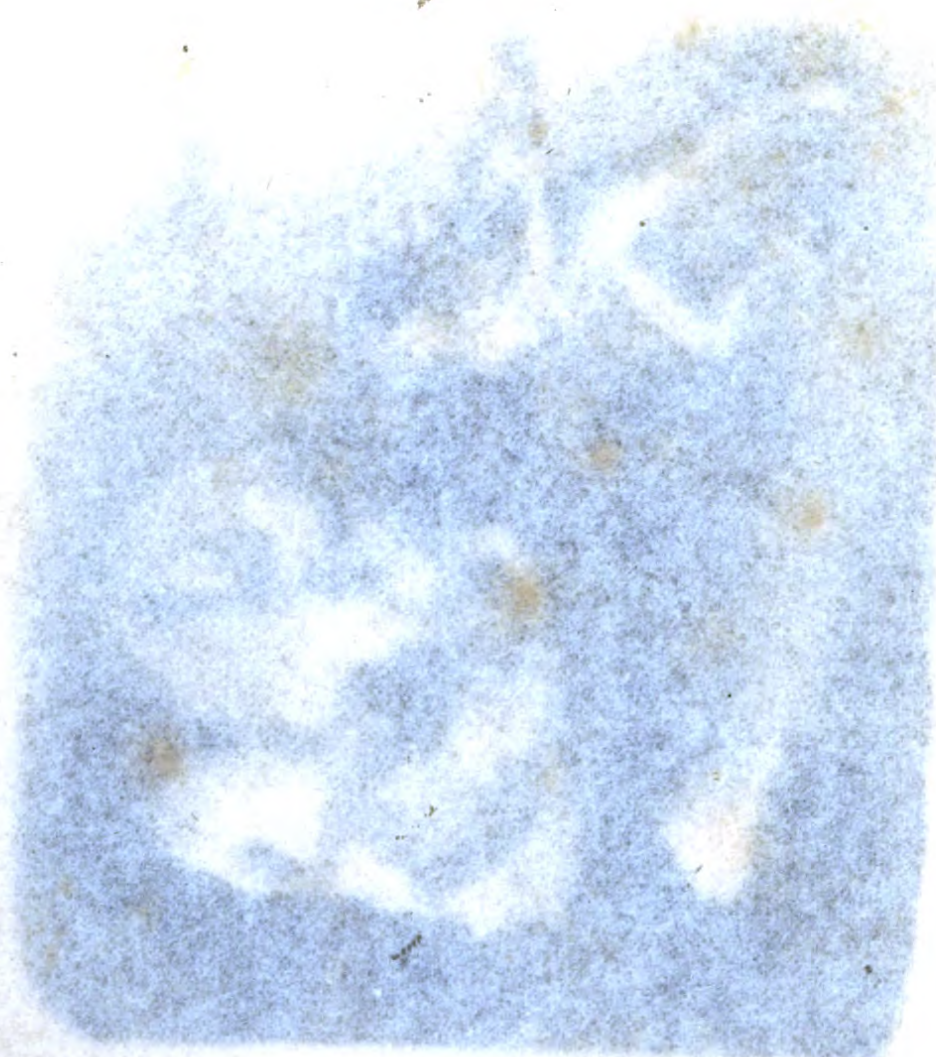


FRONTISPIECE.

[See p. 159.]



W. G. & S. SON, PRINTERS
LONDON, E.C.



OLD NORSE FAIRY TALES,

Gathered from the Swedish Folk.

BY

GEORGE STEPHENS AND H. CAVALLIUS.



WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

E. LUNDGREN,

MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS, LONDON, 1882.
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PREFACE.



ULL Prefaces are rarely read ; and as we have but a few words that are necessary to say, our Preface shall consist of them alone. The sole fact we wish to lay before the reader is that these stories are genuine Folk Tales of unknown antiquity, and transcribed from the mouth of the Swedish peasantry, who have treasured them up from father to son, from son to grandchild, ever since their immigration into old Scandinavia. That the stories are in part common to all the Germanic tribes, as indeed ultimately to the whole Aryan stock, is but natural when we come to trace the history of the first civilization of Europe by the peoples from Asia. A. A.



SWEDISH FOLK TALES.



THE PRINCESS SINGORRA.



DESCENDED from the earliest rulers of the land there once lived a king who governed a mighty realm. He was a great viking, and passed much of his time on board his galleys both in winter and in summer. It happened once, when he was away engaged in warfare, that his galleon suddenly stopped when out on the trackless sea, and could be moved neither forwards nor backwards, and no one knew what it was that stayed the vessel thus. The viking then went to the prow, whence he

saw a water-nymph seated on the billows, from which he understood that it was she who had stayed the course of his galley. He then addressed himself to her, and asked what she wanted.

She answered: "Thou shalt not leave this place unless thou wilt promise me the life of the first being that comes to meet thee on thine own shore."

As the king could think of no means by which he might otherwise pursue his onward course, he was compelled to agree to this. Then at once the galley floated off again, the wind filled her sails, and the viking was favoured with a fair breeze until at last he reached his own land.

The king had an only son, who counted fifteen winters, and who promised well for the future; he loved his father dearly. Therefore when the prince saw the streamers of his father's ship come sailing into the bay, he eagerly ran down to the shore to welcome him home. Then the viking grew sore dismayed, for he remembered what he had promised to the water-nymph. He therefore turned his eyes first towards a hog, and then

towards a goose, that were grunting and waddling on the shore, and immediately ordered the hog to be thrown into the sea, which was quickly done.

The next day there arose a sudden storm, the seas lashed high, and the hog was flung back dead upon the beach, close to the king's castle, and the viking understood by this that the water-nymph was angry. He then ordered the goose to be thrown into the sea, but it happened just in the same way; a new storm and a heavy swell arose, and the billows cast the bird back high up on the strand. It was then clear to the king that it was his only son that the sea-nymph demanded. But the stripling was the apple of his father's eye, so that the king would not have lost him for half his realm.

As things came to pass, the king had to admit that "no one can control his fate," for it happened one day that the lad went down to the sea shore to play with some other children, when suddenly a snowy white hand, with golden rings on each finger, was stretched out to him, which seized him and pulled him down amongst the blue billows. The prince

was thus brought through the sea, and did not stop before he entered the water-nymph's abode. But the Lady of the Boundless Sea has her hall deep down at the bottom of the ocean, and it glimmered with gold and precious gems, both within and without.

The prince now dwelt in the gorgeous castle,



THE LADY OF THE BOUNDLESS SEA.

and there met many other noble and royal youths, amongst whom was a young princess, called Singorra, who had been there seven long years, and knew many secret things. The young prince and Singorra fell deeply in love with one another, and they pledged their troth to each other for the rest of their lives.

One day the Lady-of-the-Deep had the prince brought before her, and she said : “ I have seen full well that thy heart is bent upon possessing my maiden Singorra ; now I will give thee three tasks to perform, and if thou art successful in their accomplishment, then I will bestow the maiden upon thee, and give thee leave to return to thy friends ; but if thou doest them not, then thou must remain here and serve me all the days of thy life.”

The prince had not much to reply to this, and the lady brought him to a vast meadow, thickly covered with green seaweed, and said to him : “ Thy first task shall be to cut off the grass, and then replace it, every blade on its stem, so that it may thrive and grow again as before ; but it must all be done to-day, before the joyous sun sets in his glory.”

With this she left, and the prince began to mow and mow as fast as possible, but ere long he saw that he could never accomplish his task. He then seated himself on the meadow and wept bitterly. All at once, while the prince was sitting weeping, Singorra came walking towards him, and asked him why he was so sorrowful.

The prince answered : " I can do nought but weep, for the Lady-of-the-Deep has ordered me to mow the whole meadow, and then put every blade of grass on its right stem again. If I have not done this before the sun sets behind the forest, I shall lose thee, and every other joy in life."

" I will help thee," the maiden answered, " if thou wilt promise to remain true to me, for never will I prove false to thee."

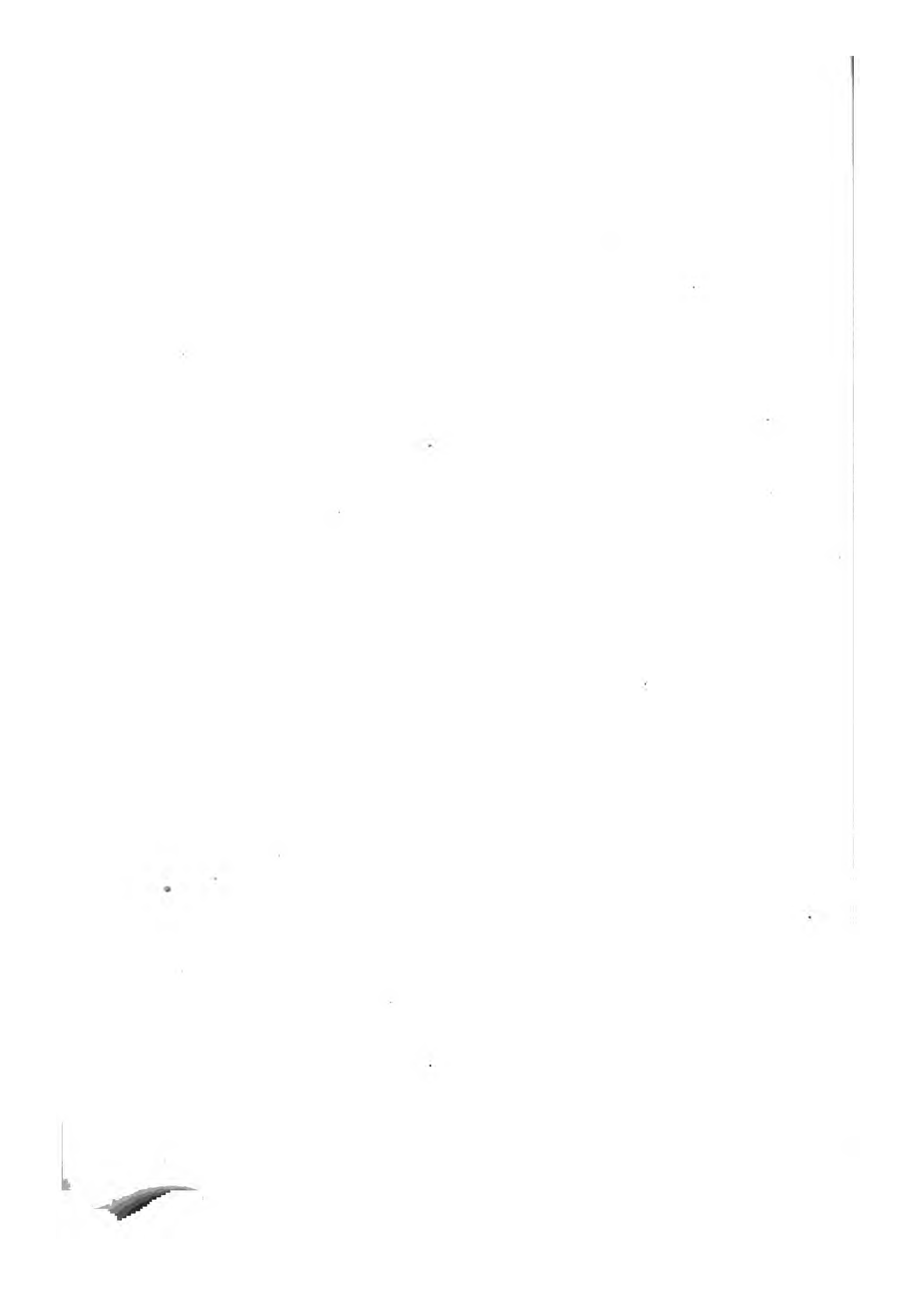
" Yea," the prince thanked her, and said that he would never break his plighted troth to her.

Singorra then took the sickle and touched the grass, and at once the whole meadow lay mowed, and all the little blades fell simultaneously to the ground ; she touched the grass again, and lo ! every blade reared itself on its stem, and the meadow appeared as before. With this the princess left, but the prince went joyfully before his mistress, and told her that he had accomplished the task she had given him to do.

The following day the Lady-of-the-Deep again had the prince brought before her, and said : " I will now set thee another task ; my stables



“I will help thee,” the maiden replied, “if thou wilt promise to remain true to me,
for never will I prove false to thee.”



contain a hundred steeds, but the place has not been cleaned within the memory of man ; now you must repair thither, and clean the stables. If thou hast done it ere eventide, I will keep my promise ; if not, then shalt thou remain here, and serve me all the days of thy life."

With this she departed, and left the prince to himself ; but when he came to the stables he could well see that he could never accomplish this task. He therefore seated himself down, rested his head on his hands, and wept bitterly.

He had not been seated long before Singorra again came walking along, and asked him why he was so sorrowful.

The royal heir answered : " I can do nought but weep, for the Lady-of-the-Deep has ordered me to cleanse her stables, if I do not want to lose thee, and all other joys in life ; but the stables must be cleansed ere the joyous sun sets in his glory."

" I will help thee," the maiden answered, " if thou wilt promise to remain true to me, for never will I prove false to thee."

" Yea," the prince vowed he never would love any other but her.

Singorra then went to the stable door, and seizing a golden whip which hung on the wall, whipped the steed that stood away in the corner farthest from the door. The horse at once tore himself loose, and began to scrape the ground with his hoofs until the whole stable was cleansed in this way, and all the hundred steeds neighed and stamped with delight. When now all was finished the princess went away, but the prince stepped joyously before his mistress and told her that he had performed her commands.

The third day the Lady-of-the-Deep again had the royal heir called before her, and said : “ I will now set thee one more task to do, and if thou canst accomplish that, then I will keep my word as I have promised, but if thou dost not do it as I tell thee, then thou must remain here, and serve me all the days of thy life.”

Then did the prince ask what his mistress demanded.

“ Well,” replied she, “ in my sty I have more than a thousand swine, and it has not been cleaned for some hundreds of years ; now thou must clean the pigsty, and it must be done before the sun sets at eventide.”

With this she brought the prince to a large sty, where lay more swine than could be counted, and the filth had accumulated into a high mountain, so that no one could pass, except by a narrow gangway. Then the Lady-of-the-Deep left, thinking that the prince would surely never accomplish this task. The youth thought so too, and therefore seated himself down, leaned his head on his hand, and wept bitterly.

All at once, whilst he was weeping, Singorra came walking along, and asked him why he was so sorrowful.

The prince answered : “ Yea, I cannot do aught but be sorrowful, for the Lady-of-the-Deep has ordered me to cleanse the whole pigsty, and if it be not done ere nightfall, then shall I lose thee, and all other joys in life.”

The maiden said : “ Be comforted, I will help thee, if thou wilt promise to keep true to me, for never will I prove false to thee.”

“ Yea,” the prince said, “ never in all my life will I forget thee.”

Then Singorra warily crossed the narrow bridge until she came to where an old grey hog lay hidden in the mire, and she sang—

“Hog, hog, the sty pray clean,
Then the prince is free, I ween.”

The words had barely been pronounced, when the hog rushed up, ran about the sty, burrowing with his snout and kicking with his hoofs, until everything was astir, and he did not cease until the whole place was as clean as a deal floor. Then he took to flight, and never returned; but the prince was glad, and went in to his mistress to tell her that he had performed her bidding.

When the Lady-of-the-Deep heard this, she became fearful in her wrath, and thought she would soon see which was the more effectual, her craftiness or the prince's fortune. She then pretended to take no further notice of him; but early in the morn, at dawn of day, she called the young swain to her and told him to depart to her sister to fetch some wedding garments; she also handed him a box in which to keep the marriage costume. When the prince was ready to start on his errand, the fair Singorra came walking towards him, and said:

“I hear that thou art about to travel to the water-nymph's sister, and I fear we shall never

meet again, unless thou wilt do as I tell thee. Here are two iron knives, two iron axes, two woollen caps, and two breads ; these, thou must take with thee and give away on the road whenever it seemeth good so to do. But when thou hast arrived, thou must take great care to see where thou sittest down, for if thou seatest thyself in the white chair, thou wilt sink, and sink, even to the bottom of the sea, and never more come up again. If thou seatest thyself in the red chair, thou wilt burn, and burn for ever, and never again grow cool. If thou seatest thyself in the blue chair, thou wilt be palsied, and suffer sudden death, and we shall never meet again. If thou seatest thyself in the yellow chair, thou wilt become despondent, and yearn, and pine away, and never regain thy health and vigour. But in the black chair thou mayst sit down, for in it thou wilt remain unscathed." And she added, "And here is a silken cushion to place under the snake that twists itself on the hall floor ; but before everything else, eat thou not of the food, for then thou wilt die, and never again shall I see thee !"

The prince thanked her much for her kind

advice, then bade her farewell, and set out on his journey. When he had travelled awhile, he came up to two handicraftsmen, who were busy with carpenter's work ; but they had only one knife between them, and that was very bad, for it was of wood. The prince then remembered what Singorra had told him, and took out his two iron knives, and gave them to the two men. When he had travelled a bit farther, he came up to two wood-cutters, but their work went very slowly, for they had only one axe between them, and that very bad, for it was of wood. The prince then remembered the advice of his beloved, and he made each of them a present of an iron axe. After this he continued his journey, and came to where two men stood by the wayside, grinding a handmill, but a cold wind was blowing, and the men were bare-headed. The prince again thought of Singorra, and he gave to each man a woollen cap. Again he continued his way, and came at last to the castle gates, when a wolf and a bear rushed against him, and the wolf opened his jaws, and the bear roared ; but the prince was not to be baffled, so he brought out one of his breads, and broke it in two, and gave a

piece each to the wolf and the bear ; the wild beasts now slunk back into their dens, and left the road free, and the prince without any further adventure arrived at the home of the witch.

When he entered the castle, he was taken before the Queen of the Water-witches, greeted her from her sister, and told his errand. And now he was exceedingly well received, and the old crone promised to arrange the wedding garments as requested. She then had a white chair placed for him, and asked the prince to rest himself after his long journey. But he remembered Singorra's word, and answered that he was not tired. Then the queen caused a red chair to be brought forth ; but the prince answered as before that he could perfectly well stand. The old crone then had a blue chair carried forward, but the youth would not yet sit down. The same also occurred with the yellow chair, and when again asked to seat himself, he went furthest up the hall and seated himself in the black chair, saying, " Here it seems to me it will be good to rest a little while."

The old crone perceived by this that he was

wary, but it is not known if she became more friendly for that.

The Queen of the Water-witches now brought out a sausage, and asked the prince to eat, saying, that surely he needed some food after his long wandering. Well, the prince excused himself, but it availed not; eat he must, whether he would or no. After this the old



crone went away to arrange about the wedding garments; but first she spoke to her snake, which lay coiled up in a corner of the hall :

“Thou, my own dear snake,
Guard him well, asleep, awake !”

When now the prince observed the snake twisting himself on the hall floor, he remembered Singorra's advice; he therefore went up

to it, and gently stroking it with his hand, placed the silken cushion under his head. This done, the prince stole away into the corner of the hall and hid the sausage under the broom, and then returned to his seat. Scarcely had he done this, when the Queen of the Water-witches returned, and asked if he had partaken of the food which she had given to him. The prince answered that he had eaten plenty.

The witch then said :

“ My own sausage dear,
Art thou there or art thou here ? ”

The sausage answered :

“ On this heap of dust
I lie, and lie I must ! ”

The queen then became angry, fetched out the sausage, and told the prince to be sure and eat it all before she returned, whether he liked it or no. With that she left him, but first spoke to the snake :

“ Thou, my own dear snake,
Watch him well, asleep, awake ! ”

When the old crone had gone away, the prince knew not for the life of him where to

hide the sausage. At last he hit upon the plan of hiding it in his bosom. In a little while the witch returned, and again asked if he had eaten his fill.

The prince answered as before.

The Queen of the Water-witches then said :

“ My own sausage dear,
Art thou there or art thou here ? ”

The sausage replied :

“ Here inside
I rest and hide ! ”

The old crone felt pleased at this and said :

“ Art thou in the bosom safe,
Gnaw the bowels and make them chafe.”

The young prince then received the box with wedding garments, bade farewell to the Queen of the Water-witches, and started homewards ; but he had only got into the courtyard when the sausage began to move under his clothes, and changed into a hideous dragon, which spreading out its wings flew high up into the air. The prince grew afraid at this, and sped away as fast as he could ; but when he

came again to the castle gates, the old crone called out,—

“ My own rough bear, catch him !
To a thousand bits tear and scratch him ! ”

At once the bear rushed forward, but the youth took half a bread and flung it into the mouth of the beast.

The bear then said :

“ Hungry did I feel ;
Now I have my meal ”—

and with that trudged off to his den. But the prince continued his route, and came to the wolf.

The witch then called out :

“ Bite, my wolf, and growl as thunder,
Tear and rend him all asunder. ”

At once the wolf rushed forward and opened his jaws, but the young prince took the last half of his last bread and threw it into the wolf's mouth. The wolf then went back to his den saying :

“ Hungry did I feel ;
Now I have my meal. ”

Now it seemed best to the young prince not

to tarry, so he took to his heels and ran off as fast as his legs would carry him, and then came to the two men who were grinding at the hand-mill.

The Queen of the Water-witches then called out .

“ Ye millers twain,
Grind him to grain.”

But when the millers saw who it was, they would not harm him, but said : “ We must not return evil for good ; *he* gave us woollen caps, formerly we were bareheaded,” and they continued to grind, never once leaving off. But the youth ran away along the road, and came to the men who did carpenters’ work.

The old crone then called out :

“ Handicraftsmen bold and true,
Cut him small, between ye two.”

But when the two men saw who it was, they neither would do him any harm, but said : “ We must not return evil for good ; formerly we had to cut with wooden knives, *he* gave us knives of iron,” and they went on with their work. But the prince ran onwards, and came to the two woodcutters.

Then the witch called out anew :

“Woodcutters true,
Chop him in two.”

But when the woodcutters saw who it was, they would not harm him in any way, but said : “We must not return evil for good ; formerly we only had axes of wood, but *he* gave us axes of iron.” And they began to hew as fast as before. But the young prince ran away along the road, and did not stop before he again came to the abode of the Lady-of-the-Deep. The prince went before his mistress, handed to her the wedding garments, and gave an account of his mission. When the Lady-of-the-Deep saw him safe and sound, she felt full of wrath, but she said nothing. Night was coming, and people were going to bed. The beautiful Singorra then came to the prince saying, “The old crone is now full of wrath ; and we must speedily fly hence, if we hold our lives dear.”

The prince asked : “How is that to be managed ? We shall never be able to get away from the water-witch’s abode without her consent.”

But the maiden bade him take heart. "I may hit upon some means," she said, "if thou wilt promise to keep true to me, for never will I prove false to thee."

And the young prince vowed anew that he would never love anybody in the world but her.

Singorra then said: "Get thee down to the stables, and place the golden saddle on the sable stallion, and the silver saddle on the black mare. At midnight we will depart."

The prince hastened to do as she had told him; he put the golden saddle on the sable stallion, and the silver saddle on the black mare. But Singorra went up into the maiden's loft, and twisted some clouts together, making three little dolls, which she placed, one by the bedside, one in the middle of the room, and one on the threshold; then she made a cut in the little finger of her left hand, and allowed a drop of blood to fall on each doll, saying, "Thou must reply for me, when I am away."

At the hour of midnight the two royal lovers stole gently down into the stable, and mounting their steeds, they swiftly sped from the abode of the Lady-of-the-Deep. But when night

waned, before the early dawn and the cock crew, the water-witch awoke in her chamber and called out :

“ My own Singorra love,
Sleep'st thou yet above ? ”

“ No, sweet lady, ” replied the doll which stood by the bedside.

After a little while the Lady-of-the-Deep again called out :

“ My own Singorra love,
What dost thou up above ? ”

“ I am making the fire, sweet lady, ” answered the second doll, which stood in the middle of the boarded floor.

Again a little while elapsed, and the old crone called out the third time :

“ My own Singorra love,
Doth the fire burn above ? ”

“ Aye, it doth, sweet lady, ” replied the third doll, which stood on the threshold.

When it became full daylight, the Lady-of-the-Deep came herself into the maiden's loft, and you may be sure that she was not very pleased when she found the cage empty and nobody there except the dolls, which stood on

the floor staring at her. Then she ran down to the stable to look for her steeds; but there she got no consolation either, for the two sable horses were missing, and by this she could well understand that the royal lovers had escaped. The Lady-of-the-Deep waxed exceeding angry, and vowed that the two fugitives should not escape her punishment. She therefore called out to her man-servant, saying: "Make haste and saddle my own buck, who takes seven hundred miles every stride; ride off and catch everything, both great and small."

And the groom was quickly ready; he saddled the buck, bestrode it, and darted off, like a gale of wind across the billows. When now Singorra heard this din and noise behind her, she knew at once what was afoot. She therefore turned to the young prince, saying: "List to the howling wind! We must now beware, for the water-witch's buck is abroad."

She then transformed herself and the prince into two little mice, which ran and played along the road. This was scarcely done before the servant of the water-witch came tearing through the air, so that it whizzed around him. When he saw the two little mice, he thought

to himself, "Surely, my mistress did not include those." He then rode on until he came to the end of the road, and then he turned back, without having found anything. When he returned home, the water-witch stood in the courtyard, and asked: "Well, hast thou found them?"

"No," answered the groom; "I saw nothing, except two little mice playing by the roadside."

"Thou shouldst have caught them," said the Lady-of-the-Deep, and she grew very full of wrath. "Now turn back, and catch all, both great and small."

The groom again mounted the fleet-footed buck, and off he started, like a blast. When Singorra heard the din and noise behind her, she said to her companion, "List to the howling wind! We must now beware, for the water-witch's buck is abroad."

She then transformed herself and her beloved into two little birds, which flitted on their wings, to and fro, in the air.

And then suddenly the servant dashed past them like a flash of lightning, and he saw the two little birds playing in the air, but he

thought to himself, "Surely, it cannot be those which my mistress meant." He then rode onward, but turned at last, without having found anything. When he returned home, the water-witch stood in the courtyard, and asked: "Well, hast thou found them?"

"No," answered the servant; "I saw nothing, except two little birds which fluttered in the air."

"Just those thou shouldst have caught," said the Lady-of-the-Deep, and she became fearfully furious. "Turn back once more, and catch *everything*, both great and small."

The servant again bestrode the fleet-footed buck, and off he went, quick as thought.

But when Singorra heard the din and noise behind her, she said to the young prince: "List to the howling wind! We must beware, for the water-witch's buck is again abroad."

She then changed herself and her beloved into two trees, which stood by the wayside; but the trees had no roots. Scarcely was this done before the groom came by on his buck, with such speed that the very air whizzed around. When he now beheld the two trees, he thought to himself, "Surely, it cannot be

those two trees that my mistress meant." He rode past, and at last turned back, disappointed in his errand. When he arrived home, the water-witch stood in the courtyard, and asked : " Well, hast thou found them ? "

" No," answered the servant; " I saw nothing, except two trees which stood by the wayside."

" Just those thou shouldst have taken," said the Lady-of-the-Deep. " Did I not bid thee take *everything*, both great and small things ? "

The old crone now grew exceeding angry, and started herself on the road to overtake the fugitives.

But Singorra had used the time well, and when the water-witch had come to the limit of her realm the two royal children were already across the boundary, beyond which she had no further power over them.

The prince and the beauteous Singorra journeyed along their route, and at last got out of the sea, not far from the king's demesne. As soon as the youth recognised his father's abode, he was seized with an ardent longing to return home to see how it fared with his friends, and if they were still alive. Singorra opposed this with all her might, for she had a shrewd guess

how it would end ; but the prince pleaded so winningly, that at last she yielded to his wishes. He was now to ride forth to the king's castle, but Singorra was to remain and bide his return. When they were about to part, the princess said : " One thing thou must promise me for all the love and troth I have shown to thee ; thou must speak to no one in thy father's house, for then thou wilt at once forget thy word and troth, which thou hast pledged to me."

The prince readily promised that for certain he would speak to no one if he were allowed to depart. And with that he rode off ; but the royal maiden seated herself on the roadside, and wept bitterly. When the prince arrived at his father's house, there was great joy among his relations, and they eagerly hastened to greet him with great friendliness. But the prince was so strange, he would neither speak nor answer, but immediately prepared to set off again. When he was riding through the castle gates, the mastiffs came rushing against him, barking loudly, and the prince forgot his promise, and unwarily called out, " Be off! be off ;" and in the same moment changed his

mind and wishes,—he forgot his lady love and everything else, and his past life seemed nothing to him but a vanished dream. He now again returned to his friends, and was received by all with great love and joy. And there was great rejoicing throughout the king's court, yea, throughout the whole realm, that the king had got back his only son, who had been lost so long a time.

Now let us return and see how it fared with Singorra, where she sat waiting for her prince. She waited and waited patiently, but no young prince came back. Then she well understood what had come to pass, and she grieved deeply, and withdrew from the high-road to a sylvan spring, where she seated herself weeping. Towards early morn, when the sun arose, there came a young girl along to fetch water, and when she leaned over the spring and saw the beauteous image of Singorra reflected in it, she felt highly delighted, and could not but think that they were her own features she beheld. She therefore clapped her hands with joy, exclaiming :

“What! have I really become so beautiful! then I am not fit any longer to sit in the old

hut to take care of my blind old father." With these words she left her jar and ran away.

But Singorra filled the jar with water and went to the old man in the hut, and tended him as lovingly as if he had been her own father. The old man could not think either but that it was his own daughter, though it seemed strange to him that she so suddenly had changed her behaviour.

In the meantime a great rumour spread through the neighbourhood regarding the blind man's daughter, who was said to be so beautiful, that a fairer creature was nowhere to be seen. This report also reached the courtiers at the king's castle, and they were determined to find out the truth of the report, which also said that the maiden was as proud as she was beautiful. They now agreed that they should, one after another, try to gain her favour, and opined that the old saw, "The bird despises the huntsman until the arrow is shot," would prove true at last. Towards evening, the first courtier was to try his fortune, and he repaired to the old man's hut, and seated himself, then began chatting with the fair maiden, and offered to help her in the household, as young men are

wont to do. When now it grew late, and the people were about to go to bed, the courtier would not leave, but asked to be allowed to remain for the night.

Singorra pretended that she had nothing against his staying, but suddenly she exclaimed : " Oh, dear me, I have forgotten to pull the damper to in the stranger's bedroom, and the cold night air will get in through the flue."

The courtier was ready at once, and offered to do it for her, for which she thanked him, and said : " Tell me when thou hast hold of the handle."

" Now I hold it," answered the courtier.

The princess then called out :

" Damper hold the man, and man hold the damper,
All to the light of day."

The courtier was now in a fix, for he could neither move one way or another, but was kept pulling the damper all night through. When day came again, he got free, and stole crest-fallen home to the king's castle ; and no wonder he would not relate how very humiliatingly his venture had ended.

The next evening the second courtier was to start, and try his fortune. He therefore repaired to the old man's hut, seated himself beside the young maiden, and said many sweet words, as is the wont of young men to do. When now it grew late and the people were going to bed, the courtier would not leave, but asked if he might remain during the night.

The maiden granted this request, and appeared to be very friendly; but suddenly she exclaimed: "Oh, dear me, I have forgotten to close the door of the stranger's bedroom, and it will be very cold during the night."

The courtier was ready at once, and offered to close it in her stead.

The maiden thanked him, and said: "Tell me when thou layest hold of the lock."

"I have it now," answered the courtier.

The princess then called out:

"Lock keep the man, and man keep the lock,
All to the light of day."

The courtier was now fixed to the door, and was kept there pulling and pulling all night, until day broke; then he got free, and stole crestfallen home to the king's castle. But he

took good care that nobody should get to know what adventures had befallen him.

The third evening the last courtier was to go and try his fortune. He therefore went away to the old man's hut, and, seating himself beside the young maiden, praised her great beauty, in words such as women like to hear about their comeliness. Well, the princess pretended that she was listening to his talk, and appeared to be very friendly. When it grew late, and the people were going to bed, the courtier would on no account leave, but prayed that he might be allowed to remain, and Singorra granted his request; but suddenly she exclaimed :

“Oh, dear me, I have forgotten to put the calf in the cowhouse, and that must be done.”

The courtier was ready at once, and offered to do it for her.

“No,” said Singorra; “the calf is difficult to catch; tell me, however, when thou hast got sure hold of him.”

“Well, now I have got him,” answered the courtier, as he seized the calf by the tail.

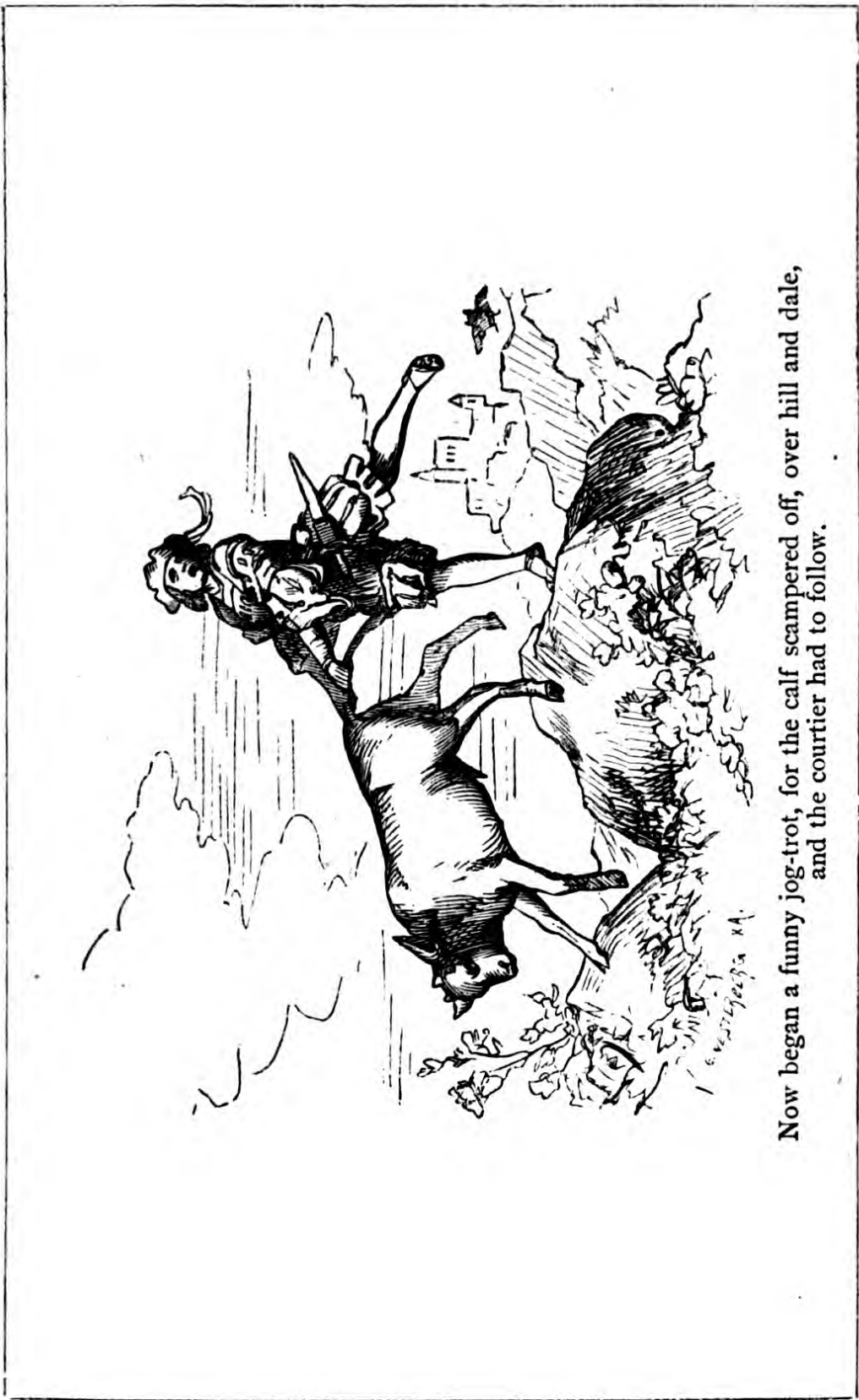
The princess then called out :—

“Calf keep man, and man keep calf,
And scamper o’er hill and scamper o’er dale,
All to the light of day.”

Now began a funny jog-trot; for the calf scampered off, over hill and dale, and the courtier had perforce to follow, with his hands stuck to the calf’s tail. Thus they scampered away during the whole night until the sun rose, when the courtier was so exhausted that he could scarcely move. He managed, however, to crawl back to the king’s court, and thought it would not bring him much honour if it became known how his adventures had ended.

Whilst all this was taking place, the king and queen conferred together, thinking that the time had now come when the prince should marry. They therefore sent their son off to foreign lands, and there he engaged himself to the young daughter of a king. A wedding was prepared, and there was mirth and joy throughout the king’s realm.

But it happened one day that the prince went out driving with his young bride, and they arrived at the hut where Singorra sat with the blind old man. When they were about to drive past, the horses became restive, broke the



Now began a funny jog-trot, for the calf scampered off, over hill and dale,
and the courtier had to follow.



shaft, kicked in the chariot, and ran away, so that no one could catch them. Everybody was in great perplexity, and much consultation took place how the young couple might get back to the palace. But the three courtiers looked at each other, and the one spake : “ I know full well where we can get a new shaft. In this hut lives a maiden ; if she will lend us the damper-handle, which lies along the rafters, I am sure it would do for a shaft to the chariot.”

The second courtier said : “ I know full well how we may mend the chariot. If the girl will lend us the door of the hut, I am sure it will fit in.”

The third courtier added : “ The worst will be to get horses ; but if the maiden will lend us her calf, I feel sure it is strong enough to draw the whole chariot, were it never so heavy.”

Since no better counsel was to be had, the prince sent a messenger to the maiden to ask if she would lend him the damper-handle, the hut-door, and the calf.

To this she consented, on one condition, that she might be invited to the prince's wedding, which was granted her. The damper-handle was now used for a chariot shaft, and fitted

exactly ; the hut-door was laid in the bottom of the chariot, and fitted exactly ; the calf was harnessed to the vehicle, and the prince and his bride returned to the royal castle with joy and comfort.

When soon the wedding-day arrived, Singorra clad herself in a garment wrought with silk, and adorned herself with costly gems, and went to the king's castle. Her robes shone with the purest gold in every seam, and she herself was so beautiful, that everybody considered in wonderment that she must be the daughter of a king. Then all the wedding-guests seated themselves at table, and each watched the stranger maiden to see what she might do. After a little time had passed, Singorra produced a small box, in which were three small birds, and three grains of gold, and when the maiden opened the lid, out skipped the birds and flew across the table to where the bridegroom was sitting. They each held a little golden grain in their beaks, except the last bird, that had forgotten his grain. Then said the other two birds : " Look ! now thou hast forgotten thy golden grain, like as the young prince forgot Singorra."

At the same moment a light, as it were, broke in upon the prince, and he knew at once his betrothed, and remembered how he had broken his plighted troth to her. He now sprang up from the table, and folded the beauteous Singorra to his heart, exclaiming : “ Thee, and none other, will I have in this world for my wife, for thou art my only, true betrothed.” This all caused a great stir, and the guests looked in wonder at each other. The bridegroom then spake, and related how all had come to pass, all from the day he had fallen into the power of the Lady-of-the-Deep, and what great sympathy Singorra had shown to him ; and the end was that the foreign princess was sent back to her land again, with a great retinue and many honours. But the young prince pledged his troth again in the loving cup at the wedding with fair Singorra, and the festivities lasted for days. Aye, for seven at least ; and if they have not come to an end yet, the loving cup will be sure to go the round to this very day in commemoration of them.





THE BOY WHO SAVED THE KING'S THREE DAUGHTERS.



OWN in the valley there once upon a time lived a blacksmith, "and many a man is that," as the old stories are wont to begin. He had just finished his work for the spring-time, and was preparing to go into the forest to cut logs of wood for a charcoal kiln.

When he had had his morning meal and was ready to start, he said to his wife : "I suppose thou'lt bring me my dinner at the pine clump?" The wife promised to do her husband's bidding, and the blacksmith then went into the forest, and began

to cut the wood. As it drew close upon noon time, his wife, so it seemed to him, came up with his meal, and he sat down and ate, after which he laid himself down to have a nap, as is the custom in the summer, and slept awhile in his wife's arms. After they had both slept a bit, the woman rose and went away, taking the blacksmith's axe with her.

"What dost thou want with the axe?" asked the blacksmith. "Thou knowest well enough that four axes hang at home on the axe-pegs."

However, his wife made no answer, but went away. This seemed strange to the husband, but he thought to himself: "I suppose she'll place the axe by some bush on the road, so that I can find it," and then he resumed his work of piling logs for the charcoal fire.

After a short time the blacksmith's wife again returned to her husband with his midday-meal, and asked him: "Wilt thou not eat thy dinner now? The day is already far gone."

The blacksmith was surprised, and answered: "Eat now? Why all this gobbling?"

The wife excused herself, saying: "Well, I am somewhat behind time, but I have not

been wasting the time, I can tell thee ; I have baked that thou mayst have bread ; I have churned that thou mayst have butter.”

This astonished the blacksmith still more, and he thought to himself that things were not as they ought to be. He however seated himself, and ate as much as he was able, but said nothing, thinking that it was best to leave matters as they were.

About seven years afterwards it happened one evening that the blacksmith was standing by a pile of logs, cutting wood for fuel for the evening fire ; he saw a lad approaching with an axe on his shoulder. The blacksmith asked : “ What is the matter with the axe ? Is it to be mended, or is the head melted ? ”

But the boy made no answer. The blacksmith then took the axe, and eyed it very closely, and said : “ There is nothing the matter with the axe, but strange to say the axe is mine.”

The lad then said : “ If the axe be yours, then you are also my father.”

The blacksmith was now compelled to acknowledge his son, as he had recognised the axe, and, sorely troubled, he went to his wife

and told her that a little lad had come, whom he wanted for a help in his forge. But the wife would not hear of any increase in the household, which was already quite large enough, so that it was only after much entreaty that the husband succeeded in persuading her.

The boy was now brought into the hut, and food and clothes were given him, and then he accompanied his father every day to the forge.

Time waned ; the boy was smart and willing, and besides mighty strong, since he was half Christian and half imp. He was at the same time hard to keep, for he ate so heartily that at last his father saw he was no longer able to keep him in food. One day therefore, the blacksmith went to the king's hall to ask if the royal master-cook wanted a boy to help him in the kitchen.

“ Aye,” replied the cook, “ I am just now in want of one ; only send him here,—the sooner the better.”


The blacksmith felt glad at this, and thought to himself : “ If my son gets into the king's kitchen, he is sure at times to get enough to eat.” With this he returned home, and related how his errand had succeeded.

When the boy learned this news, he said : " Father, my request is now that you make me three swords, one to weigh six stone, one to weigh twelve stone, and one to weigh twenty-four stone. Besides that, you must also procure me three linen frocks, one for each sword. If you do what I ask you, I will soon earn so much that you will never have occasion to work any more for your living."

The poor blacksmith was now greatly troubled how to procure so much iron and steel as would be needed for the three swords, but he durst not disobey his son. When everything was ready according to the boy's request, the third sword weighed no more than twenty-two stone, for two stone of iron had been burnt away in the welding.

The boy then grew angry, and said : " If you were not my father, I would make a cut at you with the sword."

When the blacksmith saw his son's wrath, he became frightened, and was silent, albeit he thought to himself : " The sword, maybe, will prove heavy enough to wield, though thou art strong ; I know it took all my strength to move it from the forge to the anvil."



The boy then took the three swords and the three linen frocks, and hid them under an earth-bound stone. After which he went with his father to the king's hall, and entered the service of the master cook, as was promised.

It happened at this time that the king who ruled over the land was at warfare, and being at sea, a sudden storm arose, so that all on board thought that everything would be lost. The foul weather was caused by three sea-monsters, who would not allow the king to land until he had promised them his three beauteous daughters.

When the king reached his home, he caused it to be proclaimed that "if there be any man and champion who dared to hazard his life and save the three princesses, he should be rewarded with one of them for his spouse, and besides become king over half the realm."

But no champion was found so daring that he would venture to combat the ferocious monsters of the deep, except alone a tailor, who made himself appear very brave, and promised to do his very best. When the time came on which the king's daughters should be delivered up to the sea-monsters, there was universal

grief and lamentation throughout the land, but



most of all grieved the king and his spouse the queen.

The eldest princess was then with much ceremony brought down to the sea, and the whole population accompanied her on the road; and when they had all come down to the shore, she seated herself on the white sand, and laying her cheek against her hands, shed bitter tears. But the brave tailor forgot his grand promise, and climbed up a tall tree, which grew near the place.

The lad in the meantime went to his master, and asked for leave to go out into the town to

enjoy himself a little. The cook gave his consent, but asked him not to stay away too long.

The boy at once ran off home to fetch the sword which weighed six stone, and pulled the linen frock over his other clothes, called upon his dog to follow him, and took his way towards the sea-shore. When he came to the place where the princess was sitting, he advanced and greeted her beseemingly, and asked : " Why sit ye here, fair maid, so sorrowful and lonely ? "

The princess answered : " Oh, fain may I grieve ; my father, the king, has been in dread peril at sea, and to escape he promised to give me up to a cruel sea-monster ; I fear it will soon come and seize me, piteous maiden. "

The boy asked : " Is there no brave champion in your father's whole kingdom who can save your life ? "

" Yes, " answered the princess ; " there sits a tailor in yonder tree, who has promised to do his best. "

When now the lad turned round and saw the tailor sitting far up in the pine-top, he smiled and said : " Maiden, put not your trust in such a champion ; but if you will comb my hair a little while, I will save your life. "

This the princess thought a daring proposal, but in her great distress she dared not refuse. The boy then spoke to his dog : “ Wee doggie *Faithful*, keep faithful watch ! ”

After that he laid his head in the maiden’s lap, and she performed the required service for him, and all the while the tailor sat in the pine-top, and looked on. But the king’s fair daughter pulled a red silken thread out of her bodice, and twined it unawares in the lad’s long curls.

Suddenly was heard a great commotion and noise from the sea ; the billows weltered high up on the shore, and out of the deep arose a hideous sea-monster with three heads. The gorgon’s dog was as big as a one-year-old calf.

The ogre said : “ Where is the daughter of the king, that has been promised to me ? ”

The boy replied : “ She is sitting here ; but wilt not thou come nearer, so that we may talk to each other ? ”

“ Dost thou intend to mock me, young urchin ? ” asked the monster.

“ No,” answered the boy ; “ but I have come here to fight with thee for the princess.”

“Very well,” replied the ogre; “but then we will let our two dogs fight first.”

“With that I am content,” answered the boy.

The sea-monster and the boy now called their dogs together to fight, and there was a desperate battle between them; but the game ended by the boy's little dog Faithful biting the ogre's dog in the neck, and the blood ran off him, and the sea-dog lay dead on the strand.

“Now, see what end thy dog has come to; so shall it go with thee likewise,” said the boy.

Then he advanced against the ogre, drew his sword which weighed six stone, and cut off all the three heads of the monster, so that they rolled down into the sea, and that was the end of him.

When the maiden beheld this, she exclaimed with great and heartfelt joy, “I am now saved!” and she entreated eagerly that the strange champion should accompany her to the royal Castle, and there be honoured and rewarded for his great service.

But the boy refused this, saying that his help was of small account, and not worth wasting words about. He took possession of a few

gems and pearls which the sea-monster had worn, bade humble leave of the princess, and hurriedly departed.

While this was taking place, the brave tailor sat in the top of the pine, and bided the issue of the fight in great fear; but when now the danger was past, he quickly slipped down, went to the royal maiden, drew his sword, and compelled her to take an oath to say that he, and nobody else, had saved her. Then went they together to the king's palace, and any one might easily imagine what joy there was when the princess returned home unscathed. The king had a great banquet prepared, and he placed the tailor by his side, so that he was held to be the foremost champion in the whole realm.

The next day the second princess was to be brought down to the second sea-monster, and there was now the same grief as before. But as the brave tailor had saved the eldest royal maiden, many thought that he might save the other sister as well. All therefore relied upon the tailor, and he himself was not sparse of big and grand words. The young princess was brought down to the sea, and the populace

accompanied her on the road, and when they had arrived at the place, she seated herself by the side of the sea and wept bitterly. But the tailor did not think it wise to remain by her side, so he again climbed up to the pine-tree top, as he had done before.

Whilst this was going on, the boy went to the chief cook and said: "Master, give me leave to go out into the town to enjoy myself; yesterday I had but little time to look about me."

The cook replied: "If the tailor comes off victorious in the combat with the sea-monster, there will be a grander banquet here to-day than yesterday, and I shall be all alone to prepare the feast. Yonder stands a large cask which it takes eighteen water butts to fill, and I have no one to bring me a single pailful."

The boy then asked if he might go when he had filled the water-cask. The cook consented to this, and thought to himself, that it would be night before the cask was filled.

But the boy seized the big cask with his hands, ran to the well, dipped it down, and drew it up so brimful of water that it splashed over on all sides. He brought forth besides

a few pearls, and stuck them into his master's hands, which pleased him well.

When the cook perceived the great strength of the boy, he durst no longer deny him what he asked, and said : "Go freely, but tarry not away too long."

The boy then ran home to fetch the sword which weighed twelve stone, pulled the linen frock over his clothes, called upon his dog to follow him, and wended his way to the sea-shore. He came to the place where the royal maiden was sitting on the strand weeping, and the tailor seemed exceeding glad where he was seated hidden in the pine-top.

The boy took no notice of him, but went to the princess, greeted her beseemingly, and asked : "Fair maiden, why sit ye here so sorrowful and lonely?"

"Yea," answered the king's daughter, "well may I grieve; my father, the king, has been in great danger at sea, and promised me to a vicious sea-monster; I am afraid it will come soon and seize me, piteous maiden."

The boy then asked : "Is there not to be found in all your father's realm a man and champion who can save you?"

"Yes," answered the princess, "a brave tailor sits in yonder tree; he has promised to save me as he saved my sister."

The boy then turned round at these words, and saw where the tailor sat high up in the tree. He then smiled, and said: "Maiden, put not your trust in such a champion; but if you will comb my hair a little while, I will save your life."

This seemed to the king's daughter a daring request, but in her great distress she dared not refuse to do what he asked.

The boy then spake to his dog: "Wee doggie *Faithful*, keep faithful watch!"

Then he laid himself down in the maiden's lap, and she combed his hair; and all the while the tailor was seated silent in the pine-top, and looked on. But the royal maiden drew a thread of black silk from her cloak, and plaited it unawares in the boy's long hair.

Faithful now began to bark, and at the same time a great and tremendous noise and roar arose in the sea, so that the billows weltered far up on the sand, and out of the deep came a giant sea-monster, which was fearful to behold, and possessed six heads. The gorgon's dog was as big as a two-year-old ox.

The ogre asked: "Where is the princess, who has been promised to me?"

The boy answered: "She is here; but thou mayst surely come a little nearer, so that we may speak to each other."

The monster said: "Mayhap thou wouldst like, little urchin, to fight me?"

The boy said: "That's the reason I have come here."

The ogre then said: "My brother was slain by thee yesterday, but to-day I'll conquer thee. Yet our dogs may as well have an encounter first."

"With that I am content," said the boy.

They now called to their dogs to fight, and there was a fierce battle between them; but the game ended by the boy's dog *Faithful* biting the monster's dog in the neck, so that the blood ran swiftly off, and he lay dead by the sea.

The boy then said: "Thou seest what end has befallen thy dog; so shall it happen to thee likewise."

He then went up to the monster, swung his sword which weighed twelve stone, and made such a powerful stroke that all the six heads

of the ogre rolled down into the water, and that was the end of *him*.

When the royal maiden saw this, she was exceedingly glad, and with heartfelt joy exclaimed, "I am now saved!" She then entreated her strange champion to accompany her to her father's hall, there to be honoured and rewarded for his great service.

But the boy declined this, maintaining that his assistance had been very little, and not worth speaking of. He however took a few gems and pearls, which the sea-monster had worn, bade a courteous farewell to the royal maiden, and hurriedly went away.

All the time the combat lasted the tailor was sitting in the pine-top, half dead with sheer fright and anguish; but as soon as all danger was over, he hastily slipped down the tree, drew his sword, and forced the royal maiden to take an oath to say that he, and no one else, had saved her life. The princess was not very willing to do this, but she was afraid for her life, and durst not refuse.

The tailor then brought her to the palace, and a still more splendid banquet was given than the one on the day before. The tailor

was placed nearest to the king, and was held by all in great honour and reverence, and he himself spoke many proud words, and greatly lauded his manful deeds.

The third day the youngest daughter of the king was to be brought down to the sea-monster. This caused still greater grief than before, not only in the palace, but all over the realm, for all loved the princess well, for the sake of her comeliness and kindness. Many now put their whole trust in the bold tailor, and were confident that he would save her, as he had her two elder sisters; but the princess herself would not be comforted, and wept bitterly. She was then brought down to the sea, and seated herself on the shore. But the tailor forgot all his grand promises, and climbed up to the top of the tall pine, as he had done before.

Whilst all this was taking place, the kitchen boy went to the chief cook, and said: "Master, give me leave to go once more into the town to enjoy myself. I am not soon likely to ask your leave to go out again."

As the cook was now aware of the boy's prodigious strength, and besides had expe-

rienced his generosity, he could not refuse such a simple request, but said : " Go in peace, but do not stay away too long, for if the tailor gains the victory again, there will be a still grander banquet here than ever."

The boy then took out a few golden ornaments, and stuck them into his master's hands, with which he was well pleased, if tradition speaks truly. After this he ran away to his father's house, and fetched the third sword, which ought to have weighed twenty-four stone, but which told only two-and-twenty. When now he swung it in his hand, and found how light it was, he became angry again, and said to the blacksmith : " Were ye not my father, which ye are, I would have cut at you with the sword ; now it hangs on fortune alone, whether I return or meet my end." He then fastened the sword to his side, pulled the linen frock over his clothes, called upon his dog to follow him, and wended his way towards the sea.

When he came to the place where the royal maiden sat weeping on the sea-shore, the tailor felt very happy where he sat in the pine-top. The boy took no notice of him, but went up to the forlorn princess, greeted her

beseemingly, and said: "Fair maiden, why sit ye so sorrowful, with tears trickling down your cheeks?"

The king's daughter answered: "Yea, surely, I must weep; my father, the king, has been in dread peril at sea, and has promised me to a sea-monster; I am afraid it will soon come and seize me, piteous maiden."

When the boy saw her grief, his heart was moved, for so fair a creature he had never seen before, and he asked: "Is there no man and champion to be found in all your father's realm who can save your life?"

"Yes," answered the princess; "there sits a brave tailor up in yonder tree—he has promised to save me, as he did my two sisters."

The boy turned round at these words, and saw where the tailor sat at the furthest top of the pine-tree; then he smiled, and said: "Noble maiden, put not your trust in such a champion; but if you will comb my hair a little while, I will risk my life for you."

"That I fain will do," answered the king's daughter, for she loved the swain well, because of his frank manner.

The boy then spoke to his dog, and said:

“Wee *Faithful*, keep faithful watch.” Then he laid his head in the maiden’s lap, and slept while she combed his hair.

When the king’s daughter observed the threads which her sisters had plaited in the boy’s hair, she also pulled out a thread from her scarlet cloak, and, unnoticed, twined it in the boy’s locks.

At this moment *Faithful* began barking, and a tremendous sound was heard from the sea. The lad then said: “It is time to rise, fair maiden. Give me your apron; we shall be likely to have need of it.”

The king’s daughter did as she was told, and the boy cut the stuff with his sword into twelve pieces. And now arose a fearful roar from the sea, and the billows weltered far up on the coast, and out came a hideous sea-monster with twelve heads, and more hideous to behold than the others had been. The gorgon’s dog was as big as the biggest bull.

The ogre asked: “Where is the princess who has been promised to me?”

“She is here,” answered the boy; “but surely thou wilt come nearer, so that we may speak to one another.”

The ogre said : " Perhaps, little urchin, thou wouldst like to despatch me to-day, as thou hast done my brothers before ? "

" That is the reason I have come here, " answered the boy.

The ogre then said : " Lo ! here thou wilt meet thy conqueror. Still we will let our dogs fight first. "

" With that I am content, " answered the boy.

They now called to their dogs to fight, and there was a fierce battle ; but the game came to an abrupt end, for the monster-dog seized the boy's dog with his teeth, and swallowed him at one gulp ; and that was *Faithful's* sad end.

But this daunted not the lad, who now advanced and manfully struck such a blow with his sword that all the twelve heads of the gorgon rolled into the sea. But the monster possessed a charmed life, for every time a head was cut off and fell into the water, it again quickened, darted up, and affixed itself to its former place.

When the boy saw this, he called out to the king's daughter, saying : " Noble maiden, good advice is now precious ; place quickly a piece

of your apron on the cut-off neck, as fast as I chop off his heads, to prevent it quickening again." And with this the youth struck a second blow, so that another head rolled to the ground ; but the royal maiden was ready, and did as she was told. The swain then struck again, and again a head fell ; but the princess was prepared, and quickly put a piece of her apron over the end of the neck, and so it happened at the next blow.

When the boy in this way had cut off seven heads, the gorgon began to sue for life, and said : " Sheath now thy sword, for I will fain leave the maiden in peace, so that I may depart."

But the boy was very wroth, and said : " Thou mayst not leave this place alive, since once I have gained the victory over thee." At the same time he again swung his sword, and struck such mighty blows, that one head after another rolled on the ground, and the king's daughter was ever ready, and put a piece of her apron over the wound. Nor did it end before the swain had cut off all the twelve heads of the gorgon, and that was the death of the sea-monster.

But the tailor sat during the whole time

in the top of the tree, and durst not move from sheer fright and dismay.

When the combat was now ended, the royal maiden exclaimed with heart-felt joy : "I am now saved !" and she thanked her champion with many kind words, and entreated him to accompany her to her father's palace, there to be honoured and rewarded.

But the youth refused to comply with her request, maintaining that there was but little to say about such a small service as he had rendered.

But he seized a few of the gorgon's precious gems, and then took a loving farewell of the king's fair daughter, and departed.

Now the tailor swain hastily glided down the tree, drew his sword, and threatened to kill the princess unless she would take an oath and say that he, and no one else, had saved her from the sea-monster.

This seemed very hard to the royal maiden, for her desire clung to the youthful champion, who for her sake had so manfully jeopardized his life. But she durst not in her great distress refuse, so she promised to do as the tailor had commanded.



The tailor drew his sword, and threatened to kill the princess.



They then proceeded together towards the royal court, the princess sorrowful and dejected, the tailor walking by her side with big strides and proud demeanour, as if he had been the boldest of champions.

When the king from afar off saw them approach, he felt very glad, for he had never thought to have seen his daughter alive again. He advanced with all his court to greet them with due honours, and there was universal joy throughout the king's demesne that the three princesses had been saved ; and the great fame of the brave tailor spread all over the kingdom.

The time was now approaching for the banquet to begin, but no eatables were yet placed on the tables. The king felt annoyed at this, and sent his youngest daughter to ask why the repast was not ready. The cook excused himself that his servant had been away, so that he had been left alone to prepare everything, and the princess had to return with this answer. But when she passed the kitchen-boy, she thought it strange that he should turn away. And when she looked at him closer, lo ! she recognised in him her brave champion, who but

a short time ago had imperilled his life for her sake. She ran hastily in to her sisters to tell them what she had seen and learnt, and while the princesses were still speaking about this, the king, their father, came in, and overheard what they were saying. He was greatly astonished, and commanded his daughters to confess the truth, without any evasion.

The youngest princess now recounted everything as it had happened from beginning to end, and the other princesses confirmed her words.

But the king grew very angry at the deceit of the tailor, and immediately sent a message to the kitchen that the boy-cook should at once be brought before him.

When the message went down into the kitchen, it created great surprise amongst all the king's cooks; and the boy would not go, but said: "How can I go before the king—I, who am but a poor man, and dressed in simple clothes?"

But the messenger answered that he had best obey the king's order.

Then the youth went boldly up into the hall, where the king was seated at the banquet with

all his guests, and the tailor was in the place nearest the king; but when he beheld the brave champion who had saved the princesses, he sank to the ground.

But the king turned to the boy, and asked in a strong, clear voice: "Hast thou saved my three daughters?"

The boy frankly replied: "All full well know it was not I, but the tailor who did it."

"No," called out the king's daughters with one voice; "it was thou who saved us, and here we find the three silken threads, which we each plaited in thy hair, the time thou didst lie on our knee." And the princesses ran forward, and embraced the boy-cook, and each found her silken thread amongst his long locks, and by this everybody at once understood that it was true what the daughters of the king had said.

But the king himself now spake, and said: "If thou art he who has saved the princesses, thou shalt have the guerdon forthwith, for here I bestow upon thee my youngest daughter, and with her, for a dowry, half my lands and realm."

Now was there great joy all over the king's domain, and the wedding was celebrated with

great joy and mirth. But the brave tailor sneaked away, quite crest-fallen, from the banquet, and the legend relates nothing further about his doughty deeds.





THE THREE DOGS.

ONCE upon a time, there was a king who went into another land and took unto himself a queen, and when they had been married some time they had a daughter, which caused great joy throughout the whole land, for no one grudged the king any good, because he was just and forbearing. But when the child was born, there entered an old fortune-teller; she had a weird appearance, and nobody knew whence she came or where she went. The old woman foretold of the royal child that it must not be taken into the open air before it had counted fifteen winters, or else there would be great danger of its being carried off by the mountain ogres.

When the king learnt this he was very fearful, and appointed a guard to watch that the young princess might not get into the open air.

Some time after this the queen had another daughter, which again caused great joy throughout the realm ; but the old fortune-teller came as before, and warned the king that he must not allow the princess to go into the open air before she had counted fifteen winters.

Again some time elapsed, and the queen bore her third daughter, and the fortune-teller came a third time and prophesied of the royal child as she had of her sisters. Then the king became fearful at heart, for he loved his children above everything else in the world. He therefore issued stern orders that the three princesses should always be kept carefully within doors, strictly enjoining that no one should dare to infringe his royal behests in this respect.

Thus things continued a good round time, and the royal children grew up to become the fairest maidens that were to be seen far or near.

A sudden war broke out, and the king had to leave his home. While engaged in this warfare, the three princesses were seated one day looking out from the window into the garden beneath, and admiring the sun as it

gilded the blossoms and the trees. They felt a great desire to go and play with the little flowers, and they besought their guards to allow them to walk in the garden only for a short little while. To this the guards dared not consent, for they dreaded the king's anger; but the royal maidens pleaded so prettily that at last they could not resist any longer, but allowed them to have their own way. The princesses now felt very happy, and ran out into the garden; but their enjoyment was not long, for they had scarcely got out into the open air before a cloud descended which bore them away, and all endeavours to find them proved of no avail, though they were searched for far and wide in all directions.

Now grief and lamentation spread throughout the whole country, and you may be sure the king did not feel very happy when he returned home and learnt what had happened. But as the old adage says, "What's done can't be undone," and he was therefore compelled to let things be as they were. As no good advice could be found, the king made known throughout his realm, that whoever could save his daughters from the power of the mountain

ogres, should have one of them for wife, and half the kingdom for a dowry. When this was proclaimed throughout many lands, numerous champions and young knights, with their retainers and their steeds, started in search of the three princesses ; and at the king's own court were two foreign princes, who likewise rode off to see if fortune would befriend them. They dressed themselves in goodly armour, and provided themselves with costly weapons, and proudly boasted of their determination not to return until they had successfully accomplished their undertaking.

We will now leave the young princes for awhile in their wide search, and turn our attention elsewhere. We must relate how a poor widow lived far, far in the deep, wild wood ; she had an only son, whose daily business it was to tend his mother's three hogs. While the lad thus roamed about the forest, he had made himself a rustic pipe, and found great delight in its music, and he played it so beautifully that its tones went straight to the heart of every one who heard it. He was, besides, a strong and well-built lad, frank and free, and feared nothing in the world.



The old man read his thoughts, and answered, "Well, that is just the reason why I have come here."

One day it happened that the swineherd was sitting in the wood playing on his pipe, while his mother's three hogs went burrowing about among the roots of the fir-trees. Then there came walking along an old, old man, with a big bushy beard which reached down to his waist, and who had with him a great dog. As soon as the boy beheld the dog, he thought to himself, "I wish I had that dog for company in the wild wood—that would be fine!"

The old man read his thoughts, and answered: "Well, that is just the reason why I have come here, that I might exchange my dog for one of thy hogs."

The boy was ready, and at once agreed to the bargain; he got the big dog, and gave the grey hog in exchange. At parting, the old man said: "I think thou wilt be content with thy bargain, for this dog is not like other dogs; his name is *Hold on*; and whatever thou dost bid him hold on to, he will stick to, were it even the grimmest giant." With this he went away, and the boy thought that this time, at any rate, fortune had not been unkind to him.

As evening came on, the boy called on his

dog, and drove the hogs out of the wood homewards. But when the old woman learnt that her son had exchanged the grey hog for a dog, she became exceedingly angry, and gave him blows and cuffs in plenty. The boy begged her to desist, and not to worry herself; but it was of no use, she only beat him the harder. As the boy saw that entreaty was of no use, he called upon his dog, crying: "*Hold on!*" The dog immediately came bounding along, and seizing the old woman, kept her so firmly that she could not move; but he did her no harm in any way. The old woman was now forced to promise her son that she would be contented with what he had done, but still she thought that she had never suffered any greater loss than being deprived of one of her fattened hogs.

The next day the boy again went into the woods with his dog and his two hogs, and when he had come into the forest he seated himself and played upon his pipe, as he was wont to do, and the dog danced so wonderfully to the music that it was quite a treat to look on. And now there came along Old Greybeard again out of the thicket, who had with him

another dog, which was not a whit smaller than the other. When the boy beheld this fine animal, he thought to himself: "Well, if a body had that dog too for a follower in this wild wood, it would be a fine thing."

And the old man read his thoughts, and said: "Now that's just the reason why I have come here, that I might exchange my dog for one of thy hogs."

The boy did not bethink himself long, but quickly agreed to the barter; he then got the big dog, and gave his second hog in exchange. At parting the old man said: "I think thou wilt be pleased with thy bargain, for this dog is not like other dogs; his name is *Tear*, and whatever thou mayst bid him tear he'll rip asunder, were it even the greediest ogre that ever inhabited a mountain." With this they parted, the boy very glad at heart, and thinking he had made a fine bargain, though he well knew that his old mother would not be well pleased with it.

When evening came on, and the lad returned home, he found the old woman no less angry than the day before; this time, however, she durst not beat her son, for she was afraid of his

big dogs. Often it happens that when women have been scolding to their heart's content, they at last give in, and so it also happened now. The boy and his mother thus became reconciled, but the old woman thought to herself that she had suffered a loss which could never be repaired.

The third day the lad again went into the wood with his one hog and his two dogs, and feeling very happy in his mind, he sat down on the trunk of a tree and played on his pipe, as was his wont, while the dogs danced so that it was a great treat to look on at them. When the boy was thus enjoying himself mirthfully, Old Greybeard came along again out of the thicket. This time he had with him a third dog, that was as big as any of the others; and as soon as the boy saw this fine animal, he thought to himself: "What if I also had that dog for a companion in the wild forest! I would have a merry time of it."

At once the old man spake out: "Well, that's just the reason why I have come here, that I may offer thee my dog, for I can well see thou art anxious to possess him."

The boy was ready immediately to enter

into the barter ; he got the big dog, and gave his last hog in exchange. At the parting the old man said : " I certainly think thou wilt be well pleased with thy bargain, for this dog is not like other dogs ; his name is *List*, and he has such a fine sense of hearing, that he knows all that happens, though it be many miles away, —yea, he even hears the trees and the grass of the field grow." With this he went away, and the lad felt happy in his mind, for he thought that he had now got such help in life that he need not be afraid of anything in the world.

When evening came on the boy returned home, and his mother was very sorry that her son had made away with all their possessions. But the boy told her to bid her grief begone, for he would take care that she should suffer no want. When the next day dawned he went out to the chase with his dogs, and when evening came returned with greater spoil than he could carry, and the old woman's larder was now quite full of food. The lad then took a loving farewell of his mother, telling her he would now start off into the world, to see what luck fortune had in store for him.

He wandered off across hills, and along wild

tracks, until he had got far into the deep, dark forest ; there he met Old Greybeard, of whom I have spoken. The boy was very glad to see him, and greeted him with, " Good day, Gaffer ; well met again."

" Good day to thee, too, my son," replied the old man ; " where are you off to ?"

" Well, I mean to mix with the world, and see what fortune will do for me," answered the boy.

The old man then said : " Keep only straight on until thou comest to the king's castle, there thy fortune will mend."

With this they parted ; but the boy followed the old man's counsel, and kept straight on. Whenever he came to any hut he played on his pipe, and his dogs danced, and it never failed that he got food and shelter, and what else he stood in need of. When the lad had wandered far and long, he at last arrived at a large city, where a great throng of people was eagerly pressing through the streets ; he wondered what might be the cause of this, and he soon came to a place where the king's behests were proclaimed, that whosoever could save the princesses from the power of the mountain

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The boy was admitted, and was allowed to show off his tricks.

ogres, should have one of them for wife, and half the kingdom besides as dowry.

The boy now understood what Greybeard had meant by his counsel ; he therefore called upon his dogs, and went straight on until he came to the king's castle ; but there he found only grief and lamentation, all from the day the princesses had disappeared, and the king and queen grieved the most. Then the boy went up into the hall, and asked to be permitted to play for the king, and to show his dogs. This pleased the courtiers well, for they thought that it might somewhat dispel their lord's grief ; the boy was therefore admitted, and was allowed to show off his tricks ; and when the king listened, and saw the dogs dance, he felt so merry at heart, that no one had ever seen him so glad for seven long years, all since the day he had lost his daughters. When the dancing came to an end, the king asked what reward he wished for, since he had given them all such a treat.

The lad replied : " Lord king ! my mind is not bent on chattels or gold ; but one thing I pray thee, that thou wilt give me leave to depart in quest of the three princesses, who are now in the power of the mountain ogres."

When the king heard this he lowered his brow, and said: "Surely thou canst not think of saving my daughters; men who are far better than thou art have failed in that; but if it be so that any one can save my children, I am not the man to break my word, when once given."

This the young swain thought manfully spoken, and he at once took leave of the king, and departed, determined in his mind not to rest until he had found what he was in quest of.

The boy now journeyed through many a great kingdom without anything happening to him. Wherever he went, his dogs followed him. *List* ran before to listen if anything were heard in the neighbourhood; *Hold on* carried the provision wallet; and on *Tear*, who was the strongest, the young master rode when he was tired. It happened one day that *List* came hastily bounding back to tell his master that he had been close to the high mountain, and had heard how one of the royal maidens sat inside spinning, and that the giant ogre was not at home. The boy felt very glad at this, and hastened to the mountain, his dogs following.

When they had arrived, *List* said: "We have no time to waste, for the giant is only sixty miles away, and I can already hear how the golden shoes of his horse clink against the stones on the road."

The lad then commanded his dogs to batter in the doors of the mountain, which they immediately did. When he entered, he beheld a beautiful maiden seated in the vaulted hall, twining gold thread on a spindle of gold. He then stepped forth and greeted her; she grew very frightened as she saw him, and said: "Who art thou that dares to enter here into the giant's hall? For seven long years, during which I have been enthralled in the mountain, I have never beheld a human being. For Heaven's sake, haste away before the ogre returns home, or thy life will surely be lost."

But the young swain did not feel afraid, not he, but said that he meant to stay until the giant came back.

While they were yet talking to one another, the giant came galloping home on his gold-shod steed, and when he saw that the door was open, he grew angry, and called out in wrathful tones, so that the whole mountain

shook: "Who is it that has dared to burst open my granite door?"

Boldly answered the boy, "I have done it, and I mean to break thee too! *Hold on*, hold him! *Tear*, tear him into little bits!"

He had barely spoken the words before the dogs rushed forward, and throwing themselves upon the giant, tore him into countless shreds. The princess felt exceedingly glad at this, and exclaimed: "Heaven be praised, now I am saved!" and she threw her arms around the neck of the young man, and kissed him. He would not remain in the cave, but hastened to saddle the giant's steeds, and loaded them with all the gold and effects he could find in the mountain, and then he hastened away with the maiden.

When they had travelled for some long time together, during which the lad waited upon the princess with all humility and modesty beseeming such a grand lady, it happened one day that *List*, who ran spying in advance, came hastily bounding back to his master, to tell how he had been to the high mountain, and had heard how the second princess was seated inside, winding up golden

thread, and that the giant was not at home. The brave boy felt glad at these tidings, and hastened towards the mountain, followed by his dogs. When they had arrived there, *List* said: "We have no time to waste; the giant is only fifty miles away; already I hear how the golden shoes of his horse clink against the stones on the road."

The youth then commanded his dogs to batter down the mountain door, which they at once did, and he entered into the mountain, and beheld a beautiful girl seated in the vaulted hall, winding golden threads on a reel of gold. Then the boy stepped forth and greeted the fair maiden, who, when she saw him, became very frightened, and said: "Who art thou who dares to enter the giant's hall? For seven long years, during which I have sat enthralled in the mountain, I have never beheld a human being. For Heaven's sake, haste away before the giant returns, or thy life will surely be lost."

But the boy told her his errand, and that he meant to stay for the giant's return. While they were yet talking, the giant came riding along on his gold-shod steed, and stopped in

front of the mountain entrance; but when he saw that the door was broken open, he became fearful in his wrath, and called out so angrily that the mountain trembled to its very foundation: "Who is it that has dared to break open my granite door?"

Boldly answered the boy, "That have I, and now I'll break thee too! *Hold on*, hold him! *Tear*, tear him into a thousand pieces!"

At once the dogs rushed on, and throwing themselves on the giant, tore him into shreds, like the foliage of a tree strewn before the autumn winds. Then did the royal maiden feel exceeding glad, and she exclaimed: "Heaven be praised, now I am saved!" She then threw herself upon the neck of the young swain, and kissed him; but he took her away to her sister, and one may easily imagine their united joy. And then the boy seized upon all the chattels he found in the mountain hall, and packed them on the giant's gold-shod steed, and departed in company with the two princesses.

They now again journeyed a long way together, and the youth waited upon the princesses with all modesty and humility

beseeming such grand ladies. Then it happened one day that *List*, who ran spying before, came hastily bounding back to his master, to tell how he had been to the high mountain, and had heard how the third princess was seated inside, weaving a golden skein, and that the giant himself was not at home.

At these tidings the lad rejoiced, and hastened towards the mountain, his three dogs following. When they had arrived, *List* said : " Now no time must be lost, for the giant is not more than thirty miles away ; I can already hear the golden shoes of his steed clink against the stones on the road."

The boy then commanded the dogs to batter in the doors of the mountain, which they at once did, and he entered and there beheld a maiden seated in the vaulted hall, weaving a golden skein. But the maiden was so exceedingly beautiful, that the boy thought that never so fair a creature had ever before existed. He now stepped forth and greeted the beautiful princess, who was very much frightened, and said : " Who art thou that dares enter the giant's hall ? For seven long years, during which I have sat here enthralled in the

mountain, I have never beheld a human being. For Heaven's sake, leave this place before the ogre comes, or it will be thy death."

But the boy kept a stout heart, and said he would fain risk his life for the beautiful maiden. While they were yet speaking, the giant came riding along on his gold-shod steed, and stopped in front of the mountain entrance; but when he entered, and saw his unbidden guest, he became fearfully dismayed, for he knew well what fate had befallen his brothers. He therefore thought it best to try deceit and falsehood, since he dared not openly fight. Accordingly, he began saying many fair words, and smiled and smirked, and was very friendly, and ordered the royal maiden to prepare a meal for their guest. Yea, the giant plied his tongue so well, that the boy was fairly enchanted, and, forgetful of his charges, seated himself at table with him. But the princess cried in secret, and the dogs were very uneasy, though no one heeded them.

When the giant and his guest had ended their repast, the lad said: "I have now satisfied my hunger,—give me now also something to slake my thirst as well."

“Well,” answered the giant, “at the top of the mountain I have a spring, which flows with the purest wine, but I have nobody to fetch it.”

Then the boy said: “If that is all, one of my dogs can go for it.”

At this the deceitful heart of the giant was glad, for he wished for nothing so much as that the boy might send away his dogs.

The boy ordered *Hold on* to go to the spring and fetch the wine, and the giant gave him a large jar; then the dog left, though it might have been plainly seen that it was sorely against his will.

Time slowly dragged on, but the dog did not return, and after awhile the giant said: “I wonder why the dog stays away so long; perhaps it would be as well to let another dog go and help him, for the way is long and the jar is heavy to carry.”

As the boy did not suspect any treachery, he consented to the giant’s request, and he bade *Tear* go and see why *Hold on* did not return.

The dog wagged his tail, and did not wish to leave his master; but the boy did not notice

it, and drove him off to the spring. The giant then laughed in his sleeve, and the princess wept; but the boy heeded it not, for he was in high spirits and thought of no danger.

Again a long time passed, but they heard neither of wine nor of dogs.

The giant then said: "It is plain that the dogs do not obey thee, or else why should we be sitting here athirst? It were better for thee to despatch the third dog to see why the others do not return."

And then the boy was enticed by these words to order *List* to the spring; but the dog would not obey, and crept whining to his master's feet. The boy then grew angry, and drove him off with blows. The dog was thus forced to obey, and ran with great speed up the mountain. But when he arrived at the top, it befel him like the others: a high wall rose around him, and he became a captive through the sorcery of the giant.

When now the giant was freed from all the three dogs, he arose, changed his aspect and seized his burnished sword, which hung on the wall.

"Now," said he, "I will avenge my brothers'

fate, and thou shalt speedily die, for thou art in my power!"

Then the boy felt dismayed, and regretted that he had parted with his dogs; but he answered: "I do not beg of thee to spare my life, for I shall have to die some day; but I pray thee first to allow me to say a prayer, and then play a hymn on my pipe, as is the custom in my country."

The giant consented to this request, but told him he would not wait long. The boy then knelt, and with great piety repeated his prayer, and then he began to play upon his pipe. But the music sounded over hill and vale, and at the same moment the sorcerer's spell lost its power, so that the dogs again became free, and all came dashing along like a gust of wind, and they rushed into the mountain cave. Then the boy sprang to his feet, and called out:

"*Hold on, hold him! Tear and List, tear him into a thousand pieces!*"

The dogs then rushed upon the giant, and tore him into countless shreds. Then the boy took all chattels that lay in the mountain, harnessed the giant's horses to a golden chariot,

placed the princesses into it, and drove away as fast as he could.

Now did the princesses feel happy, as you may easily imagine, and they thanked the brave boy for having saved them ; but he himself was deeply smitten with love for the youngest one, and they pledged their troth to be true to each other. After this they journeyed along together with mirth and fun, and heartfelt joy, and the youth waited upon them all with modesty and deference as it well beseemed him towards such exalted maidens.

It happened one day, when they were still on the road, that they fell in with two wanderers who journeyed the same way. They were clad in threadbare garments, their feet were sore, and it was plainly visible by their whole appearance that they had performed a long and difficult journey. Then the boy stopped his chariot, and asked them who they were and whence they came.

The strangers replied that they were princes, who had travelled in search of the three enthralled maidens ; but their venture had turned out so unsuccessfully, that they now had to return on foot, more like beggars than kings' sons.

When the boy heard this, he felt concerned for them, and he asked them if they would not rather travel with him.

“Yes, that they would ;” and they travelled along together, and at last arrived at the land over which the king, the father of the princesses, ruled.

But when the princes learned how the humble lad had served the royal maidens, they felt great envy, and conferred together how they might betray him, and themselves gain the honour and reward. Soon, when they found an opportunity, they fell upon him, seized him by the neck, and choked him, leaving him for dead in the deep forest. After this they threatened the princesses with death if they would not take an oath to keep secret what had happened. Since the maidens were now in the power of the princes, they durst not refuse ; but they felt deeply grieved for the brave boy who had lost his life for their sake, and the youngest princess fretted so sorely in her heart that she wept both day and night.

When the princes had slain the boy, they departed in high glee to the king’s demesne,

and great was the joy in the land that the king had got back his daughters.

The poor lad in the meantime lay as dead in the forest, but he was not forsaken, for his faithful dogs crept closely up to him to warm his body; and they licked his wounds, and did not leave off before their master at last regained his breath and showed signs of life. When thus his life and strength had been restored, he resumed his way, and after many hardships arrived at the king's palace, where the princesses dwelt.

But in the king's castle was great stir; and mirth and joy reigned everywhere, while from the banqueting hall the music of harps and dancing and merry jest was heard. This surprised the boy, and he asked the meaning of it all.

The menials replied: "For certain, thou must have come from afar, since thou knowest not that the king has got his three daughters safe back from the power of the mountain ogres, and that to-day the wedding of the two eldest princesses is being celebrated."

The boy then asked whether the youngest princess was also being married. But the

servants answered that she would accept of no husband, but was constantly weeping, and nobody knew the cause of her great grief.

The boy then felt happy once more, for he understood by this that his sweet-love kept yet true and loved him still. He then went up into the guard-room, and sent a message to the king that there had come an unbidden guest, who asked permission to add to the mirth of the weddings by showing off his performing dogs.

This pleased the king well, and he commanded that the stranger should be well received; and when he entered the hall with his three dogs, there was great wonderment amongst the wedding throng at their cleverness, and they all thought they had never seen such a bold and brave young man as he. But the princesses knew him at once, and quickly rose from the table to embrace him. The two princes wished themselves far away, whilst the maidens related how this lad alone had saved them, and all else that had happened to them.

When the king learnt that the two foreign princes had used knavery and deceit, he became very angry, and to punish them with

great disgrace and shame, caused them to be hooted off his royal demesne. But the brave young swain was received with great honour, which was his just meed; and the same day his wedding with the youngest princess was celebrated. And when the king afterwards died, he was unanimously chosen king over all the land, and he became a brave and mighty monarch. And there he lives with his fair queen, and rules, ever favoured by fortune, to this day. I don't know any more of him.





The Boy and the Giant.



THE BOY AND THE GIANT.

ONCE upon a time a shepherd lad who tended goats in the big forest found himself in his wanderings near to a giant's hut. When the monster who dwelt therein heard him shouting and calling in the woods, he rushed out to see what was the matter. But he was so tall, and so grim in appearance, that the lad got frightened, and took to his heels, and ran away as fast as he could.

In the evening, when the shepherd boy brought home his goats from the pasture, he found his mother busy making cheese; so he took a piece of the new-made cheese, rolled it in the cinders at the ingle, and hid it in his wallet. In the morning he went away with his goats as usual, and again chanced to come

to the giant's hut. When the ogre found himself once more disturbed by the noise of the lad and his goats, he grew angry, went out, and taking a big stone in his hand, crunched it into little bits, so that the splinters flew about in all directions. The giant said to the boy: "If ever you come here again and make such a noise, I'll squash you into little splinters just as I have done to this stone." But this time the boy wasn't going to be scared so easily; he took out his cheese which he had rolled in the cinders, and pressed it hard between his fingers so that the whey ran down upon the ground.

Quoth the boy, "If you do not take yourself off and leave me alone, I'll crunch you just as I now press water from this stone."

When the ogre saw that the lad was so strong, he grew frightened, and went into his hut. With that the shepherd boy and the giant parted from one another for this time.

On the third day the boy with his goats again went into the woods, and the boy asked the giant if they should have a trial of strength. To this he agreed, and the lad said: "I say,

Gaffer, I think it would be a fair test of strength if we each tried to throw your axe so high that it never came down again." The giant agreed, and thought so too, and they at once set about it. The giant threw first, and swung the axe so powerfully that it flew high up in the air, but despite his frequent and frantic endeavours, down it always came again.

The lad then said : " Gaffer, I never thought your strength was so slight. Look out, I'll show you a better fling ! " And he flung as if preparing to give a hard blow, but in this action he managed very smartly to let the axe glide down into his leathern wallet which was strung upon his back. The giant perceived nothing, and waited long to see the axe come down again to the ground, but no axe was seen. So he thought to himself that the boy must be wonderfully strong, although he was so slim and puny. After this they parted, and each went to his home.

After some time had elapsed, the giant and the shepherd boy met again. The tall monster asked the strong boy if he would take service with him, to which he agreed, leaving his goats

in the forest and accompanying the giant to his hut.

One day the giant and the herd lad went into the forest to fell an oak. When they came to the right spot, the giant asked if the lad would rather cut the timber or hold it down by the top. "I will hold it down," answered the boy, but excused himself at the same time that he could not reach the top. The giant therefore grasped the tree and bent it to the ground; but when the lad took hold of the top to hold it down, the oak sprang back again and threw him high up in the air. The giant stood a long while wondering where his servant had gone to so suddenly; but at last seized the axe, and began cutting away at the trunk.

After a little while the lad came limping back; he had barely escaped being killed, and the giant asked why he had let go his hold.

But the lad pretended not to hear, and asked the giant if *he* dare take such a leap as he himself had just made. The giant objected to this, but the boy replied: "Well, Gaffer, if you dare not do that, you must both hold and cut

the tree yourself." The giant contented himself with this, and felled the big oak alone.

When they were going to bring the timber home, the giant said to his servant lad: "If you take the top end, I'll carry the root-end on my shoulder."

"Oh, no, Gaffer," the boy replied; "you carry the top yourself; I am strong enough for the roots."

The giant consented to this, and lifted the top of the tree on to his shoulder; but the boy, who was behind, called out to him to pull the trunk a little more over. The giant did as he was bid, and at last got the whole tree equally balanced over his shoulder, while the boy jumped up on it and hid himself in the foliage, so that he could not be seen. The giant now began the homeward journey, content that the boy carried the heavier end.

When they had proceeded in this way for awhile, it seemed to become a tough job to the giant, and he groaned heavily. "Are you not tired yet, lad?" he asked of his servant lad.

"No, not I," the boy rejoined. "Surely, Gaffer, you are not tired with so slight a job!"

The giant did not like to confess to that, so he continued his way. But when they arrived home, he was nearly half-dead with the burden. He flung the tree to the ground, but the lad had already jumped down, and pretended to be carrying the root-end.

“Are you not tired yet?” asked the giant.

“Oh dear no, Gaffer!” replied the boy; “you mustn’t think such little things tire *me*; the timber is not so heavy but that I could easily carry it all by myself.”

On the following morning the giant said: “As soon as it is daylight we must go into the barn and thrash!”

“No,” replied the boy; “it is far better that we thrash at early dawn, before we have our breakfast.” The giant agreed to this, and went away and fetched two big flails, of which he seized one himself.

When they were going to begin, the boy found his flail so big and heavy that he could not even lift it. He got hold of a stick instead, and with this he beat the barn-floor to the measure of the giant’s thrashing, who did not perceive the trick, and in this way they continued until daylight. The boy then said:

“Let us go home now, and have some breakfast.”

“Yes,” answered the giant; “methinks we have had a hard task, and have well earned our repast.”

Some time after this the giant ordered his servant lad to go to plough. “Now,” he said, “you must plough the way I will show you; but when the dog comes, you must unyoke the oxen, and put them in there where the dog goes before.”

The boy promised to do as he was bid; but when the oxen were unyoked, the giant’s collie crept under the basement of a house to which there was no door. It was the giant’s object by this to find out if his servant was so strong that he without assistance could lift up the whole house and put the oxen into their stalls. But the boy found a way out of this: he killed the animals, cut them up, and threw them in little bits through a small window into the house. When he went home, the giant asked him if he had put the oxen into their stalls.

“Yes, I got them in all right,” answered the boy, “though I had to make shift to do it.”

This aroused the giant’s suspicion, and he

consulted with his wife how they might make away with the servant lad.

“I advise thee,” said the old crone, “to take thy club and kill him to-night when he is asleep.”

The giant thought this good advice, and promised to do as she had said; but the boy was hiding, and listening to what they were saying.

When night came he placed a butter-churn in his bed, and hid himself behind the door. At midnight the giant arose, seized his club, and gave the churn such a blow that the buttermilk splattered up into his face. This done, he went to his wife and said, laughing: “Ha! ha! ha! I gave him such a knock that the blood splattered up into my face!”

The giantess was highly pleased, and praised her husband’s valour, and said they might now sleep comfortably, having no more dread of the crafty servant lad.

Scarcely had day dawned before the boy crept out of his hiding-place and went to wish the giant and his wife “Good morning.”

“What do I see?” roared the giant. “Art thou not dead yet? I thought I had killed thee with my club.”

“ Oh, I see now,” replied the boy; “ I thought last night I felt a flea bite me ! ”

At night, when the giant and his servant lad were to have their supper, the housewife had made stirabout for them. “ This is fine,” said the boy. “ Now, Gaffer, let us try and see who can eat most, you or I.”

The giant-ogre was ready at once, and they began to work as hard and as fast as they could ; but the boy was shrewd : he had tied his leathern pouch round his waist, and when he put one spoonful of stirabout in his mouth, he managed to put two into his bag. When the giant had eaten seven bowls full of porridge, he had had enough, and groaned heavily, for he could not put any more away ; but the boy kept on as eagerly as before. The giant asked him how it was possible that he who was such a small lad could yet eat so much.

“ Oh, Gaffer,” replied the boy, “ that I will easily teach you ; when I have had my fill, I rip up my belly with a knife, and then I can eat as much again.” And with these words he took a knife and cut open the wallet, so that the porridge ran out. The giant thought this was a fine way, and wanted to do the same ;

but when he thrust his knife into his body, the blood began to spout out, and it ended no worse than that it became the end of him.

Now that the giant was dead, the boy took all the chattels that were in the hut away with him, and went his way ; and that is the end of the story about the clever shepherd boy and the stupid giant.





THE COWHERD BOY.



O you know there was once upon a time a poor cowherd boy, and many a one is there in the world, and he had no one to shelter and protect him except his stepmother, and she was a vicious woman, and grudged him everything, so that he got scarcely anything to eat, or to clothe himself with, and the poor lad suffered great want. The whole livelong day he had to take out the cattle to graze, and she never gave him a morsel to eat, except a scrap of porridge morn and night.

One fine day the mother had gone out without leaving him any food, and the poor fasting

cowherd boy was thus compelled to drive his cattle to the woodlands. Being very hungry, he cried bitterly. But when noon came he brushed away his tears, and went up on to a green hill, where he was wont to rest when the sun scorched during the summer. On the hill he had always found cool and dewy shades under the leafy trees, but now there was no dew and the grass was trodden down. This seemed very strange to the boy, and he wondered who it could be that had so trodden down the grassy sward. At this moment he observed something that lay glimmering in the sun. Hey, the lad ran at once to see what it was, and found a tiny little pair of shoes of the purest glass. Now he was happy, he forgot his hunger, and played the whole day with the two little glass shoes. In the gloaming, when the sun had sunk down behind the forest, the boy called together his cattle and drove them homewards. When he had gone a little way he met a wee thing of a lad, who greeted him so kindly: "Good even!"

"Good even to thee again," returned the cowherd lad.

The little fellow then asked: "Hast thou



The boy then gave him back the little glass shoes.

found my shoes, which I lost early this morn amongst the green grass ? ”

The grazier lad answered : “ Yes, that I have, but let me keep the tiny shoon, there’s a dear little fellow ; I thought of giving them to my stepmother, and belike I will get some victuals when I get home.”

But the little one pleaded so earnestly and prettily, “ Give me back my shoon ; another time I will do thee a service.”

The boy then gave him back the little glass shoes ; this made the little one very glad, and he nodded in a friendly manner to him and ran away.

The grazier boy again called his herd together, and retraced his path homewards. When he came to the homestead it was already dark, and his stepmother scolded him for being so late.

“ There is some porridge left in the bowl —eat it, and be off to bed,” said she, “ that thou may’st be astir betimes to-morrow morn like other folk.”

The poor boy durst not make any answer to her harsh words, but took his meal, and then stole away to the hay-loft where he used to

sleep; but he dreamed the whole night of nothing else but the little lad and his two little glass slippers.

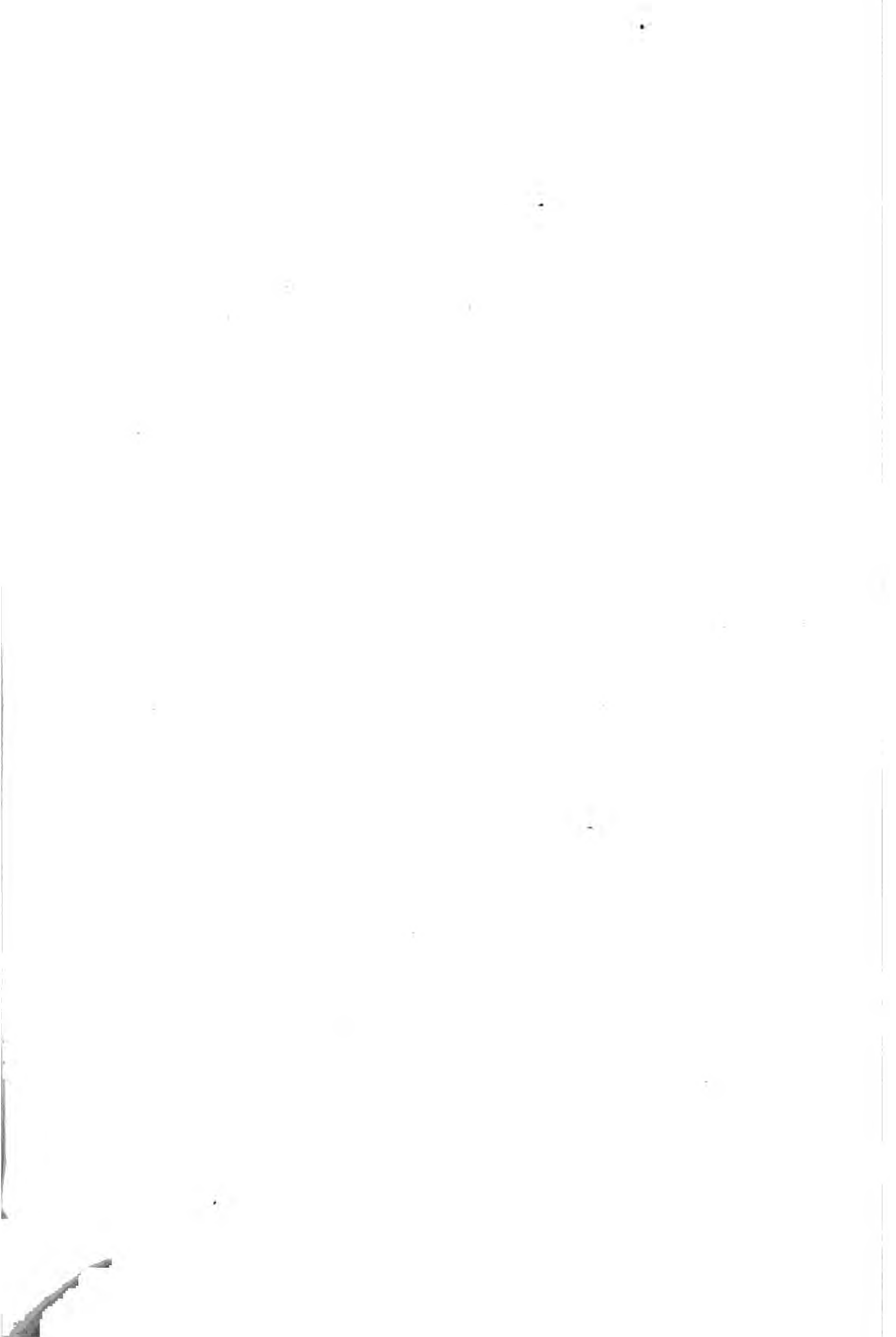
At grey dawn, before the sun had peeped forth from the east, the boy was roused by his stepmother, shouting, "Get up, thou lazy oaf. It is bright daylight, and the cattle must not stand starving for thy sake."

He rose in a trice, got a morsel of bread, and drove out his herd to graze. When he came to the green hill which was always so cool and shady, it seemed strange to him that the dew was again brushed away from the grass, the ground dry, yea, even more so than the day before. As he sat in deep thought, his eyes lit upon something that lay on the grass and glittered in the sun. Hey! he ran there at once to see what it was, and found a tiny little cap, scarlet in colour, with small golden bells fastened on it all around. Then again he felt very happy, and quite forgot his hunger, and played all day through with the little cap.

At gloaming, when the sun sank behind the big forest, the cowherd boy gathered together his cattle, and prepared to drive homewards. On wending his way along, he met one of the



“ Give me back my cap ; another time I will do thee a service
in return.”



prettiest little girls imaginable, and she greeted him kindly : " Good even."

" Good even to thee again," returned the grazier boy.

Then the wee girl asked : " Hast thou found my cap, which early this morn I lost among the green grass ? "

The boy answered : " Yes, that I have ; but let me keep the little cap, and thou art a good little girl. I had thought to have given it to my stepmother, and belike I may get some victuals when I get home."

But the little one entreated so prettily and so winsomely, " Give me back my cap ; another time I will do thee a service in return," that the boy gave her back the little scarlet cap, and the little maiden was once more happy, and, nodding in a friendly way to him, ran away.

The boy now called together the kine, and returned homewards. It was already dark when he came to the homestead, and his stepmother had long been waiting for him. She was therefore cross, and said : " Thou dost always return so very late that I must sit up half the night to milk the kine ; there is some porridge left in the bowl—now eat, and then

tumble into bed, that thou may'st get up be-
times to-morrow morn like other folk."

The poor boy durst not answer her harsh words, but quietly ate his food, and then stole away to the hay-loft where he slept; but he dreamt the whole night of nothing but the little maiden and her scarlet cap.

Early in the morn before the dawn of day, the lad was roused by his stepmother with the daily call of, "Get up, thou lazy oaf; the cattle mustn't be kept waiting for thy sake."

The boy rose in a trice, and soon made himself ready to drive the cattle out to graze; but before he started he asked his stepmother for a morsel of bread.

"Bread!" exclaimed the hard-hearted woman, "a good-for-nothing like thee is not worth a morsel of bread."

The boy had thus to depart quite fasting, which tormented him sorely. When he came out amongst the green woodlands he seated himself on the hill where he was wont to rest during the summer's heat. But it seemed strange to him that the ground appeared more scorched than on previous days, and the grass trodden down in large circles. It then came

into his mind what he had heard about the little fays that sport on the dewy sward during the summer nights, and by that he understood that this must be a fairy ring for elfin dance. When he was thus deeply musing he pushed his foot against a little bell, which lay amongst the grass, and the tiny thing gave such a sweet tinkling clank that all the cattle ran together and stood listening. The boy then again felt very happy, and forgot all his troubles, just as the cattle did to browse. And thus passed this day too, and far more speedily than he could have thought.

When time waned towards night, and the sun was on a level with the forest tree-tops, the grazier boy called his herd together and prepared to return homewards; but however much he called and blew his horn, the cattle would not leave the place, for there was such a rich and juicy pasture. The boy then thought to himself: "Perhaps they will obey the little bell better." He took forth his bell and tinkled it as he proceeded on his way. The bell-cow immediately came running after him, and the whole herd followed her. The boy then felt very glad, for now it was plain to what use he

could put the bell. As he was trudging along he met a tiny little mite of an old man, who greeted him with a very friendly "Good even."

"Good even to thee again," said the boy.

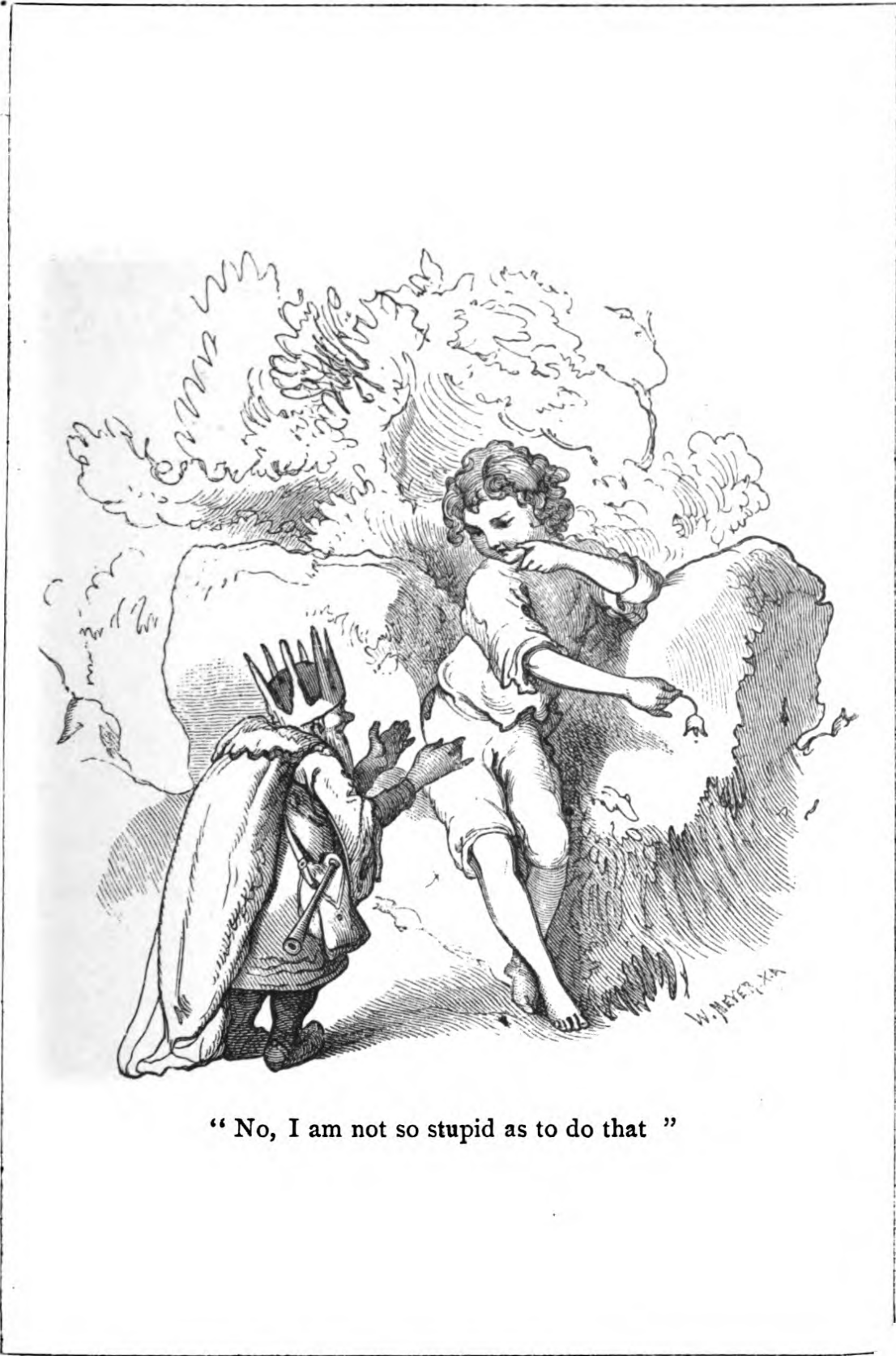
The little man then asked: "Hast thou found my bell, which only this morn I lost among the green grass?"

The cowherd boy replied: "Yes, that I have."

The old man then said: "Give it back to me."

"No," answered the lad, "I am not so stupid as to do that. The day before yesterday I found two little glass shoes, and a little boy fooled me out of them. Yesterday I found a little cap which I gave to a little maiden, and now thou comest and wouldst take away from me the little bell which is so fine to call the cows together with; other trovers get some reward, but I never get anything."

The little old man now lavished many kind words upon the boy, and said, "Give me back my bell and I'll give thee another one, with which thou canst call the kine together, and besides that I will allow thee to wish for three things."



“ No, I am not so stupid as to do that ”



Well, this the boy thought a good bargain, and he handed the bell to the old man, saying, "Since I may wish for whatever I like, I wish first of all to become king, and then I wish to get a big royal palace, and thirdly I wish to get a fair and winsome queen."

"Well," said the old man, "thou'rt wishing for no small things, at any rate; but now, remember well what I tell thee. To-night, when all are asleep, thou must leave thy home and wander far, until thou comest to a king's castle, which lies straight to the north. Here, I give thee a pipe, made of bone; if thou art in peril sound it! Shouldst thou again chance to come in still greater peril, sound it again! But if for the third time thou art in great danger, then break the little pipe in twain and I will help thee, as I have promised."

Of course the boy was very grateful for the old man's gift, and then the elfin king departed. But the grazier boy proceeded homewards with glad thoughts that soon he would no longer have to drive the cattle belonging to his step-mother, to graze.

When the boy came home it was already dark, and the stepmother had long been awaiting

his return, so that she was mightily offended. He therefore got blows instead of bread, did the poor lad.

“Oh, but this won't last much longer,” was the thought which consoled him as he stole up to the hayloft, and laid himself down to rest for a little while. But at midnight he rose quietly and stole away from the house, and began journeying northwards, as the old elf had directed. Thus he wandered on without rest over hill and dale, and twice the sun rose and twice set, while the lad was still on the road.

Towards even on the third day he came to a castle, so vast that he had never thought to see the like. He went into the kitchen and asked to be taken into service.

“Eh, what canst thou do?” asked the chief cook.

“I can drive the herd to graze!” answered the boy.

“Indeed!” said the chief cook. “The king requires a grazier just now very badly; but I suppose it will befall thee, like all the others, that every day thou wilt lose some one of the herd.”

“No,” replied the boy. “Hitherto I have never lost a cow of mine, that I have been grazing.”

He was then taken into service on the great royal demesne, and he grazed the king’s herd; but the wolf never seized any of his beasts, and thus he became well liked as one of the king’s servants.

One evening, when the grazier boy drove his herd homewards, he observed a fair young maiden, who stood by the window, listening to the music of his horn; but the boy pretended not to observe her, though his heart beat tick-tack under his jacket. It continued this way for some time, and every morning, when the boy sounded his horn on going out with his herd, the maiden stood listening; but he was not then aware that it was the king’s daughter. It came to pass one day that the young maiden came walking to where he was starting out with the herd. She had with her a snowy white little lamb, and she asked him so kindly that he would take great care of her little pet, that the wolves of the forest should not devour it.

The boy felt so abashed that his voice quite

forsook him, and he could make no answer ; but he took the lamb with him, and afterwards found his greatest joy in tending it, and it followed him about, as a dog follows his master. From that day the cowherd boy often saw the royal maiden. At early dawn, when he sounded the call for the departure of the herd, she was always wont to stand by the window, listening to the quavers from his horn ; and at even, when he returned home from the woodlands, the princess came down to pet her little lamb, and speak a few kind words to the grazier lad.

As time went on the cowherd boy grew up to become a fine young swain, and the king's daughter budded into a perfect rose, the fairest maiden to be seen far or near. Yet she still came every even to pet the lamb, as was her former custom. But one fine day the princess was lost ; she had disappeared, nobody knew how, and nowhere could she be found. This caused great commotion and grief all over the king's realm, for all loved her well ; but the king and queen grieved the most. The king then caused to be published all over the land, " that whoever could find his daughter should

have her for wife, and half the kingdom for a dowry besides."

Then came princes, champions and eager knights from east and from west; and clad in harness, and well armed, they set out with their retainers to seek the lost maiden. But few were they who ever returned from that undertaking, and those who did come back had neither heard nor learned aught of the missing princess. The king and queen grieved exceedingly, and felt that they had suffered an irreparable loss. And the grazier lad, when he grazed his cattle in the woodlands, grieved as deeply as they, for the beauteous girl dwelt in his mind night and day.

One night the grazier fancied in his sleep that the little elfin king was standing by his bed-side, and said, "To the north! to the north! there thou wilt find thy queen." This gave such joy to him that he awakened, and lo! there the little old man still remained, beckoning to him, "To the north! to the north!" and with that he vanished, so that the boy knew not if it really had been him or only a vision. But when it became light, he went up into the royal hall, and asked to be allowed

to speak with the king. All the royal servants greatly wondered at this, and the master cook said: "Thou hast now tended the herd for so many years, and thou mayst have a rise of wages, and better keep, without troubling the king about it."

But the grazier repeated his request, and told them he had a very different thing to ask. When at last he was admitted into the presence, the king asked him his errand.

"Great lord," began the lad, "I have served thee faithfully for many years, and I now ask leave to depart and seek the princess."

This bold request made the king angry, and he said: "How canst thou, who art only used to tend cattle, think of doing what neither princes nor champions are able to do?"

But the grazier answered stoutly that he would "find the princess or lose his life in the attempt."

The king then allowed his wrath to cool down, and thought of the old saying: "that a noble heart often beats under a russet jerkin." He commanded that the lad should be provided with the best accoutrements, and a good

steed, and with whatever else he might require.

But the cowherd said : " I want neither accoutrements nor steed ; give me only your royal word and leave to go, and some victuals for the road." After this he started, and the king wished him good fortune in the undertaking ; but all the pages and menials in the king's castle jeered at his audacious attempt.

The cowherd now wandered towards the north, as the old fay had told him, and he went such a long distance, that it could not now be very far to the world's end. When he had thus journeyed through many wild mountain tracks, he came at last to a great lake, in the midst of which was a verdant isle with a great castle standing on it, and considerably larger than the one from which he came. He went down to the strand and viewed the castle on all sides ; but as he was looking around, he saw a maiden with fair golden hair standing at the window, and beckoning to him with a silken ribbon, which her lamb used to wear.

His heart leapt for very joy, for it seemed to him that it could be no other than the princess. He now seated himself down to think how he

was to cross the water to the castle, but he could hit upon no plan. At last he remembered the little elfin, and it struck him that he might try and see if he would help him. He therefore took out his little pipe of bone, and blew a long drawling tone.

“Good even!” on the moment said a voice behind him.

“Good even to you again,” greeted the swain in return, and turned round, and there stood before him the wee lad whose glass shoes he had once found amongst the grass.

“What dost thou want of me?” inquired the elfin lad.

The cowherd answered: “I pray thee, bring me across the lake to the royal castle.”

The pigmy rejoined: “Well, seat thyself on my back;” and in a moment he transformed himself into a great big storm-kestrel, which sailed through the air.

The grazier seated himself, and the bird stayed not before they had reached the isle, on which stood the great castle.

The grazier now went up to the castle hall, and asked to be taken into service.

“What canst thou do?” asked the master cook.

“ I can drive cattle to graze,” answered the boy.

“ Indeed !” said the master cook. “ The giant is just now very badly in need of a grazier ; but likely enough it will befall thee just as the others, for if thou lovest but one beast, thy life will answer for it.”

The lad thought this a hard condition, but said that he would agree to it.

The cook then bade him welcome, and told him he might begin his service the following morning.

The swain now grazed the giant’s cattle, and sang his pastorals, and clanked with the bell as he was wont to do. But the king’s daughter sat at the window listening, and signed to him that he was not to make himself known.

In the evening the grazier was again calling his herd together from the wood with his horn. The giant then came and met him, and roared ferociously : “ If there be one missing *thou* shalt answer for it.” But not one beast was missing, however much he counted. He then in a friendly way said : “ That is good ; thou shalt be my grazier for thy whole life.” With this he went down to the lake, unchained his

enchanted galley, and rowed three times round the island, as he usually did every evening.

When the giant was away, the princess placed herself by the window, and sang :—


“What time the moon lifts up her light,
And clouds are chased from stars so bright,
Haste then to me thou grazier bold,
And I will give thee a crown of gold.”

The grazier understood by this that he ought to come during the night to liberate the royal captive. He then went away as if nothing had happened ; but when it was late and everybody lay in deep sleep, he again stole near to the tower, and placing himself near the window, sang :—

“With reverent love does the grazier stand,
And watch thy window with outstretched hand ;
To-night, when sleep doth hold her sway,
He'll gladly come to fetch thee away.”

The royal maiden then answered : “ I am fettered with golden chains ; come and break them asunder.”

The grazier was at a loss how to do this, so he took out his little pipe and sounded a long drawling tone.



“ Good even ! ” said at the same moment a voice behind him.

“ Good even to thee again, ” said the grazier, and turning round, there stood that little elfin maiden, whose scarlet cap he had once found amongst the green grass.

“ What dost thou want with me ? ” enquired the girl.

“ I pray thee, ” answered the grazier, “ to convey the princess and me both far away from here. ”

“ Follow me, ” said the little elfin girl ; and they ascended the tower to the maiden’s loft. The prison door opened of itself, and when the elf touched the chains they fell asunder. All three then went down to the strand, and the elfin creature sang :—

“ From miry sedge and waters deep,
Awake, oh pike, from thy night sleep,
Haste, oh haste, for a princess fair,
And a man who for her doth all things dare. ”

And with that she leapt into the lake, and changed into a great big pike, who gambolled lustily in the water. The pike said : “ Seat yourselves upon my back, but happen what

may, the princess must not become frightened, for then my power is naught."

The grazier and the royal maiden did as they were told, and the pike brought them speedily on through the waves.

While this was taking place, the giant awoke in his lofty tower, and on looking out through the window, observed where the grazier voyaged on the water with the king's young daughter. He at once assumed his eagle shape and flew after them. But when the pike heard the din of the eagle's eager wings she dived deep down into the lake; the princess became frightened, and gave a piercing shriek, and with that the elfin maiden's power was made naught, and this enabled the giant to seize the two fugitives in his talons. As soon as he had returned to his stronghold, he had the grazier thrown into a dark dungeon, some fifteen fathoms below the earth; and the princess was replaced in the former prison, and closely watched that she might not escape.

The grazier now lay in the dungeon deep and was ill at ease, brooding over his evil mishap that he was not able to save the royal maiden, and that he also had lost his freedom.



“The giant assumed his eagle shape.”



It then came into his mind what the old elf had said, that if for the third time he fell into any danger, and should break the pipe in twain, he would obtain immediate help. The grazier now thinking full well that he never more should behold the light of day, took out his little pipe, and brake it in twain.

“Good even!” was heard at the same moment from a voice behind him.

“Good even to thee again!” answered the grazier in return, and looking round, there stood the elfin king before him.

“What dost thou want with me since thou callest me?” he asked.

“I wish to save the princess and carry her home to her father,” the lad answered.

The elfin king at once brought him away, and they passed without trouble through locked doors and through many splendid chambers, until at last they came to a great hall, on the walls of which hung a great number of various arms, swords, spears and battle-axes with blades of burnished steel and hilts and handles of purest gold.

The old elf now made up a fire on the big hearth, saying: “Take off thy clothes.”

This the grazier quickly did, and the little old man burned all his old garments. He then went to a large iron chest, and took out a suit of armour which shone with burnished gold.

“Put these on,” he said ; and the lad did so.

When he was thus clad in full armour from head to foot, the old elf fastened a sharp-edged sword to his side, and said : “It is ordained that the giant shall fall by this weapon, and through this armour no steel can cut.”

After this they again returned to the dark dungeon, but the lad was in high spirits, like a young bird, and with great joy thanked the elfin king for all the kind help he had given to him. And then they parted one from another.

As the day dawned there was great din and bustle all over the castle, for the giant was now to hold his wedding with the royal captive, and he had invited his friends to the feast. And the princess was attired most gorgeously, with a crown of gold, ruby rings and other precious gems, which the giant’s mother herself had worn.

But the bride wept bitterly all the time without ceasing, and her tears were so hot that they burned like fire. And she cried most

when night approached, and the giant was to lead her to the bridal chamber, for he wanted to despatch the grazier, who lay in the prison dungeon, and he therefore sent his pages to fetch him, but, lo ! when they came down to the dungeon the prisoner had escaped, and there stood in his stead a champion bold, with sword and shield, and fully equipped. The giant's pages grew frightened at this unexpected sight, and took to their heels ; but the grazier followed after, and came up into the courtyard, where the whole wedding throng were gathered to witness his end

When the giant beheld the bold champion he waxed wrathful, and exclaimed : " Beshrew thee, thou crafty demon," and while he spake his eyes glowed so furiously that their glances quite pierced the armour. But the grazier was undaunted, and said : " Here thou must fight with me for the fair maiden," and as he drew his sword it seemed like unto flaming fire.

The giant then grew dismayed and sank backwards ; but the lad boldly advanced, and swinging his sword, struck such a mighty blow that the giant's head was severed from his body, and that was the end of him. One may

be sure the wedding guests now quickly became scarce, and they scattered in all directions ; but the princess ran forth, and thanked the manful deliverer, who had saved her.

Then they went down to the strand of the lake and unfastened the giant's enchanted galley, and rowed away from the isle. When they came home to the king's castle there was great joy and exultation that the king had got back his daughter, whom he had mourned as lost for so long a time. And a grand wedding was prepared, and the king bestowed upon the grazier his fair daughter, according to his promise.

And they lived ever afterwards happy and contented for many, many years, and saw their children grow up like fair blossoms. But the little bell and the broken horn-pipe are still kept as heir-looms at the royal castle even to this day.





“The princess ran forth, and thanked the manful deliverer, who had saved her.”





THE BOY WHO STOLE THE GIANT'S TREASURES.



DOWN in the valley there once lived a poor cotter who had three sons; the eldest two accompanied their father to field and forest and helped him in his work, but the youngest was kept at home to assist his mother in the house. For this he was held in contempt by his brothers, and they dealt unfairly with him whenever they had a chance.

After some time the old cotters died and the three sons set about dividing their inheritance. It turned out as might have been expected; for the two elder brothers took whatever was of any use, and left their young

brother nothing but an old cracked trough, which neither of them would have. The eldest brother said, "The old trough might do for our youngest brother, he is always baking and scrubbing." Of course the lad thought this was but a poor inheritance; however, he was forced to be content with it. But from that day it did not seem good for him to remain in the old house, so he bade farewell to his brothers, and when he came to the shore of the lake he caulked his trough with oakum and made it do for a little skiff; then he got two sticks, which he used as oars, and rowed away. When the lad had crossed the lake he came to a king's castle, and he entered and asked to speak with the king, who questioned him about his ancestors and his present errand. The boy answered, "I am only the son of a poor cotter, and don't possess anything in the world, except an old trough, and now I have come here to seek service." When the king heard this he replied, smiling, "Certainly thou hast but a poor inheritance, yet fortunes change marvellously at times." So the lad was installed amongst the king's little pages, and was well liked by everybody for his fearless and frank demeanour.

Now must be told that the king who lived in this castle possessed an only daughter ; she was both fair and wise, so that her beauty and understanding were praised all over the land, and suitors came from east and west to seek her in marriage. But the princess rejected them all, saying that she would give her hand to him who could bring to her for a wedding dowry the four highly prized treasures in the possession of the giant who lived on the other side of the lake. The four treasures were a golden sword, three golden hens, a golden lantern, and a golden harp.

Many a king's son and many a doughty champion had essayed to gain these valuables, but none had ever returned, for the giant had seized and devoured them all. The king thought this a very hard condition of his daughter's, for he feared she would thus never get a husband and he would be deprived of a son-in-law to inherit his kingdom.

When the lad heard all this he thought to himself that it was well worth the trouble to try and gain the hand of the king's fair daughter. He therefore sought the king one day and told his errand, but the king grew mighty angry

and replied, "How dar'st thou, who art only a simple retainer, propose to do that which great champions and bold warriors have been unable to perform?"

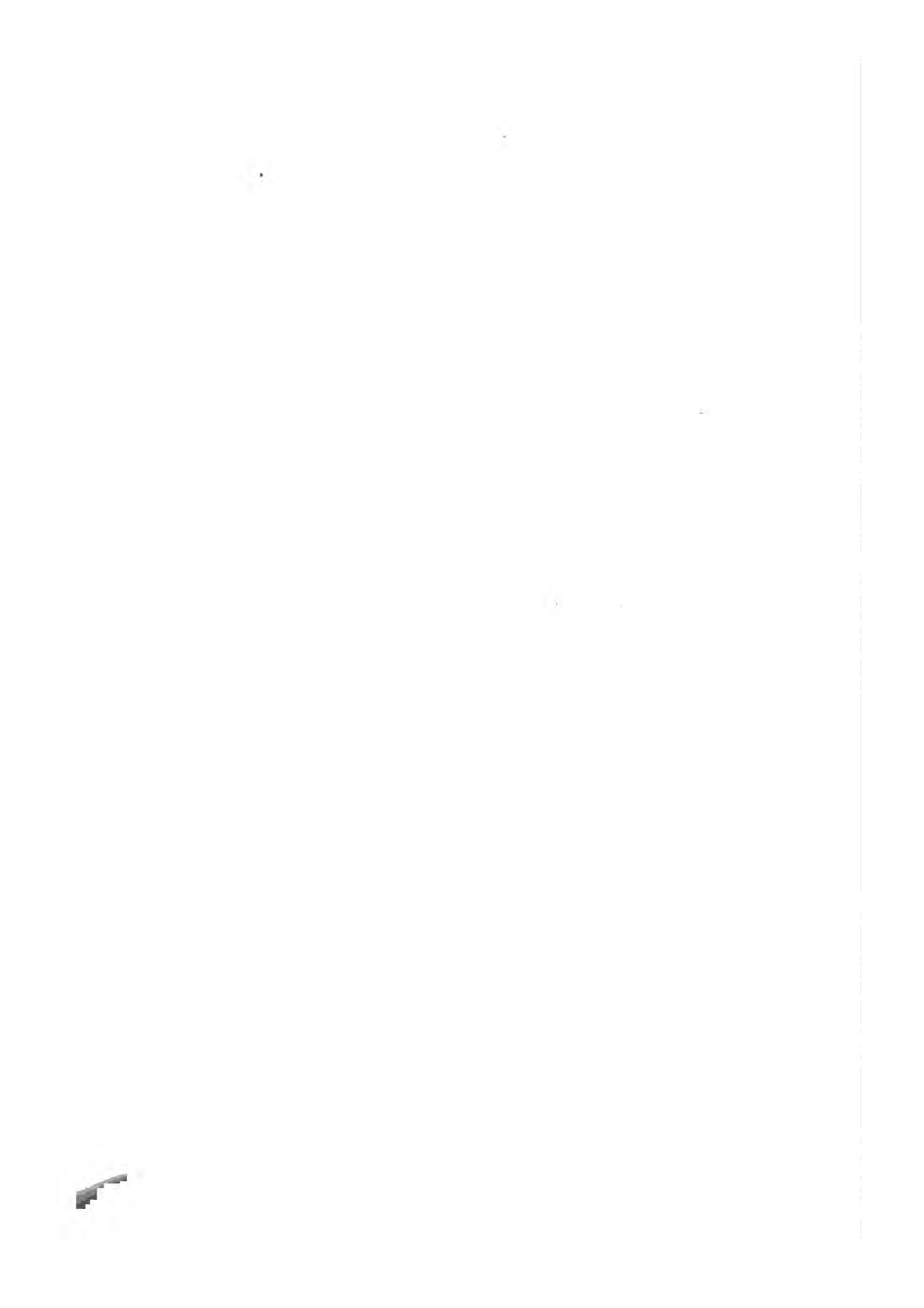
The boy, however, stoutly maintained his desire, and asked permission to try his fortune; and when the king saw his pluck and determination he allowed his wrath to cool down, and gave the boy his consent, adding, "Thou'lt imperil thy life, and I would fain retain thee," and with this they parted one from another.

The lad now took his way to the shore, found his trough-boat, examined it closely on all sides, then rowed across the lake and hid himself for the night in a secret place near to the giant's hut.

But very early in the morning before dawn, the giant repaired to his barn, and threshed so loud that it echoed in the mountains all around. When the boy heard this he gathered a number of stones into his wallet, cautiously climbed to the roof of the barn, and there made a small hole so that he could look down. He then saw that the giant carried his golden sword by his side, but the weapon was of such a strange quality that it clanked sharply every time its



“ When now the giant was threshing at full swing, the lad flung a little stone.”



master grew angry. When now the giant was threshing at full swing the lad flung a little stone so that it touched the sword and made it clank. "Why dost thou clank?" said the giant, "I am not angry." He threshed again, but suddenly the sword again clanked. Again the giant resumed his work; but the sword



clanked the third time, which irritated the huge man so that he unfastened his belt and threw the sword out of the barn door.

"Now lie there," said he, "until I have finished my threshing."

The lad now tarried no longer, but quickly glided down from the roof, seized the giant's

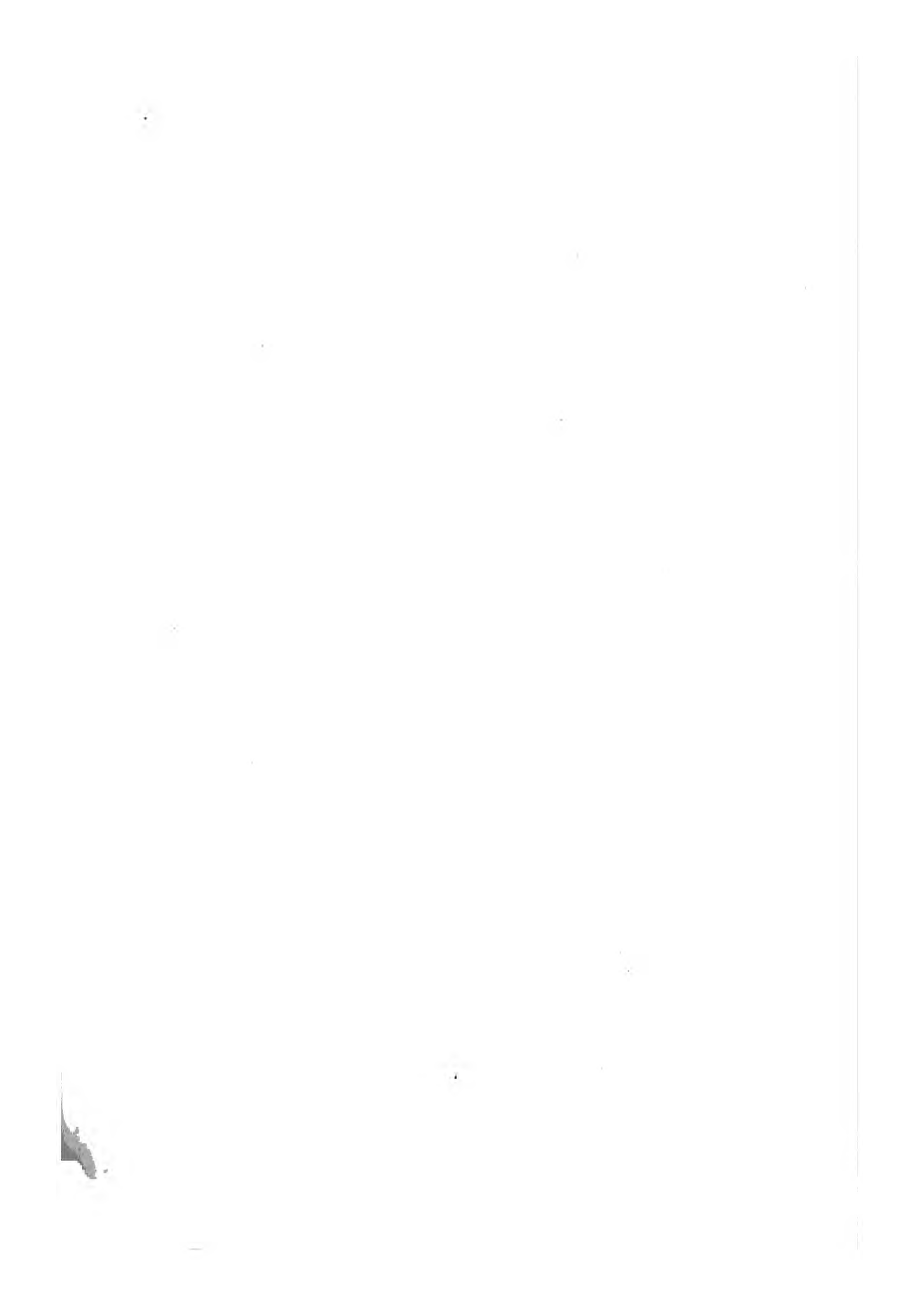
golden sword, ran to his boat, and rowed across the water. When he had gained the other side, he hid his booty, rejoicing that his adventure was so far successful.

The next day the lad filled his wallet with corn, and placed a bundle of bast-twine in the boat and again made his way to the giant's hut. When he had got to a hiding place he obtained a sight of the giant's three golden hens, where they ran about on the sands spreading their tails so that they shimmered gloriously in the bright sunshine. In a trice he was on the spot, and called to the golden hens so softly, so softly, and then threw corn to them out of his wallet. While the fowls were pecking, the boy gradually drew near to the water, until at last he had gathered the golden hens into his boat; he then jumped quickly in and pushed out from the shore, and tied the golden birds down with the bast. Then he rowed to the opposite shore.

The third day he put several lumps of salt into his satchel and again voyaged across the lake. As night came on he noticed how the smoke curled over the giant's hut, and by that he judged that the giant's wife was busy boiling



“He called to the golden hens so softly, so softly, and then threw corn to them out of his wallet.”



stirabout. He climbed the roof and through the reek-hole spied a huge cauldron boiling over the fire ; he then took some lumps of salt from his wallet, and let them fall, one by one, down into the pot. This done, he stole down the roof and quietly abided the issue. In a short time the giantess lifted the pot from the fire, ladled the porridge into a big bowl, and placed it on the table, and the giant, who was hungry, fell to at once, but when he tasted the porridge he found it to be horribly salt, and became very angry and rose from his seat. The old woman excused herself, and declared the porridge was excellent ; but the giant bade her taste it ; for his own part he had had enough of her cooking. The old crone now tasted it herself and pulled a very wry face, for such a badly tasting stirabout she had never made before.

There was no way out of it for the giant woman but to make fresh porridge. She therefore seized the pail, snatched the golden lantern from the wall, and went in a hurry to the well to fetch water. No sooner had she placed the lantern on the well-cover, and was just stooping down to wind up the water, than

the boy was there, seized the old hag by the feet, turned her head over heels into the well, and seized the beautiful lantern; then he took to his legs, ran to his boat and crossed the lake in safety.

The giant sat for a while wondering why his wife tarried so long away; at last he went out to look, but she was nowhere to be seen. Then he heard the splash down the well, and understood by that that she had fallen into the water, and with great difficulty he hauled her upon dry ground again.

“But where in all the world is my lantern?” bawled the giant, as soon his wife had gathered herself a bit together.

“I don’t know,” answered she; “but there came somebody who caught me by my feet, and threw me into the well.”

The giant was quite furious, and said, “Three of my treasures are already gone; nought remains now but my harp of gold; but I’ll baffle him whoever he is, the thief—he shan’t have the harp—I’ll keep that secure with twelve padlocks.”

While the giant was making safe his harp, with twelve locks, the boy was seated on the

other shore and rejoicing that hitherto everything had passed off so well. But the worst job remained, and very much did he cudgel his brains to find out a way to obtain possession of the golden harp. He therefore resolved to return to the giant's hut across the lake, and there watch patiently for any opportunity to occur.

No sooner said than done ; he rowed once more across the lake, and went into his lurking place, but it so happened that the giant was watching himself this time, and discovering the boy, quickly ran forward, and seized him.

“So I have caught thee at last, young thief,” said the giant, exasperated beyond measure. “Nobody but thou hast stolen my sword, my three golden hens, and my golden lantern.”

The boy felt dreadfully frightened, for he thought that his last moments had surely now come. He said humbly, “Don't take my life, Gaffer, and I'll promise never to return.”

“No,” answered the giant ; “it shall be the same with thee as with all the others. I allow no one to escape with life.”

He then put the lad into a sty, and fed

him with nut-kernels and sweet milk, so that he might be nicely fattened by the time he was to be killed and eaten.

The boy was now a prisoner. He ate and drank, and altogether had an easy time of it. After a while, the giant wanted to know if he were quite fat yet, so he went to the sty, bored a hole in the wall, and told the boy to put out a finger; but the lad understood his evil intention, and put out a new-peeled alder twig. When the giant cut into the stick, and the red sap trickled out, he thought to himself the boy was but meagre fare as yet, since his flesh felt so hard and bony; he therefore caused more sweet milk and nut-kernels to be brought to his prisoner.

Some time after this the giant again went to the sty, and told the boy to put out a finger through the hole in the wall. This time the boy put out a cabbage stalk, and the giant cut into it with his knife, and the result satisfied the giant-ogre that he must be sufficiently fattened, since his flesh was so soft and good. When the next morning came, the giant said to his wife, "Now, mother, the boy is well fattened, take him out to-day and roast him in

the oven, and I will, in the meantime, go and invite our friends to a rare feast."

Of course the old crone promised to do as her husband had told her, so she made the oven very hot, and brought out the boy to roast him.

"Seat yourself on the bread-shovel," said she, and the boy obeyed; but whenever the old hag raised the shaft, the boy always managed to fall off; and so it came about at least three times. The giant woman at last grew angry, and scolded him for his awkwardness; but the boy excused himself that he did not quite understand how he ought to sit.

"Look, I'll show you how," said the old crone, and she seated herself on the bread-shovel, with bent back and knees drawn up. Scarcely was she seated on the blade before the lad seized the shaft, and quickly shunted her down into the oven, while the bond-woman's little daughter banged the door to. He then possessed himself of the giantess's fur coat, stuffed it with straw, and laid it on the bed; then he seized the giant's big bunch of keys and opened the twelve locks, and bore off the wonderful golden harp. He next set the

giant's daughter free, and then ran away down to his boat, which lay hidden among the sedges along the shore.

Soon after, the giant returned home, and said, "Where can my wife be? Oh, I see, she has lain down to rest a bit. Well, I thought as much."

But long the old crone slept. She seemed loth to awake, though the invited neighbours were expected soon to arrive. The giant then went to the bed to rouse her, and bawled, "Get up, mother;" but nobody answered. He called a second time, but still no reply. This silence enraged the giant, and he violently shook the fur coat which lay on the bed, and he now saw that it was not his old woman, but a sheaf of straw over which her garment had been pulled. The giant was greatly dismayed, and hastened to look for his golden harp; but the bunch of keys was gone, the twelve locks had been opened, and the golden treasure stolen! And when, at last, he opened the oven door to look at the feast prepared—lo, and behold! he saw his own old crone was seated in the oven, and grinning at him!

The giant flew into a storm of passion and

rage, and rushed out to be revenged on the boy who had caused him such grief; and when he came down to the shore he saw the boy sitting in his boat, playing on the harp—the strains of the music floated over the water, and the golden strings glimmered in the sunlight. The giant ran into the water to seize the boy, but found it was too deep for him. He then laid himself down and began to drink that he might lessen the depth of the water, and by drinking so much and so fast he created quite a current by which the little boat was drawn nearer and nearer to the land. But at the very moment when the giant was going to seize it, he burst, from drinking so much, and that was the end of him.

The giant was left lying dead on the shore, but the boy again rowed across the lake, happy and merry. When he came on shore he combed out his beautiful golden hair, fastened the giant's golden sword to his side, took the harp of gold in one hand, and the golden lantern in the other, and calling on the gold-feathered hens made them follow him.

At length he stood before the king in the great hall, where he was seated surrounded by

his retainers. When the king now beheld the gallant swain he felt glad at heart, but the lad stepped before the king's fair daughter, saluted her with becoming reverence, and laid the giant's treasures at her feet. One might easily imagine what joy spread through the king's court, that the princess had obtained the giant's treasures, and had got a bridegroom so bold and so brave, and the king celebrated his daughter's wedding with great joy and pomp, and when the old king died the lad was made king, and ruled over the whole land with great prudence for many years.

I did not witness any more myself.





THE LAND OF YOUTH.

WHEN the earth was younger than it now is, there once lived a king who ruled over a great realm. He was brave in warfare, wise in council, and always fortunate in his undertakings. But as years passed on the king became old and grey, so that he saw he could not live much longer ; this made him sorrowful in mind, for life was dear to him, and he questioned all sage men in his realm if there were no means by which he might escape death. The sages shook their heads and consulted together, but no one could satisfy the king's demand.

One day there came to the king's castle an old fortune-teller, who had travelled far and wide, over land and sea, and was famed for much wisdom. The king enquired the old woman's tidings. She answered : " Lord king, the latest news I know is that thou art greatly afraid to die, now that thou hast grown old. I have therefore come here to tell thee how thou may'st regain thy youth and health."

This speech pleased the king well, and he asked her how it was to be done.

" Far, far away, many thousand miles from here, is a land called the Land of Youth. In that country a strange kind of water is to be found, and there also grows a kind of priceless apple. Now, whoever drinks of that water and eats of those apples will become young again, were he ever so old. But few there are that have tasted of these things, for the way is long and full of danger."

When the aged king learned this he felt quite overjoyed, and liberally rewarded the fortune-teller for her good counsel ; and then they parted.

The king now considered within himself how he might obtain these wondrous treasures. At



The old Fortune-teller.



last he decided to send one of his sons to fetch them. For this purpose he had the eldest prince richly equipped with everything necessary, gave him plenty of money, and despatched him on his errand.

But when the prince had travelled far away, he came to a city which enthralled his fancy; he forgot all about his mission, and spent his time in luxury and pleasure, and thought not of his promise to seek the water of life for his father in the distant land.

Time passed on, and the old king longed much for the return of his son, but no news ever came from him. Then he fitted out his second son with gold, and all things necessary, and sent him in quest of the Land of Youth. But when the prince had travelled a long way, he came to the same city and met his brother, and it happened to him just as it had to his elder brother. He quite forgot all about his mission, and wasted his time in drinking and folly, and thought no more of his promise to fetch the apples of youth and the water of life for his aged father.

After a goodly time had thus gone by, and yet the princes did not return, the old king fell

ill from grief and age. The youngest prince then went to his father and prayed that he, too, might be permitted to go in search of the Land of Youth. But since only one son remained unto the king, he was loth to grant his request, and besought him to remain at home. But the lad held stoutly to his request, and in the end was allowed to depart. The king caused him to be fitted out in a seeming manner; and he started on his journey. But the old man sat alone and forsaken in his realm, in great anguish, biding the return of but one of his sons.

The young prince now travelled on distant roads, and came at last to the great city where he met with his two elder brothers, and they asked him to remain with them, and give himself no further trouble about the old man at home; but the prince would not break his word, and refused to stay. He bade them farewell, and travelled far and wide through many a great realm. Whomever he met on the road, he questioned about the Land of Youth; but no one knew aught of it, and could not inform him where it lay.

One day the prince lost his way in a great



“ At peep of day, the old crone went out and sounded her
horn.”

forest, and when looking about to find a shelter for the night, he espied a small light glimmering in the distance between the trees. He advanced towards it, and came to a small hovel, where dwelt a very old woman. The young prince asked if he might stop the night there, to which the old crone consented. In their talk, she asked about his family and his errand. The prince answered, that he was the son of a king, and was journeying to find the Land of Youth, and at the same time asked if she could tell him aught about it.

The old crone then said : " I have lived here three hundred winters, but no one has told me of the Land thou speakest of ; but the beasts of the field obey me—mayhap some one of my subjects knows the way, and early to-morrow morn I'll make enquiry."

The young prince thanked her for her kind promise, and remained in the cottage during the night.

At peep of day when the sun rose, the old crone went out and sounded her horn. Then a great noise was heard in the forests, and all kinds of beasts came running from far and near. When they were gathered together, and had

done homage to their queen, she asked : " Is there any among you who knows the way to the Land of Youth ? "

The animals then conferred long together, but no one could give an answer to her question.

The old woman then turned to the young prince and said : " I can aid thee no further ; but I have a sister whom all the birds of the air obey. Go, greet her from me ; maybe she can help thee. "

She then commanded the wolf to bear the prince away on his back to her sister.

Thereupon the prince bestrode the wolf, and off they went, across field and forest, over hill and dale, through many bewildering tracts.

Belated at night, when the sun had long sunk behind the big forest, they saw a small light that seemed to flit between the trees. The wolf then said : " We have now arrived, for here dwells the sister of our queen. "

He then turned home again, but the prince advanced, and found a very, very old woman, who lived in a cave, dug into the earth. She asked about his family and his errand. The prince answered, that he was the son of a king,



“ I have lived six hundred winters here, and no one hath told me of the Land
of Youth.”

and was journeying to seek the Land of Youth ; at the same time he greeted her from her sister, who ruled over the beasts of the field.

The old crone then spake, and said : “ I have lived six hundred winters here, and no one hath told me of the land thou speakest of ; but the birds of the air obey me, and maybe some one amongst my subjects may know the way. Early to-morrow I will make enquiry.”

The young prince thanked her, as was befitting, for her kind promise, and remained there during the night.

At the first streak of dawn the old crone went out and sounded her horn, and immediately a great wind and roar was heard aloft, and there came, hieing on their wings, all the birds of the air, both big and small, from far and near. When they had all gathered and had done homage to their queen, she asked if any of them knew the way to the Land of Youth.

The birds conferred long together about it, but the result was that no one could give an answer to their queen's question. The old woman then turned to the young prince, saying : “ I can now help thee no further ; but I have a

sister whom all the fishes in the sea obey. Do thou then go and greet her from me ; if she can give thee no counsel, there is no one can do it." The old crone then commanded the eagle to bear the prince on his wings to her sister. And the young prince bestrode the eagle's back, and off they went like a storm across green woods and rolling seas.

Late at night they saw a little light that glimmered between the trees, whereupon the eagle said : "We have now arrived, for here dwells the sister of our queen." He then bade farewell to the prince, and flew home again to his mistress ; but the young prince entered the cot and asked if he could be sheltered for the night, which request was granted. But in the hut lived an old, old woman, and she asked about his errand and his family.

The prince answered, that he was a king's son who was journeying to seek the Land of Youth, and at the same time greeted her from her sister, who ruled over the birds of the air.

The old crone then spake : "I have now lived nine hundred winters, but no one has ever told me of the Land thou speakest of. I rule over all the fishes of the sea—maybe there is

some one amongst my subjects who knows the way. Early to-morrow I will question them."

The prince thanked her in a seeming manner for her kind promise, and remained there all that night.

Early in the morning, before daybreak, the old crone went out and sounded her horn. Then there arose a tremendous roar and swell in the sea, and the waters foamed and frothed from the stir of the innumerable fishes, great and small, who all crowded hither from far and nigh. When all had gathered together, and had done homage to their queen, the old woman spake, saying: "I have summoned ye all, for I have a mind to know if any of ye can tell the way to a country called the 'Land of Youth'?"

The fishes now held a long conference, but the end was that no one could give an answer to their queen's question. This vexed the old woman, and she said: "Are ye sure all are gathered here? I see nothing of the old whale, who isn't exactly the least of the lot."

At this moment a loud noise was heard far out at sea, and the old whale came dashing through the billows with great speed.

The old woman asked why he had not come with all the others, but the whale excused himself that he had travelled such a long way.

“Where hast thou been?” asked she.

“I have voyaged many thousand miles, and I have only just now come from a distant country, called the Land of Youth!”

When the old woman heard this she was well pleased, and said: “As a punishment for thy tardy arrival, thou shalt once more travel to the Land of Youth, and take this young swain with thee, and bring him safely back with thee.”

After this she bade farewell to the young prince, wished him success, and then he seated himself on the back of the whale. Off they went, with foaming speed, far away through the sea.

They journeyed throughout the day, and late at night they came to the much-praised Land of Youth.

The whale then said: “I will now give thee good counsel, which thou shalt faithfully follow if thou wishest for success in thy undertaking. In the enchanted castle everything falls asleep at the hour of midnight; at this hour do thou go up into the castle, take only one apple and

one phial of water ; tarry not, but immediately come back. If thou stayest beyond the midnight hour itself, thou wilt endanger both our lives.”

The young prince thanked the whale for his kind counsel, and promised to do everything as the fish had told him.

At midnight the prince went up into the enchanted castle, and found everything just as the sapient whale had related. At the castle gate were ferocious beasts, wolves, bears and dragons, but they were all wrapped in deep sleep, and it seemed as if the whole castle was deserted.

The prince wandered through many grand rooms, each one more gorgeous than the others ; he was astonished beyond measure at the countless treasures which everywhere met his eyes.

At last he came into a large hall, which was magnificently adorned with gold and silver arras. In the midst of the great hall grew a tree, bearing the priceless apples, and beside it flowed a spring, the water of which glimmered like liquid gold, and had a mystic sound as it rippled over the stones.

The young prince now understood that he at last had found what he so long had sought. He therefore ran and filled his phial with the water of life from the precious spring, but when he came to the tree he could no longer refrain, but, forgetting the words of the whale, gathered and quite filled his satchel with the fresh apples of youth.

He now intended to turn back, but he could not master his desire to look about the enchanted castle for a little while longer; so he continued his wandering from hall to chamber, from chamber to hall, and saw that the last one always surpassed the others in grandeur.

At last he came into a room which, more than any other, was decked with gold and silver and gems. In the middle of the chamber stood a bed with azure silken bolsters, on which a maiden lay in slumber, so lovely, so fair, that surely no one had ever seen her equal in the whole wide world.

Then the young prince was touched at heart, and forgetting both heaven and earth, and his father's grey hairs, and the warnings of the wise whale, he stooped over the royal maiden and kissed her.

Then he intended to depart, but it seemed to him that he ought to let the maiden know who it was that had stolen her kiss. For this purpose he wrote on the wall that prince Venius of England had been there, and then hastened out of the castle. It was high time, too, for he had scarcely passed through the castle gates before every one and every thing awoke from their trance; the wild beasts roared, the heavy armour rattled and clanked, and the whole castle was filled with life and din. But the prince hastily threw himself on the back of the whale, and off they went like a tempest blast across the billows.

They journeyed this way for some while out into the trackless sea. The whale then suddenly dived deep down, dragging the prince with him, and when they came up again, the prince felt very frightened, and thought that he had been very near his end.

The whale asked: "Art thou afraid?"

"Yes," answered the prince; "I have never been so frightened before."

The whale said: "I was just as frightened when thou didst take so many apples."

They journeyed a while longer, when the

whale again dived down into the deep ; but this time he remained much longer under the water than before, and the prince was nearly half dead from fright when they once more came to the surface.

The whale asked: "Wert thou afraid?"

"Yes," replied the prince; "never in my life have I been so much frightened."

"I was just as frightened when thou didst steal a kiss from the princess in the enchanted castle," answered the whale.

They now journeyed awhile, when the whale again dived down into the deep ; but this time he went so far down that the prince thought he never more would behold the light of day.

When at last they came up again, the whale asked afresh: "Wert thou afraid?"

"Yes," replied the prince; "never before have I been so near to death."

"I was just as frightened," said the whale, "when thou didst write thy name on the chamber wall."

After this they continued their journey without any further adventure until they reached the opposite shore.

The prince now bade farewell to the old whale, and went to greet the old woman who had seen nine hundred winters ; and when she beheld him, she rejoiced to hear that his undertaking had succeeded so well.

But the young swain said that he would recompense her for her kind help, and forthwith he gave to her an apple from the Land of Youth, and a drink of the charmed water of life. And a marvellous transformation was effected, for that wizened old woman's wrinkles vanished from her face, her mouth became filled with glistening white teeth, her bosom heaved, and she stood there a maiden in full bloom, like as she had been in her young days. And the Queen of the Fishes thanked the young prince exceedingly for the great service he had done her, and then they parted.

But at the parting she said: "I will now reward thee for thy kind gift. Here is a bridle; when it is shaken a steed will appear, fleet as the wind. He will carry thee wherever thou may'st desire to go."

The young prince now shook the bridle, as the Queen of the Fishes had directed him, and at once there came a steed, fleet as the wind,

and the young man rode off to the old woman who had seen six hundred winters.

When, now, the Queen of the Birds beheld him, she rejoiced that his undertaking had succeeded so well.


But the royal youth thanked her for the kind help she had rendered him, and said that he would return her kindness. He then gave to her an apple from the Land of Youth, and a drink of the water of life.

And now a new miracle took place, for the old woman's wrinkles disappeared from her face, her lips smiled, her bosom heaved, and she stood there before the prince like the maiden of her young days.

The Queen of the Birds thanked the prince exceedingly for this great service, and with this they parted one from another.

But at parting she said : " I will now recompense thee for thy gift. Here is a cloth ; whenever thou spreadest it out, thou wilt find a full repast laid out upon it."

The prince took the priceless cloth, and again bestrode his steed, and rode off to the Queen of the Beasts of the Fields, who had seen three hundred winters.



When the old woman now beheld him, she rejoiced that his venture had ended so well, and received him with great kindness.

But he said that he wished to return her kind help, and he then gave to her an apple from the Land of Youth, and a drink of the charmed water of life.

Then again was seen a miracle, for she changed her appearance and became young again; the wrinkles disappeared from her face, her bent figure straightened up, and she stood there, a maiden of rare beauty. The Queen of the Beasts of the Field thought that she could not rejoice enough at what had taken place, and she thanked the prince for his exceeding great kindness, and with that they parted; but at parting she brought forth a sword and gave it to him, saying: "I will now befittingly return thy favour: here is a sword—whomever thou dost threaten with it shall yield to thee, were it even the most ferocious of beasts." The young prince now thought himself in every way well equipped, and travelled on until he again met with his brothers, and then there was great rejoicing on all sides.

But when the elder princes learnt that their

brother had succeeded in his undertaking, a great envy seized upon their hearts, and they conferred together how they might betray him, and themselves win the approval of their father. They bestowed upon him many fair and flattering words, and had a splendid banquet prepared: but in the night, when the young man slept, the brothers watched their opportunity, and exchanged the apples of youth and the water of life, without the prince knowing it, or even dreaming of such knavery.

The prince soon bade farewell to his brothers, mounted his steed and rode away to his father's demesne. The aged king was then highly pleased to get back his youngest son, and the prince rejoiced that his father was still in life. He then brought forth his offerings, and asked the king to eat of the apples and drink of the water, that he might again become young. However, it went quite contrary to expectation, for no change took place, and the old grey beard remained as old and grey as before. Now the king could think no other than that his son wanted to mock him, and he became fearfully enraged. But the prince knew he had been betrayed, and this touched him deeply.

After some time had passed, the two elder brothers also returned home to the king's demesne. They had a great deal to relate about their travels, and they descanted largely upon all the manifold dangers they had experienced during their journey to and from the Land of Youth. They then went before their father and offered him the apples and the water of life, that he might become young again. But now a remarkable change took place, for the old man threw off his age, his grey hairs became flaxen again, and his mouth was filled with bright teeth, the furrows on his brow disappeared, and he stood there again as in the days of his youth.

Then there arose a great joy throughout the whole realm, and the king lauded his two elder sons for their faithfulness, but everybody detested the king's youngest son for having been false and deceitful, and the king sentenced him to be thrown into the lions' den, and this was ruthlessly done. But when the wild beasts were going to rush upon him to tear him to pieces, he threatened them with his sword, and they fell back and harmed him not. And when he felt hungry he had only to spread his cloth,

and it became covered with costly dishes. He remained for full seven years in the lions' den, and no one knew that he was still alive.

The legend now goes back to the Land of Youth, where there was great consternation when the prince had departed, for the water of life had ceased to flow, the apples were lost, and—worst of all—the young princess had lost her fair fame. In course of time the royal maiden gave birth to a child; but the little prince had in his left hand a wondrous strange outgrowth, like an apple, which could not be removed. The princess then called together all the sapient women in the Land of Youth, and asked them what she was to do to rid her son of his strange malformation. Upon this the women conferred long together and spake both hither and thither, but at last gave their opinion that the young prince would not attain shapeliness until he met his father. A good round time now rolled away, and as the lad grew up he showed greater understanding and a better memory than other children; yea, nothing was so crooked or entangled that he could not straighten or clear it up, and when only seven years old he could already spell out his father's

name, which was written on the chamber wall. His mother, the king's daughter, then felt a great desire to start in quest of prince Venius. She caused her galleys to be prepared in the best possible manner with costly fittings, and manned with picked crews. Then she embarked with her young son; the sails on the gilded yards were hoisted, and away they sailed, far over the seas, all the way to England.

When the splendid fleet now arrived before the chief city, it caused great fear and excitement, for everybody thought it was a warlike hostile armada. But the royal lady proceeded to the landing place, and sent a message to the king, requesting to see prince Venius.

The king was now greatly concerned, for he knew full well that the prince had been thrown to the wild beasts, although he would not say so. He conferred with his councillors what was best to be done, but no one knew a way out of the perilous situation.

The end was that the king sent his eldest son, as he could not send his youngest, and a messenger was despatched to the royal lady, saying that prince Venius would come the next day.

Early in the morning the princess had the road covered all over with cloth of golden tissue, and she seated herself, together with her little son, at the landing place ready to receive the prince. After a little while the eldest prince rode out of the city on his way down to the ships. When he beheld the costly stuff spread out on the road he was greatly astonished at all the splendour, and kept his steed off the road that he might not trample on the precious stuff. He now came down to the pier, where the princess was seated in a chair of state, surrounded by all her people. But when the little lad saw him advancing warily to the pier he eagerly called out, "This is not my father!" and the apple in his hand remained as hitherto.

The prince had then to turn back with but little glory, and much disappointed; but the princess announced that she would not depart from there until she had found the true prince Venius.

The following day the king sent out his second son, but it turned out the same way. The prince was afraid of riding along the costly golden cloth, and when he came to the

pier, where sat the princess in her chair of state, the lad who stood by her side called out, "This cannot be my father!" The apple also remained in his hand as heretofore.

The king's second son had now to turn back, and everybody thought that he had gained more shame than glory. But the princess now perceiving that she was met with deceit and falsehood, became very angry and landed with all her warriors, and sent a message to the king, demanding to see prince Venius, even though only the remains of him, or she declared that she would not leave one stone upon another in the whole city.

Now was there general dismay, and the king knew not what counsel to follow in this dread emergency. At last he thought it best to send to the lions' den to look for some remains of his son. When the messengers came to the lions' den to look for even a bone of prince Venius, lo! there he was seated quite alive, sporting with the wild beasts! Then to be sure there was great joy through all the city and the whole kingdom, and everybody entreated the prince to leave the den. But he was proud and refused to come,

until at last his father was forced to kneel before him, and to promise him to amend all wrongs which had been done to him.

When the sun arose again for the third day, the royal lady again caused the golden cloth to be spread on the road, and she seated herself in her chair of state, and the little lad stood by her knee, and all her men were assembled around. Prince Venius attired himself in the most gorgeous silks and purple, and fastened the sword to his side, shook his bridle, and mounted his storm-fleet steed. He then galloped along the road towards the fleet, but it seemed as if he flew through the air, for so daring a rider and so swift a steed no one had ever seen.

When now the lad beheld prince Venius, when he dashed forward along the road of gold, he called out with joy, "There is my father!" and at the same instant the apple fell out of his hand. The princess then rose from her chair of state and went to greet him, and received him with great joy and love. And the populace stood by looking on, thinking they would have to search far to find so brave a man, and so beauteous a woman.

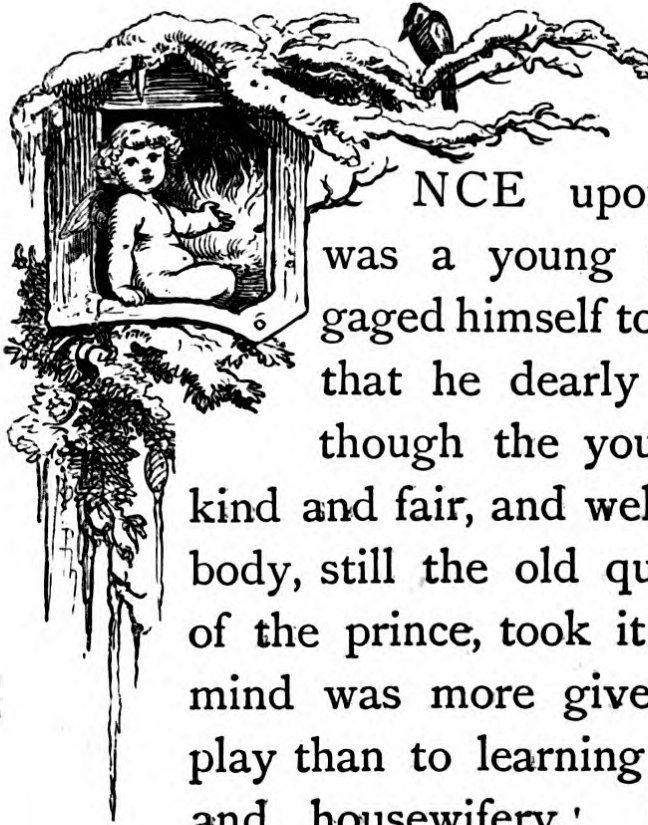
The king's youngest son and his fair bride now repaired to the city, and the king caused such a splendid wedding to be prepared, that it was noised about far and wide. When the festivities had passed off with mirth and sport, prince Venius and his bride departed again for the Land of Youth, and there they are living to this day.

But the treacherous brothers were thrown into the lions' den, and no one has ever learnt if they ever came out again. I did not witness any more myself.





THREE OLD FAYS.



ONCE upon a time there was a young prince who engaged himself to a young princess that he dearly loved. But although the young princess was kind and fair, and well liked by everybody, still the old queen, the mother of the prince, took it very ill that her mind was more given to mirth and play than to learning domestic duties and housewifery.' She accordingly opposed in every way her son's marriage, saying she would have no daughter-in-law that was not expert in house-keeping as she herself had been in her youth. When the queen now

insisted on this condition, the young prince went to his bride's mother and asked that she might put his intended wife to the test, and see if peradventure she was not as dexterous as the queen herself.

This was thought by all to be a daring proposal, for the prince's mother was a very industrious woman, who spun and sewed and wove night and day, that her equal was not to be found. The end, however, was the prince got his own way, and the young princess was sent into the women's hall, and the queen sent her two stone of flax, which she was to spin before the daylight came, or else never think of becoming wife to the king's son.

When the princess was left to herself, she became very dejected, for well she knew that she could not spin the queen's flax, and yet she would not lose the young prince, whom she dearly loved. She walked to and fro in the room, and wept and wept without ceasing.

All at once the door was opened very, very softly, and in stepped a wee little thing of an old woman, of strange appearance and still more strange demeanour. The little old woman had uncommonly large feet, so that

whoever saw her marvelled at them. She greeted the princess with, "God be with thee!"

"God be with thee also!" returned the princess.

"Why, fair maiden, art thou so downcast to-night?" asked the old woman.

"Well may I be downcast!" answered the princess, "for the queen has ordered me to spin two stone of flax, and if I have not finished it before daylight I shall lose the young prince, whom I dearly love."

The old woman then spake: "Be comforted, fair maiden; if it be naught else, I can help thee; but thou must grant me one request I will make."

The princess felt exceeding grateful for her proffered help, and asked what the request of the old woman might be.

"Well," said the old woman, "they call me Big-foot Mother, and I want no other return for my help than that I may be invited to thy wedding, for I have been at no wedding since the queen, thy intended mother-in-law, was a bride."

Well, to this the royal maiden had fain to agree, after which they parted one from the



“ Be comforted fair maiden ; if it be naught else, I can help thee.”



other. The old woman went as she came, while the princess laid herself down to rest, though not a wink of sleep did she get the whole livelong night.

Early in the morn, before the peep of day, the door was opened and Big-foot Mother again entered. She went up to the maiden and handed her a bunch of skeins of yarn, which were snowy white and fine as gossamer. The little old woman then said: "Look thee! such fine yarn I have not spun since the day when I spun for the queen when she was going to be married; but that is a long time ago now."

This said, she vanished, and the princess enjoyed a short, sweet slumber. But ere long she was aroused by the old queen, who stood by her bedside and asked if the flax was ready.

The maiden said it was, and handed the yarn to her, and the queen had therefore to be content for this time, though the princess saw that it was not with a good heart she was so.

As the day grew, the queen said that she would put another task to the princess, and she sent the yarn down into the maiden's room, together with weaving and other materials, and

ordered the princess to weave it into linen cloth, and which was to be ready before sunrise, or else the maiden must not think of obtaining the prince.

When the princess was again left to herself, she became still more dejected, for she knew full well she could not weave the yarn, and yet she would not lose the prince, whom she loved so dearly. She walked to and fro in the room, weeping bitterly; but all at once the door opened, and softly, so softly, in stepped a very little old woman, of strange appearance and still more strange demeanour; she had a very large hump on her back, so that any one who saw her must needs have been astonished. She greeted her with, "Heaven bless thee!"

"Heaven bless thee also!" rejoined the maiden in return.

The old woman then asked: "Why art thou so lonely and so sorrowful, young maiden?"

"Yea," answered she, "for certain I may fain grieve; the queen has ordered me to weave a web of all this yarn; and if it be not done by dawn to-morrow, I shall lose the young prince, whom I dearly love."

The old woman then spake: "Be comforted,

fair maiden ; if it be nothing more, I can help thee ; but thou must agree to a condition which I shall make."

The princess felt exceeding glad at this, and asked what the condition was.

"Well," answered the old woman, "they call me the Hunchback Mother, and I don't want any other reward than that I may be asked to thy wedding, for I have not been to one since the queen, your intended mother-in-law, was a bride."

Of course the princess readily consented to this request, and then they parted one from another, the old woman going the way she had come, while the maiden laid herself down to rest, though not a wink of sleep did she get the whole livelong night.

Early in the morn, before the break of day, the door opened and Hunchback Mother again entered ; she went up to the maiden, and handed a linen cloth to her, which was snowy-white and as fine and soft as wash-leather, so that no one had ever before seen the like. The little old woman then said : "Look thee ! such web I have not woven since the time I wove for the queen, when she was a bride ;

but that is now a very long time ago." With that she vanished, and the princess enjoyed a sweet, short slumber. But ere long she was roused by the old queen, who stood by her bedside and asked if the allotted task was done.

The maiden answered that it was finished, and handed the fine web to her; with this the queen had to be contented for the second time, but the princess saw it was not with a good heart that she was so.

The princess now thought that she would be free from any further task; but the queen thought otherwise, for after awhile she had the web sent down to the maiden's chamber, with a message that she was to make shirts for her betrothed, and to have them done before sunrise, or never hope to obtain the young prince for a husband.

When the princess was once more left alone, she felt ill at ease, for she knew full well that she could not do the task; yet she did not like to lose the prince, whom she loved so dearly. She walked to and fro in the chamber, and shed many a bitter tear.

All at once the door opened softly, so softly, and in stepped a wee, little old woman, of

strange appearance, and still stranger demeanour. She had an exceeding large thumb, so large that every one who saw her could not but be surprised.

“Heaven be with thee!” she greeted.

“Heaven befriend thee too!” answered the princess.

The old woman then asked: “Why art thou so lonely and sorrowful, fair maiden?”

“Yea,” answered the princess, “fain may I be grieving; the queen has ordered me to sew shirts for the young prince from this web; and if it is not done before sunrise to-morrow, I shall lose my betrothed, whom I love so dearly.”

The wee woman then said: “Fair maiden, if it be nothing else, maybe I can help thee; but thou must agree to a condition.”

The princess felt exceeding glad at this, and eagerly inquired the old woman’s demand.

“Well,” said the old woman, “they call me Large-thumb Mother, and I don’t want any other reward for my trouble than that I may be invited to thy wedding. I have not been at any such since the queen, thy mother-in-law, was a bride.”

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she vanished in the doorway, and no one saw how she departed, as also no one knew her name. But the prince lived happily with his spouse, and all went on joyfully, because the princess was a hard woman as was the old



To this condition the maiden gladly consented, and then the old woman went the way she had come, and the princess lay down to rest, and slept so soundly that she did not even dream of her lover.

Early in the morning, before the peep of day, the door opened, and Large-thumb



Mother entered again. She went up to the princess, and handed her some shirts; but they were so curiously wrought that no one had ever seen the like before. The old woman said :

“Look thee! so well as this I have not wrought since the day I sewed for the queen, when she was to be a bride; but that is a very long time ago.” And with these words

she vanished, for the queen was standing in the doorway, and asking if the shirts were ready.

The maiden answered that they were, and handed her the beautiful work.

This so exasperated the queen that her eyes sparkled with anger, and she said : " Well, take him, then ; I never thought thou wert so clever." With this she left the room, and banged the door so that the lock rattled.

The young prince and the royal princess were now to be united as the queen had promised, and the wedding was prepared. But the princess was not very joyful on her wedding day, for she thought of the strange guests she had invited. Time went on, and the wedding festivities were being celebrated with great joy and mirth, as was the custom of yore ; but no old women were to be seen, however anxiously the bride looked around. At last, when the guests sat down to table, the maiden observed the three small women, seated in the corner of the banqueting hall at a table all by themselves.

The king then rose and asked who those guests were, that he had not seen before, and had not invited.

The eldest woman of the three replied: "I am called Big-foot Mother, and my feet are so large because I have had to spin all my life."

"Indeed!" said the king. "Then my daughter-in-law shall never spin any more."

He then turned to the second old woman, and asked what was the cause of her strange appearance.

The old woman answered: "I am called Hunchback Mother, and my back is so big because I have had to weave so much in my time."

"Indeed!" said the king. "Then my daughter-in-law shall never weave any more."

And then he turned to the third old woman, and asked her name.

Large-thumb Mother then rose, and said that she had such a large thumb because she had sewn so much in her time.

"Indeed!" said the king. "Then my daughter-in-law shall never more do any sewing."

And that was the final decision. The fair maiden got the prince, and was exempted from spinning, weaving, and sewing for the rest of her days.

When now the wedding festivities had ended the three old women left, and no one saw how or when they departed, as also no one knew whence they came. But the prince lived happy and contented with his spouse, and all went peacefully and joyfully, because the princess was not such a hard woman as was the old queen.





PINKEL.



ONCE upon a time, there lived a poor widow who had three sons; the two eldest went out as farm labourers, and thus earned their livelihood, but were not good lads at home, for they seldom yielded to their mother's wish no matter what it was. But the youngest boy always remained at home and helped his widowed old mother in her housewifery, and for this he was much loved by her, though scarcely tolerated by his brothers, who in mockery gave him the name of Pinkel.

One day the old dame said to her sons:

“Now you had better leave here and go out into the world to seek your fortunes in the best way you can, for I am not able to keep you any longer, now you have grown up into years.”

The sons replied that that was just what they wanted, since their mother objected to their remaining any longer at home. They soon prepared to start, and left home, but wandered about a long time without getting any work. After long continued wanderings they came late one night to a large lake, and far out on the water they saw an isle, on which shone a bright light as from a fire. The lads remained on the shore, wondering at the bright light, and from it judged that the isle was inhabited. It was already dark, and they knew not where to find a shelter for the night, so they resolved upon taking a boat, which was lying among the sedges, and crossing to the isle, that they might try to obtain lodging.

Accordingly they entered the boat, and rowed across the creek. As they neared the isle, they saw that a small cot stood on the holme. The lads wended their way thither, and soon found that the bright gleam, which

spread over land and lake, issued from a golden lantern placed at the door of the abode, while in front of the house a large goat with golden horns walked to and fro, and to it were affixed small bells, that clanked strong and sharp as the animal moved about. At all this the three brothers were greatly astounded, but most of all at the old woman and her daughter, who lived in the cot. The old crone was both wizened and weird, but she was splendidly dressed in a fur jacket, curiously wrought with golden threads, so that it glittered in every seam. By this they well understood that they had not fallen in with a common human being, but with a witch or a fairy.

After a short consultation between themselves, the three brothers entered, and saw where the old crone stood by the ingle, and with a big ladle stirred something about in a pot which was boiling over the fire. They told their errand, and asked to be allowed to stay there during the night; but the old hag to that answered "No," and advised them to repair to the king's castle, which was situated on the other side of the lake.

While she talked she sharply eyed the



The old witch was splendidly dressed in a fur jacket, curiously wrought with golden threads.



youngest lad, where he stood searching with eager glances everything the cot contained. At length she asked :

“What may be thy name, my lad?”

To this the boy frankly replied: “They call me Pinkel.”

Quoth the witch: “Thy brothers had better be off; but thou shalt remain with me, for thou dost appear to be a shrewd lad, and I could expect no good from thee if thou wert taken into the king’s service.”

Pinkel eagerly besought her to allow him to depart with his brothers, and promised her that he would never do her any harm, or annoy her in the least. The three brothers then immediately made their way to the boat, rejoicing that they had all escaped from her thralldom.

At break of day the three lads came to the stately hall where dwelt the king; they entered, and asked to be taken into service. The king took the two elder brothers into service as stablemen, and the youngest as page to his young son. Pinkel being both smart and frank, was well liked by everybody, and rose rapidly into the good graces of the king himself. This annoyed the two elder brothers

who could ill brook that he should be preferred to them, and they conferred together how they might bring about his disgrace, thinking that such an event would further their own good fortunes.

One day, when the two brothers were in attendance upon the king, they began to speak of the wondrous lantern which glimmered over land and lake, and they said it was not seemly that such a great king should be without so magnificent a treasure. When the king heard this he grew very attentive, and asked them : "Where is that lantern to be found, and who can get it for me ?"

The two brothers replied : "Nobody can obtain it but our youngest brother Pinkel, and he also knows where the lantern is to be found."

Then the king felt a great desire to possess the golden lantern, and he caused Pinkel to be brought before him, saying : "If thou canst fetch me the wondrous golden lantern, which glimmers over land and lake, I will make thee the foremost man in my whole court."

And Pinkel was not loth, but promised to do his best, and this pleased the king well.

But the envious brothers secretly rejoiced in their hearts, for they well knew that such a daring attempt was not likely to end happily.

Pinkel now obtained a small wherry, and secretly rowed across the lake to the isle where the old witch of a woman lived. When he arrived evening was at hand, and the old crone was occupied in boiling her porridge for the evening meal, as was her custom; then the boy crept warily on to the roof, and now and again dropped a few handfuls of salt through the reek-hole, so that they fell into the pot which stood on the fire. When the porridge was ready the old crone began eating, but she could not make out how it was so very salt, and she grew very angry and scolded her daughter for having put too much salt amongst the oats; yet however much water she mixed with the porridge, it could not be eaten, so very very salt did it taste. The old crone now ordered her daughter to go down to the well, at the foot of the hill, and fetch water to make fresh porridge with.

The girl answered: "How am I to go to the well, so pitch-dark as it is outside? I can't find the path across the hill."

“Well, then take my golden lantern,” the old hag replied sharply.

The girl then took the beautiful golden lantern, and hurriedly ran away to fetch water; but when she leaned over the well to hoist up the pail, Pinkel was not idle, but seized her feet and tumbled her head over heels into the water. Then he laid hold of the lantern and ran away to his boat as fast as he could.

As time went on, the old witch began to wonder that her daughter did not return. She looked out through the small window, and saw at the same time that the lantern glimmered far out on the lake. Greatly dismayed she ran down to the strand, calling out: “Is that not thou, Pinkel?”

The lad replied: “Aye, that it is, old mother!”

Then said the old crone: “Hast thou taken my lantern?”

Pinkel answered: “Aye, that I have, old gammer!”

The witch rejoined: “Art thou not a great rascal?”

The boy replied: “Aye, that I am, old mother!”

Then the old hag began to whine and



Then said the old witch : " Hast thou taken my lantern ? " Pinkel
answered : " Aye, that I have, old gammer. "



bespew herself : " Oh, what a dolt was I to let thee go from me ! I ought to have known that thou wouldst have played me some trick ! But if ever thou dost return again, thou shalt not get away ! " That was so far settled.

Pinkel now returned to the king's demesne, and was made the foremost man at court, as the king had promised.

But when Pinkel's brothers learnt what good fortune had befallen him, they grew even more envious than ever, and again conferred how they might bring about the disgrace of their youngest brother, and themselves gain the king's favour.

One day when the two brothers were in attendance upon the king, they began to speak about the goat with horns of purest gold, with little golden bells affixed to them, which clanked every time it moved about. They said, that it well befitted so rich a king to possess such a precious animal.

When the king heard this speech, he grew very attentive, and asked : " Where is that goat, and who can procure it for me ? "

The brothers answered : " No one can fetch

it but our youngest brother Pinkel; and he knows where the goat is to be found.”

The king now felt an eager desire to possess the goat with the golden horns, and therefore caused Pinkel to be brought before him.

When the lad came, the king said: “Thy brothers tell me of a goat with horns of purest gold, which have little bells affixed to them, so that they clank every time the goat moves; my will is that thou dost depart at once and fetch me that goat, and thou shalt not go unrewarded, for if thou dost succeed in thy undertaking, I will make thee lord over one third of my realm.”

Pinkel was not loth, and promised to do his master's bidding, and this well pleased the king. But the jealous brothers secretly rejoiced in their hearts, thinking that Pinkel would not escape this time as before.

Pinkel now prepared himself, and in his boat crossed the lake to the isle where the witch lived. He arrived late in the evening, and it was already dark, so that no one could observe him; for the golden lantern hung there no longer, but spread its light in the king's hall. The lad sorely cudgelled his brains to think

of a way to get the golden goat ; but it was no easy thing, for every night she slept in the hut of the old crone herself. At last he hit upon a plan by which he would be able to enter the cot, "and that accomplished," thought he to himself, "I shall be able to manage it somehow, even if it is very dangerous."

When night came and the old witch and her daughter were going to bed, the girl first went to the door to lock it as was her custom. But Pinkel was lurking behind it and slyly inserted a splint in the hinge, so that it could not be closed.

The girl repeatedly tried to bang the door fast, but she could not succeed. When her old mother heard all this, she thought something was amiss with the door, and called out that they might leave the door unlocked just for one night, and as soon as daylight came again they would see what was the matter.

So the girl left the door ajar, and laid herself down to sleep. Further on in the night, when both lay in the deepest slumber, the lad cautiously crept into the hut and stole forward to the goat, which lay stretched on the sunken hearth before the fireplace. He took some

wool and stuffed up all the golden bells, so that their clanging might not betray him; he then seized the golden goat and hurried to his boat, and when he was fairly out on the lake he took away the wool from the bells, so that when the creature moved they clanked loud and strong, far and wide. This awoke the old witch out of her slumber, and she heard the sound of the bells, and off she scampered at once to the strand, calling out in her wrath: "Art thou there, Pinkel?"

The boy answered: "Aye, I am, old mother!"

The old hag asked: "Hast thou stolen my golden goat?"

The lad replied: "Aye, that I have, old gammer!"

The witch again asked: "Art thou not a great rascal?"

The boy replied: "Aye, that I am, old mother!"

Now the old crone began to whine and beshrew herself: "Oh, what a dolt was I to let thee go away from me! I ought to have known that thou wouldst have played me some trick! But if ever thou shouldst return again, thou shalt not be let off so easily."

Pinkel now rowed home to the king's hall again, and was rewarded with one-third of the realm for his dominion, as the king had promised.

But when his brothers learned how everything had passed off so well, added to which they saw the golden lantern and the goat with the golden horns, which everybody praised mightily, then they became even more spiteful and embittered against their brother, thinking of nothing but how to effect his downfall and ruin.

One day therefore, when the two brothers again were in attendance upon the king, they began to descant largely upon the beauty of the old witch's fur-jacket, which threw out a sheen as of purest gold, and which better befitted a queen than a witch, adding that this alone was lacking to complete the king's fortune and happiness.

When the king heard all this, he became very thoughtful, and asked: "Where is that fur-jacket, and who can procure it for me?"

The brothers answered: "No one can fetch it except our brother Pinkel."

The king now felt an eager desire to possess

the rare fur-jacket, and he sent for Pinkel, to whom he said: "I have long perceived that thy wish is to possess my young daughter for wife. Thy brothers have now told me of a splendid fur-jacket which shimmers with purest gold in every seam. Depart thou therefore at once and bring the fur-jacket, and thou shalt then become my son-in-law and inherit the whole kingdom after me."

Hey! who was now in high glce if not Pinkel? and he vowed to win the king's fair daughter or lose his life in the attempt. The king then highly praised his valour; but the brothers rejoiced in their false hearts, deeming that this last journey must prove fatal to Pinkel.

Pinkel now again seated himself in his boat, and rowed across the lake to the isle where the old witch lived. During the passage he sorely cudgelled his brains to discover a way to obtain the rich fur-jacket; it seemed to him a very difficult matter since the witch always wore it. When he had been musing long and deeply, he thought at last of a plan that might succeed, though very bold and daring.

The lad tied a wallet under his clothes, and

with timid steps and humble mien entered the old crone's cot. When the witch beheld him, she asked astonished: "Art thou here, Pinkel?"

"Aye, that I am, old mother!"

The old crone was very glad at this, and said: "Since of thine own accord thou hast given thyself up into my power, thou canst not suppose that I will let thee off, after all the tricks thou hast played me."

She then fetched out a large knife and prepared to thrust it into the lad. When Pinkel saw this he pretended to be very much afraid, and called out: "Since I *must* die, I am sure that thou wilt give me the choice of dying which way I like best. I would much prefer to kill myself by eating too much barley porridge, rather than to be slaughtered like an ox with a knife."

The old crone thought that it would all come to the same, and promised therefore to grant the request. She then put a large pot on the fire and filled it with barley to make porridge. When it was nearly ready she told Pinkel to sit down and eat, and he readily obeyed; but for every spoonful he

put into his mouth he slipped ten into his wallet.

When the old crone began to wonder that he could eat so much, he pretended to feel ill, and tumbled off the settle, as if he had been dead, and cleverly managed at the same time to rip open his wallet so that the porridge ran all over the floor.

The old crone thought that for certain Pinkel had burst from the great mass he had eaten, and she clapped her hands for very joy at this, and hastened away to find her daughter, who had gone to the well. But as it was foul weather and rained heavily, she first took off her splendid fur-jacket. In a trice Pinkel started up; like a flash of lightning he laid hold of the golden fur-jacket, and like a dart shot off to the strand where his boat lay.

When the old crone beheld Pinkel alive again, and saw the golden fur-jacket that spread a sheen over the whole lake, she was quite beyond herself, and ran down to the water's edge calling out: "Art thou there, Pinkel?"

"Aye, that I am, old mother!"

"Hast thou not taken my splendid gold jacket?" asked the old witch.

“Aye, that I have, old gammer!” answered Pinkel.

She again said : “But art thou not a great rascal?”

“Aye, that I am!” rejoined Pinkel.

The old witch now began to whine and beshrew herself : “Oh, what a dolt I was to let thee off! I ought to have thought thou wouldst have played me some trick for sure!” And that was how they parted from one another for the last time.

But Pinkel rowed across the lake, and happily returned home safely to the king’s hall, and gave to him the golden fur-jacket, and it seemed to all that no one had ever seen such a precious treasure before.

And the king faithfully kept his word and gave to him his only daughter in wedlock, as a reward. And Pinkel lived happy and contented for the rest of his days, but his brothers remained stablemen as long as they lived.





THE GOLDEN HORSE, THE LUNAR LANTERN, AND THE MAIDEN IN THE ENCHANTED CASTLE.



OWNHEARTED and forsaken, two poor orphan lads wandered from hamlet to hamlet begging as they went. One day they came to a cornfield where the corn grew to man's height. The elder boy now said : " Let us gather some ears of corn, as we have not had anything to eat to-day. The younger brother consented, and they went about and gathered some grain, when all at once they saw a man approaching towards them. He was of no slim build, and looked very grim and fierce.

The giant came up to them and asked : "Who has allowed ye to gather ears in my field ?"

The lads answered : "We did not think it would anger thee, for we were so hungry, and there remains as much as ever for thee."

The giant said : "I am not angry either, but if ye will accompany me home I will give ye plenty to eat, and ye will no longer have any need to go about looking for ears of corn."

This seemed to the elder boy very fine indeed, but the younger thought that the giant, mayhap, was deceitful, and he would not consent to give himself into his power. The lads then consulted with each other, and the elder said : "I think we will go with him."

"No," answered the younger ; "we had better stay away."

The other objected to this, and said : "Let us go with him, and if we are not well treated we can then go away."

The giant at length desired to know whether the boys were coming or not.

"Yes, of course we are," answered the elder brother, and the two boys accompanied the giant home to his hut.

When they arrived, they were taken by the giant to a small room, and there he gave them so much to eat that they had never fared so well before ; he then left them and locked the door behind him.

Said the elder brother : “ Wasn't I right to insist that we should come here with him ? Now we have a fine time of it, and need not go about begging.”

The younger brother replied : “ We do not yet know how it will end, for now we are locked in, and cannot come and go at will as we should like to.”

But the other would not listen to this, and laid himself down to sleep, while the younger brother placed himself by the door to have a peep at what might be going on outside. This continued for several days ; the brothers had no lack of good eating, but were always locked in.

One evening when the lad stood as usual peeping through the clink in the door, he saw the giant enter the kitchen, and heard him order something to eat, and while at his meal he asked his wife if the two boys would not soon be fat enough.

“The one is fleshing, but the other is nothing to boast of yet,” answered she.

“It seems to me,” said the giant, “that they ought to be fattened by this time, if only thou hast given them enough to eat. I am now off for a short while to invite our friends to the feast; thou hadst better kill the boys in the meantime, and to-morrow we will make a meal of them.”

When the lad heard this, he immediately awakened his brother and told him how matters stood.

“Oh, it can’t possibly be as you say,” the elder exclaimed, and, very frightened, he cautiously stole to the door and peered through the hole. The giant was just finishing his repast, and calling out to his maidservant to bring him some water.

“Hast thou forgotten,” he shouted, “that I want to drink every time I eat?”

The bondwoman excused herself that it was so dark that she could not find her way to the well.

“Well, then,” gruffly responded the giant, “take my lantern.”

The bondwoman then took down from the

wall a lantern, which gave a bright light, like the full moon, and she went away to fetch water.

Then the giant drank, and when he had had enough, he again spoke to his wife: "I'll now saddle my golden horse and ride off to invite our guests; don't forget in the meantime to take out the boys," and with that he left.

But when the elder boy had overheard this conversation he became fearfully dismayed, and eagerly besought his younger brother to find out some way to save their lives, and the lad answered that he would try and find some way.

Later on in the evening the giantess came to the boys and made herself very friendly, speaking many a fair word. "Come with me, little babes," said she, "and I'll let ye look about in the kitchen; ye will have your place there to-night."

The little brothers did as she told them, though the elder was very much frightened. The old ogress allowed them after this to lie down in the big bed, and she laid herself down by their side, and fell sound asleep. But when it was close upon midnight the younger lad arose and placed his tinder steel close to the

crown of her head, for he knew well that steel has power over all witches, so that if it is placed over them while they sleep they cannot awake before it becomes light again. And the old crone at once sunk into such a deep slumber that she slept until the following day. But now the boy awoke his brother, and with him stole out of the hut, and the two hurriedly sped away.

Towards dawn of day they came to a large homestead, and knocked at the door of the house and asked for shelter. The husbandman asked whence they came, since they arrived so late to seek a lodging, and the two brothers related to him their adventure, and how they had barely succeeded in making their escape from the giant. The husbandman then kindly provided them with food and drink, and what else they stood in need of, and said: "There are not many who have escaped with their lives from the fell power of the giant; beware that he never entices ye again, but remember that his power avails nothing so long as you cross not the wide ditch that divides my fields from his."

And the boys thanked the peasant for his

kind advice, and promised to do in everything as he had told them.

Now the giant came riding along on his golden horse, and towards noon halted by the side of the wide ditch. The horse had golden hair, and was so gorgeous that it shone all around, wherever it went. When the giant saw the boys, he called out to them, and asked why they had run away from him after he entreated them so kindly.

“Come back with me, little babes, and to one of you I will give my golden horse, and on the other I will bestow a beauteous princess, who is now in my power.”

But the lads did not dare to heed his allurements, but ran right away, and again took to their former mode of begging from door to door. After they had been wandering about a goodly time, they at length came to the grand castle of a king, in which they entered, asking to be taken into service. Then the king who ruled over this demesne had suddenly a fancy for the younger boy, because of his frankness, and he made him a retainer, but the elder brother went about begging as before. It continued this way for a long time, and the

young lad was liked by everybody. But when the elder brother heard what good fortune had befallen his brother at court he grew jealous, and gave himself no rest until he also had been taken into the king's service; and his brother also supplicated for him, so that he was at last accepted as a groom. But just as everybody liked the younger, so everybody disliked the stableman, and that because he was false and base. Over this he brooded in his mind, and thought of nothing so much as how he should be able to undo his brother, and himself gain the king's favour.

It happened one day that the king went into the stable to look at his horses, and when he had viewed them all round, he stopped by the side of the palfrey which he himself rode; he stroked him and said to his stableman: "Tell me, was there ever in this world a horse so shapely as this?"

The stableman spake in answer: "Lord king, I know of another, which far surpasses this."

The king immediately became curious to hear more, and said: "Where is that horse, and who can bring him to me?"

The groom answered: "I do not believe any

one can get that colt except my brother; he best knows where he is to be had.”

The king now felt a great desire to possess the horse of which he had been told, and forthwith commanded his retainer to depart at once, and bring the horse back with him.

The courtier had to obey, though he would rather have remained at home. But the stableman rejoiced at heart, thinking surely his brother was not likely ever to return from that journey.

The retainer now prepared himself, and set out on his venture. When he came to the husbandman's house, he entered and greeted all beseemingly, and asked for good counsel how best to accomplish the hazardous undertaking on which the king had sent him.

When the peasant recognised him as the boy who had fled from the giant, he received him kindly, and promised to assist him in all he could. They conferred long with one another, and the result was what I am now going to relate.

At night, when the sun had sunk behind the forest, the retainer cautiously stole to the giant's hut; he had brought with him a rope, and to the end of it was fastened a stick, crosswise, so

that when he threw the stick in through the stable window it would hold fast, and he could climb up the wall. When he had got up he pulled the rope after him, changed the stick to the outside, and let himself down with the rope into the giant's stable; then he saddled the golden horse, threw open the door, and galloped off in hot haste.

When he came to the husbandman's hut there was great joy that his venture had succeeded; but he could not tarry there for long, and immediately made ready to start again, and swiftly rode home to the king's hall, where then there was great wonderment at the famous horse, and most of all was the king astonished, and from that day the courtier rose still higher in the sight of the king. But the groom brooded over the brother's great fortune, and wished him no good.

One day the king went again into the stables to behold his steeds, as was his custom, and when he had looked at them all around he stopped by the side of the golden horse, patted him, and spake thus to his men: "Tell me where in all the world was ever seen such a treasure as this?"

The men agreed that his equal was not likely to be found, but the deceitful groom was immediately ready with an answer, and said : " Lord king, without gainsaying that your horse is a rare treasure, I yet know of another treasure which far surpasses him in priceless value."

When the king heard that, he became curious, and asked of what he spoke.

The groom then began to speak for a long while of the merits of the wondrous lantern, which spread around a far brighter light than the full moon herself.

" Where is that lantern ?" inquired the king, " and who can bring it to me ?"

" I don't believe any one can fetch you that lantern," answered the groom, " except my brother ; he best knows where it is to be found."

The king now felt a great desire to possess that wondrous lantern of which he had heard, and commanded his retainer to depart and fetch it.

The retainer was not very frightened, but still he would have preferred to have remained where he was. But the groom rejoiced in his

heart, thinking that his brother would not be likely to return this time, as he had before.

The retainer then prepared himself and set out on his journey. When he came to the husbandman's house, he entered and reminded them gratefully of their last meeting, and again asked for good counsel how best to obtain the giant's golden lantern.

Now as before the peasant gave him good cheer, and promised to help him in all he could. When they had talked the matter over together, the retainer bade farewell, and departed alone on his hazardous errand to the grim giant.

The giant came home from the forest late in the evening, when the gloaming had set in ; he had been away the whole day, and was now very hungry, and when he had finished his evening's repast he asked for water, but the bondwoman had forgotten to fetch any. This vexed the giant, and he said : " Hast thou now forgotten that I wish to drink after every time I have eaten ? "

The bondwoman excused herself that she could not find her way to the well. " Take my lantern with thee, then," growled the giant with angry voice.

And she needed not telling twice, but snatched it from the wall, and hied away to the well. But her errand ended differently to what she had expected, for when she leaned over the well's mouth the retainer was ready and seized her by the feet, and sent her head foremost down to the bottom of the well. Then he laid hold of the wondrous lantern, which shone like the full moon, and hastily took to his heels and ran off.

When he arrived at the peasant's homestead, there was great joy that his undertaking had succeeded so well. However, the retainer could not tarry long with him, and prepared himself to depart, and he pursued his journey to the king's hall.

Then there was great wonderment over the priceless lantern, and most of all was the king himself astonished, and after this day the courtier became even more endeared to his lord, so that he was considered the foremost man at court. But the groom conceived yet still greater envy against him in his heart, and was for ever thinking of some device by which he might undo his brother.

Some time afterwards the king again went

into his stables to view his steeds. When he had pleased himself by looking at them all, he turned to his men, saying: "There is surely not a king who can boast of having greater treasures than I, and I now know of nothing that I desire."

To this all agreed; but the deceitful groom was immediately ready with an answer, and said: "Lord king, without gainsaying that you possess many priceless treasures, yet I still know of a jewel which far surpasses them all."

When the king heard this he was greatly surprised, and asked: "Of what dost thou speak, and who can procure for me that jewel?"

The groom then began talking hither and thither about the beauteous princess, who was a captive in the giant's abode, and he ended his speech by saying: "I cannot fetch the young maiden myself, neither know I of any other who can, except my brother."

The king immediately felt an ardent desire to possess the beauteous princess for a wife, and he commanded his courtier to depart at once and fetch her. But the courtier had far

rather have remained where he was, and the groom rejoiced, thinking that this would most likely be his brother's last journey.

But his brother, the courtier, prepared himself and came again to the peasant's homestead, as he had done before. He entered, and reminded them kindly of their last meeting, and asked for good counsel how best to snatch the royal maiden from the giant's stronghold. When they had consulted together, the peasant said: "Thy undertaking is a most difficult and dangerous one, and I cannot say how it will end, for the princess is kept in a high loft, within an enchanted cage. Still, my counsel is, that thou fasten iron wedges in the wall, and on them climb up. After that it remains to see if fortune will befriend thee."

Then the courtier thanked the old man for his advice, and said that he would carefully follow it. After this he made his way to the giant's abode.

At night, when the darkness had set in, the courtier fastened his iron wedges in the wall, and thus ascended the steep tower to the maiden's loft, where she sat, a captive princess. But there was a spell cast over the cage, so



“The young swain firmly held her in his grasp, and this pleased the royal maiden well.”

that no one could unlock it, except he who was by fate ordained to become the bridegroom of the princess.

When now the royal maiden beheld the brave young swain, she felt glad in her heart, and the lock sprang open of itself, so that the courtier could enter the cage. He courteously told her his errand, and asked if the princess would accompany him. "Yes, that she fain would," and when they descended the steep scarp the young swain firmly held her in his grasp, that she should not fall, and this pleased the royal maiden well. After this they hastily made off and came to the peasant's homestead. The courtier would not tarry long, but said farewell to the wise old man, and prepared to journey home to the king's hall. But on the road he was seized by an ardent love for the fair princess, so that he thought it would be the death of him if any one else were to possess her.

When at last they arrived, there were great rejoicings all over the king's demesne, for everybody loved the courtier well, except his brother the vicious groom. And the king himself went at once to see his young bride, and he thought

he had never seen so beautiful a maiden before; but when he was going to speak with her, lo! the enchanted cage had returned, and no one could open the lock, except he alone who had saved her from the giant's power. The king understood by this that she was not ordained to be his spouse; and he therefore had a splendid wedding arranged, and gave the royal maiden away as bride to the brave young courtier, who had so jeopardized his life for her. After the nuptials had lasted a long time in mirth and joy, the king bade farewell to them both, and sent them home with a great retinue to the princess's father. And here there was no small joy throughout the realm, that the king had got back his only daughter.

The courtier and his spouse lived happily many, many years, and when the father of the princess died the courtier was made king over all the land. There he lives, and from what I have heard, governs the land with success to this day.









