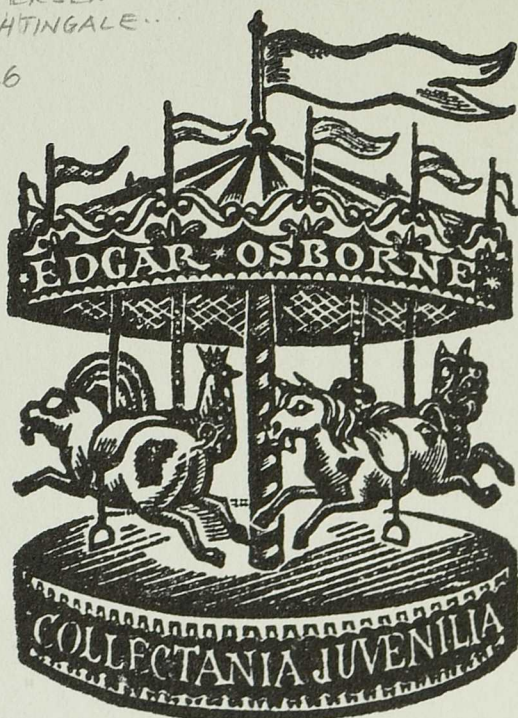


**THE
NIGHTINGALE
BY
ANDERSEN**

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ANDERSEN
NIGHTINGALE...

1846



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THE

Nightingale and other Tales.

BY
HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES BONER.

WITH
Numerous Illustrations by the Count Pocci.



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JOSEPH CUNDALL, 12 OLD BOND STREET.

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Great New Street, Fetter Lane.



TO MISS MITFORD.

MY DEAR MISS MITFORD,

You will not, I dare say, have forgotten the tales I read to you, when sitting comfortably by your fire-side some weeks ago. As you were so delighted with the few you then heard, and expressed yourself so favourably of the translation, it gives me great pleasure to be able to present you now with the complete collection. I trust you will receive it kindly, and as a token that the pleasant fifteenth of October is well remembered by me.

How glad should I be if, as on that evening, I could read them to you myself, and again enjoy with you the humour and the pathos of these charming tales.

Believe me,

MY DEAR MISS MITFORD,

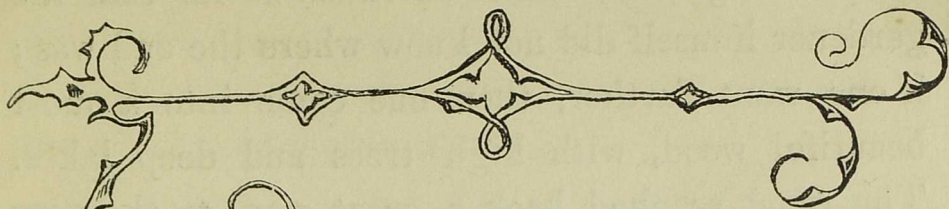
Very truly yours,

CHARLES BONER.

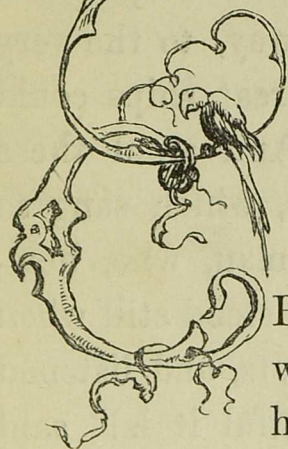
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November 10, 1845.

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THE NIGHTINGALE.



CHINA, you know, has an Emperor who is a Chinese; and all those he has around him are Chinese people too. It is a long time ago now, but just for that very reason it is worth while to hear this story, before it is forgotten.

The Emperor's palace was the most magnificent in the whole world, made entirely of the finest porcelain; so costly, but also so fragile that one was really obliged to take care when one touched it. In the garden the most curious flowers were to be seen, and on the most beautiful, little silver bells were fastened, which kept on tinkling, in order that no one might pass by without remarking the flowers. Yes, all was so cunningly devised in the

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Emperor's garden, and it extended so far that the gardener himself did not know where the end was ; if one went further, then one came into a most beautiful wood, with high trees and deep lakes. The wood reached back a great way, to the very sea, which was deep and blue ; great ships could sail close under the branches. And amid these boughs there dwelt a Nightingale, which sang so sweetly that even the poor fisherman, who, however, had many other things to do, stood still when he was out at night to draw his nets, and listened to the Nightingale. "How beautiful it is!" said he ; but then he was obliged to go about his work and forget the bird ; but the following night, when she sang again and the fisherman came out, he said anew, " Oh, how beautiful it is !"

From all parts of the world came travellers to the city of the Emperor, and they admired it, and the palace, and the garden ; but when they heard the Nightingale, they all said, " However, this is the best !" And when the travellers returned to their homes, they related what they had seen, and the learned men wrote many books about the city, and the palace, and the garden : but they

did not forget the Nightingale ; she was placed first ; and they who could write poetry, all wrote the most charming verses about the Nightingale in the wood near the deep lake.

The books went round the world ; and so at last one reached the Emperor. He sat in his golden chair, and read, and read, and every moment nodded his head ; for he was pleased with the splendid description of the city, and the palace, and the garden. There, too, stood these words : “ But the Nightingale is the best of all.”

“ The deuce !” said the Emperor : “ the Nightingale ! I know of no Nightingale ! Is such a bird in my dominions, and, moreover, in my garden ? I never heard of it !—and that one must first learn such a thing from books !”

“ Hereupon he called his Chamberlain. He was so high a personage that no one of inferior rank dare address or speak with him ; and when any one did venture to ask him any thing, he only answered “ P !” —and that has no meaning.

“ Why, they say there is a most curious bird here, called a Nightingale,” said the Emperor ; “ they say it is better than any thing in my whole

empire: what's the reason I have not been informed of it?"

"I have never heard her mentioned before," said the Chamberlain; "she has never been presented at court."

"It is my will that she comes here and sings this very evening," said the Emperor. "The whole world knows what I have, and I know it not!"

"I never heard her mentioned before," said the Chamberlain; "but I will go and look for her."

But where was she to be found? The Chamberlain ran up stairs and down stairs, through halls and corridors; not a single person whom he met had heard any thing of the Nightingale; and the Chamberlain ran back again to the Emperor, and said it was certainly only a tale invented by the persons who wrote the books. "Your imperial Majesty must not believe what is written! It was nothing but a device, and a thing called the Black Art."

"But the book in which I read it," said the Emperor, "was sent me by the mighty Emperor of Japan, and therefore it cannot be an untruth."

I will hear the Nightingale! She shall come here this very evening! She enjoys my highest favour; and if she do not come, then after supper I'll have the tattoo played on every courtier's back!"

"Tsing-pe!" said the Chamberlain; and again he ran up stairs and down stairs, through all the halls and corridors; and half the court ran with him, for they did not much like having the tattoo played upon their backs. There was such a questioning about the wonderful bird that the whole world knew of, but which nobody at court had ever seen.

At last they met a poor little girl, employed in the kitchen, who said: "The Nightingale? oh, I know it very well! How she can sing! Every evening I am allowed to carry my poor sick mother the remnants from table,—she lives down yonder near the shore,—and when I come back, and stop to rest in the wood, then I hear the Nightingale! The tears always come into my eyes; it is just as if my own mother was kissing me!"

"Little kitchen-maid," said the Chamberlain, "I will get you a permanent place in the kitchen, besides a permission to see his Majesty the Emperor

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dine, if you can lead us to the Nightingale; for she is announced for this evening."

So then they all went together to the wood, where the Nightingale used to sing: half the court was with them. As they were going a cow began to low.

"Oh," said the court-pages, "there she is! The power is really extraordinary for so small an animal! I am certain I have heard her once before already."

"No, those are cows bellowing," said the little girl; "we are still far from the place."

The frogs in the pond croaked.

"Admirable!" said the Chinese court-chaplain; "now I hear her; it sounds just like little church-bells!"

"No, those are frogs," said the little kitchen-maid. "But now, I think, you will soon hear her."

The Nightingale began to sing.

"That is she!" said the girl; "hark! hark! and there she sits!" And she pointed to a little grey bird up on a bough.

"Is it possible!" said the Chamberlain. "I did not fancy she would be so! How the simpleton

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looks! She has doubtless changed colour at the sight of so many personages of rank."

"Little Nightingale," said the maiden quite loud, "our gracious Emperor wishes you to sing to him."

"With the greatest pleasure!" said the Nightingale; and she sang so that it was a delight to listen.

"It sounds like glass bells," said the Chamberlain; "and look at the little throat, how it moves! It is extraordinary that we never heard her before: she will have wonderful success at court."

"Shall I sing to the Emperor again?" asked the Nightingale; for she thought the Emperor was present.

"My excellent Nightingale," said the Chamberlain, "I have the inexpressible pleasure to require your attendance this evening at a court-festival, where you will delight his Imperial Majesty with your charming song."

"It is heard to far greater advantage in the green wood," said the Nightingale; but she followed willingly, when she heard it was the Emperor's wish.

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The palace was decked out in fine style ! Walls and floors, which were made of porcelain, glittered from many thousand golden lamps : the most beautiful flowers, and those which tinkled best, were placed in the corridors : there was a bustle and a draught, and then all the bells tinkled so that one could not hear oneself speak.

In the middle of the grand saloon, where the Emperor sat, a golden perch was erected : on this the Nightingale was to sit. The whole court was there, and the little kitchen-maid had received permission to stand behind the door ; for she had now the rank and title of an efficient kitchen-maid. Every body was in full dress ; and every body looked at the little grey bird, to which the Emperor nodded.

And the Nightingale sang so beautifully that tears came into the Emperor's eyes—tears rolled down over his cheeks ; and then the Nightingale sang more beautifully still ; her song went to the heart : and the Emperor was happy ; and he said the Nightingale should have his golden slipper, and wear it about her neck. But the Nightingale thanked him : she was rewarded sufficiently already.

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“I have seen tears in the Emperor’s eyes ; that is to me the greatest treasure. The tears of an Emperor have a peculiar power. Heaven knows, I have reward enough!” and then she sang again with her sweet and lovely voice.

“It is the prettiest piece of coquetry ever known!” said the ladies around, and they took water in their mouths, to make a clucking noise when they spoke : they then thought themselves Nightingales ; yes, even the lackeys and ladies’-maids gave notice that they too were satisfied ; and that is saying a great deal, for they are the most difficult of all to please. Yes, the Nightingale was very successful. She was now to stay at court, to have her own cage, as well as the permission to fly out twice by day, and once by night. Twelve servants were given her, who all held a silk riband tied to her leg ; and pretty tight they held. There was no pleasure in such a flight.

The whole town spoke of the wonderful bird ; and when two persons met, one said “Night,” and the other “Gale ;” and then they sighed, and understood each other : yes, the children of eleven citizens were named after her ; but not a single one

could sing even a note. One day there arrived a great parcel for the Emperor, and on it was written, "Nightingale."

"Here we have again a new book about our celebrated bird," said the Emperor: however, it was no book, but a little piece of mechanism, which lay in a box: an artificial Nightingale, which was meant to look like the living one; but set all over with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. As soon as the artificial bird was wound up, it could sing one of the songs which the real Nightingale sang; and then the tail went always up and down, and glittered with silver and gold. Round its neck was a little riband, on which was written, "The Nightingale of the Emperor of Japan is poor in comparison with that of the Emperor of China."

"That's splendid!" exclaimed every one; and he who had brought the Nightingale immediately received the title of "Imperial Chief Nightingale-bearer." Now they must sing together! That will make a fine duet!

And so together they were obliged to sing; but it would not do very well, for the real Nightingale sang in her way, and the artificial bird was moved

by wheels. "It is not his fault," said the Chief Musician: "he keeps time wonderfully well, and is formed exactly after my school." Then the artificial bird was to sing alone. He had just as much success as the real Nightingale; and, besides, he was so much prettier to look at; he shone like bracelets and breast-pins.

Three-and-thirty times did he sing the same piece, and yet he was not at all tired; every body would have liked to have heard it again from the very beginning, but the Emperor thought that now the real Nightingale ought to sing something;—but where was she? No one had observed her fly out of the open window, away to the green wood.

"But what is the meaning of that?" said the Emperor; and all the courtiers scolded, and thought the Nightingale a most ungrateful animal. "We have the best bird still," said they; and for the four-and-thirtieth time they heard the same piece, but they did not know it quite, it was so difficult; and the Chief Musician praised the bird so exceedingly; yes, he even asserted it was better than the real Nightingale; not only as regarded appearance and the many diamonds, but also the inside.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

“For look, your Majesty,” said he, “and you, ladies and gentlemen ; with the real Nightingale one never can calculate beforehand what is to come ; but with the mechanical bird all is determined : it will be so, and not otherwise ; one can explain it, one can take it to pieces, and shew the human contrivance ; how the wheels are placed, how they move, and how one follows after the other.”

“Just my opinion !” cried every body ; and the Chief Musician gained permission to shew the bird to the people on the following Sunday. “They should also hear him sing,” said the Emperor ; and they did hear him, and were as pleased as if they had been enjoying themselves with tea—for that is truly Chinese ; and all said “O !” and held up their forefinger and nodded. But the poor fisherman, who had heard the real Nightingale, said, “It sounds pretty enough—it sounds nearly like ; but a something is wanting,—I know not what.”

The real Nightingale was banished the empire.

The artificial bird had his place on a silken cushion, close to the Emperor’s bed ; and all the presents he received, gold and precious stones, lay around him ; and he had risen in rank to be “Im-

THE NIGHTINGALE.

perial Bedchamber Singer:" in rank NUMBER ONE, on the left hand; for the Emperor considers the side on which the heart is as the more exalted; and the heart is placed on the left side even with an Emperor. And the Chief Musician wrote five-and-twenty volumes about the mechanical bird; which were so learned, and so long, and with the most difficult Chinese words, that every one said he had read and understood them; for otherwise he would have been thought stupid, and would have had the tattoo played upon his back.

Thus passed a whole year: the Emperor, the Court, and every Chinese knew each clucking sound of the song by heart; but just on that very account they found it so beautiful: they could now accompany the song of the bird; and they did do so. The boys in the street sang "zi-zi-zi—kluk-luk-luk;" and the Emperor sang it too. Oh, it certainly was very beautiful!

But one evening, when the artificial bird was in the best part of his song, and the Emperor lay in bed and listened, "snap!" went something in the inside of the bird: a something made "burrrrr!" all the wheels ran round, and the music ceased!

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The Emperor jumped quickly out of bed, and sent for his private physician ; but what good could he do ? Then he sent for the watchmaker ; and at last, after much debate and examination, the bird was in some measure restored ; but the watchmaker said it must be taken great care of ; for the pegs were nearly worn out, and could not possibly be renewed ; at least not so as to play with any certainty.

That was a source of lamentation ! Only once a year did they dare to let the artificial bird sing ; and there was a difficulty even about that : but then the principal Musician made a little speech with difficult words, and said it was just as good as formerly ; and after that it *was* just as good.

Now five years had passed ; and there was a great mourning throughout the land : for in reality all cared a good deal about their Emperor. He was now ill, and would not live, it was said ; a new Emperor was already chosen ; and the people assembled before the palace, and asked the Chamberlain how the Emperor was ?

“ P ! ” said he, and shook his head. Chill and pale lay the Emperor in his ample, magnificent bed : all the Court thought he was dead already,

and each one hastened to salute the new Emperor ; the lackeys ran to chatter about it, and the ladies'-maids had a great tea-party. Every where around, in all the halls and corridors, the floor was covered with cloth, so that not a footfall might be heard ; and that was the reason it was so still—so very still. But the Emperor was not yet dead : stiff and pale, there he lay in the magnificent bed with the long velvet curtains and the heavy golden tassels : high above, a window was open, and the moon shone down on the Emperor and on the artificial bird.

The poor Emperor could hardly breathe : he felt as if something was pressing on his chest ; he opened his eyes, and saw it was Death that sat on his breast, who had put on his golden crown ; in one hand he held the golden sabre, in the other the splendid banner of the Emperor ; and around, from the folds of the great velvet curtains, peeped out the strangest faces, some quite ugly, and others so pleasing, so mild. They were all the good and evil deeds of the Emperor, which stared him in the face now that Death was sitting at his heart.

“Dost thou remember this?” whispered they, one after the other : “Dost thou remember that?”

and then they recounted so much that the drops of sweat stood on his forehead.

“ I never knew of this,” said the Emperor. “ Music ! Music ! the great Chinese gong,” cried he, “ so that I may not hear all they are saying !”

But they went on ; and Death nodded his head like a Chinese to all they said.

“ Music ! Music !” screamed the Emperor. Oh, “ dear little artificial bird, sing—oh, sing ! I have given thee gold and precious things ; I have even given thee my golden slipper to hang around thy neck ; sing then—oh, sing !” But the bird stood still ; for no one was there to wind it up—and without that he did not sing ; and Death continued gazing at the Emperor with his great empty sockets ; and it was quite still the while—terribly still !

Suddenly was heard, very near the window, the tones of the sweetest song : it was the little live Nightingale, that was sitting on a bough without. She had heard of the severe illness of her Emperor, and was now come to sing to him, and bring him hope and consolation ; and, as she sang, the forms became fainter and fainter, the blood flowed quicker and quicker through the Emperor’s weak limbs,

and even Death listened and said, "Go on, little Nightingale ; go on !"

"And wilt thou give me the magnificent golden sabre? Wilt thou give me the splendid banner, and the Emperor's crown?"

And Death gave all these emblems of royalty for a single song : and the Nightingale sang on ; and she sang of the peaceful churchyard, where the white roses bloom, where the lilac exhales its fragrance, and the fresh grass is bedewed by the tears of the survivors. Thereon Death felt a longing after his garden, and, like a cold white shadow, floated hoveringly out of the window.

"Thanks, thanks !" said the Emperor. "Thou heavenly little bird, I know thee well ! I banished thee my dominions, and yet hast thou, by thy song, dispelled the evil faces from my bed, and Death from my heart. How shall I reward thee?"

"Thou hast already rewarded me," said the Nightingale ; "I saw tears in thy eyes when I sang to thee for the first time ; that I shall never forget. Those are jewels that gladden a singer's heart ! But now sleep, and get refreshed and well. I will sing to thee !" And she sang, and the Emperor

THE NIGHTINGALE.

fell into a sweet sleep ; and oh, how calm, how restorative, was that sleep !

The sun shone in at the window when he awoke, strengthened and restored to health : not a single one of his servants was come back, for they all thought him dead ; but the Nightingale still sat there and sang.

“Thou shalt always stay with me,” said the Emperor ; “thou shalt only sing when it pleaseth thee ; and as to the artificial bird, I’ll dash it into a thousand pieces.”

“Do not do that,” said the Nightingale : “why, he has done what he could. Keep him a while longer. I cannot take up my abode in the palace ; but let me come when it pleases me ; then I will sit of an evening on the bough near the window, and will sing to thee, that thou shalt be at once glad and thoughtful. I will sing to thee of the happy and the suffering ; I will sing to thee of the good and the evil which lies hidden around thee. The little songster flies far from here, to the poor fisherman, to the cottage of the peasant, to all that are far from thee and thy court. I love thy heart more than thy crown ; and yet has the



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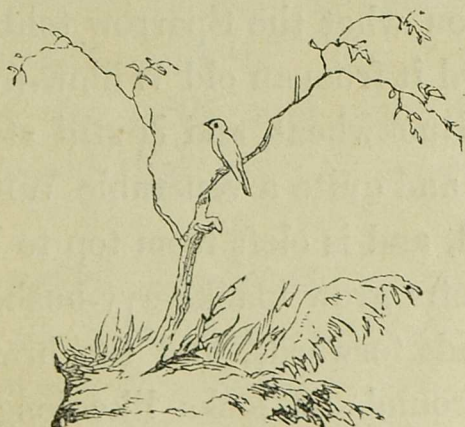
crown an odour of sanctity about it. I will come, I will sing ; but one thing must thou promise !”

“All!” said the Emperor, and he stood in his imperial robes, which he had himself put on ; and held the sword, which was heavy with gold, next his heart.

“One thing I beg of thee ! Tell no one that thou hast a little bird which relates thee every thing ! It will be much better not !”

And then the Nightingale flew away.

The servants came in to look after their dead Emperor — yes, there they stood ; and the Emperor said, “Good morning !”



THE BUCKWHEAT.



F, after a thunder-storm, you go into a field where Buckwheat is growing, you will sometimes see that it looks quite black and singed; just as if a stream of flame had passed over it; and then the farmer says, "The lightning has done this." But how is it that the lightning does it? I will tell you what the Sparrow told me, and the sparrow heard it from an old Willow-tree that stood in a field of Buckwheat, and is still standing there. It is a large and quite a venerable Willow, but old and wrinkled, and is cleft from top to bottom; and out of the clefts grow blackberry-bushes and grass. The tree bends forwards, and the branches almost reach the ground—it looks like long green hair hanging down. In all the fields around grain was

growing: Rye, Buckwheat, and Oats. Yes, beautiful Oats, that look, when ripe, like a whole sea of little golden canaries sitting on a bough. The grain stood there in such blessed fulness; and the heavier it was the lower it bowed in pious humility.

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

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

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

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

THE BUCKWHEAT.

“Bow thy head, as we do,” said the Flowers.

“I shall do no such thing!” said the Buckwheat.

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

“No, I will not bend,” said the Buckwheat.

“Close thy flowers, and bend down thy leaves,” said the old Willow-tree; “look not into the glare of the lightning when the cloud bursts: men even dare not do that; for in the lightning one seeth into God’s own heaven, and *THAT* sight is enough to dazzle even man: how would it fare with us, mere plants of the earth, if we dared to do it? we are so much less!”

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

Later, when the storm was over, there stood the Flowers and the Corn in the calm pure air refreshed

THE BUCKWHEAT.

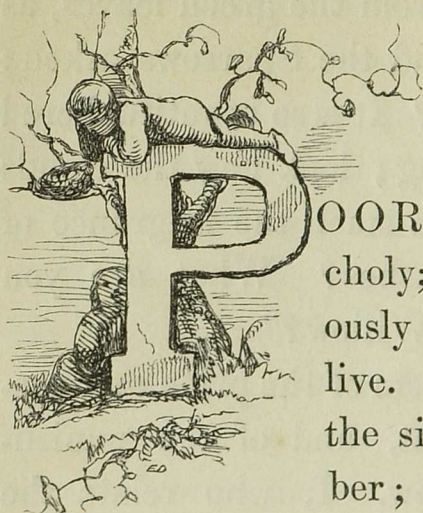
by the rain ; but the Buckwheat was burned by the lightning as black as a coal : it lay a dead useless plant upon the field.

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

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



THE FELLOW-TRAVELLER.



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

“You have always been a good son to me, Johnny,” said the dying father, “and God will therefore certainly help you through the world!” He cast a tender look upon his son, heaved a deep sigh, and died. There he lay as though he were asleep. But Johnny wept; for now he had not a friend in the whole world—neither father nor mother, brother nor sister. Poor John! he knelt

beside the bed, kissed his dead father's hands, and wept bitterly; but at last he fell asleep, and his wearied head sank on the hard bedstead.

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

The next week was the funeral. John followed close behind the coffin, and wept again most bitterly; for he would never see his good father more—he who had thought so much of him! He heard the earth fall upon the coffin, he still saw the last corner of it; but with the next shovelful of earth even that was no longer visible. Then it seemed to him as though his heart would break, so very wretched did he feel. Yet he felt some consolation from the singing of the children round the

grave; his tears flowed and relieved his heavy grief. The sun shone with a friendly look upon the green trees, as though it would say, "Be not so sorrowful, John! Seest thou not how blue and beautiful the heaven is? Thy father is there now, and implores a merciful God to take thee under his protection, that thou mayest be happy!"

"I will always behave well," thought John, "and then one day I shall go to heaven to my father. Oh, how shall we rejoice when we see each other again! And he will again shew me many things, and teach me what is heavenly felicity, as he did when here on earth. Oh, how happy shall I be!"

John pictured this heavenly meeting so vividly to himself, that he smiled through his tears. The little birds sat in the chestnut-tree, and chirped their gladsome song; they were happy, although they had come with him to the funeral. But they knew very well that the dead man was now in heaven, and that he had wings which were much larger and more beautiful than their own; for he had led a good life, and therefore was it that they rejoiced. John saw how they flew from the green

trees out into the world, and he felt a wish to fly away too. But he first made a large cross of wood, to put over his father's grave; and when he carried it there in the evening, he found the grave decorated with flowers. Others had done this; for everybody loved the good old father that was now no more.

Early in the morning John buckled on his little knapsack, put his whole fortune, consisting of fifty crowns, carefully into his girdle, and intended to set out on his travels. But, before doing so, he went to the churchyard, repeated a pious thanksgiving at the grave of his father, and said: "Farewell, dear father! I vow that I will always act uprightly, and then you will be able to pray God to protect and aid me."

In the fields the flowers displayed themselves fresh and beautiful in the warm sunshine, and appeared to nod him their welcoming. John returned once more to the old church where, when a little child, he had been baptised, and where he had gone every Sunday with his father to hear the service, and where, too, he had sung many a psalm. There he saw how the little sprite of the church

stood in the belfry-window, in a pointed red cap, and with one hand shaded his eyes from the sun, which was shining directly in his face. John waved him a farewell; and the little sprite waved his red cap in return, laid one hand on his heart, and kissing the other, gave him to understand how sincerely he wished him well, and that he might have a right happy journey.

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

The first night he was forced to pass on a haycock in the open air: other bed had he none. But this seemed to him very beautiful; the king, he thought, could not have a better. The whole large meadow watered by a stream, the hay-cock, and the blue sky above, seemed to him a splendid bedchamber. The green grass, with the many red and white flowers, was his carpet; the elder and the wild roses his flower-bed; and the stream,

with its fresh blue waves, his bath, out of which the sedge nodded him a friendly "good night" and "good morrow." The moon was the large night-lamp, which burnt high up on the blue ceiling of heaven, without any danger of setting his bed-curtains on fire. Here he might sleep quietly; and he did so too, and only awoke just as the sun was rising, and the little birds all around sang, "Good morrow! good morrow! are you not up yet?"

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

In the churchyard were many graves, on some of which rank grass was growing. "The mound over my father's grave will soon look so too," thought he in sorrowful silence; "for no one will weed up the grass and plant flowers upon it!" While he thus talked to himself, he pulled up some of the weeds about the graves, set up the

crosses that had fallen down, and hung on them the wreaths of evergreens that had been blown away by the wind. "Perhaps another may do as much for my father's grave, as I am no longer able," said he. At the gate of the churchyard stood an old beggar, who supported himself on crutches. John gave him a piece of silver, and then, contented and happy, continued his journey.

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

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

It was midnight when he awoke; but the storm had passed, and the moon shone through the high church-windows. On the pavement of the church stood an open coffin, in which a dead man lay,

placed there for burial. John was not the least frightened at the sight; for he had a good conscience, and knew for certain that the dead harm no one; but that it is the wicked only who can work us evil. And such were the two men now standing beside the corpse in the open coffin, that had been only placed in the church until the funeral. They would leave him no place even in death, and intended to fling the dead man out into the churchyard.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"With all my heart," answered John; and now on they both went in company, and soon began to like each other very much; for they both were good persons. But John soon remarked that his companion possessed much greater experience than himself; for he knew somewhat of everything, and had travelled over the whole world.

The sun was already high in the heavens, when

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

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

“A goodly payment, truly!” answered the old woman, laughing wildly. It was true, she said, she did not much like giving away the herbs; yet it was a sad thing to lie a-bed with broken limbs; and therefore she gave them to the stranger. As soon as she had rubbed her leg with the salve, she

got up quite cured; and could walk even better than before. Such was the healing power of this ointment; which, however, is not to be had at any apothecary's.

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

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

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

"You mistake," said the other; "those are not clouds, but high mountains,—on which, far above the clouds, one enjoys the pure air of heaven. Oh, there it is wondrous beautiful! To-morrow, doubtless, we shall have got so far on our travels through the world."

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

and it would therefore be better to go to an inn, and rest and strengthen ourselves for the following day."

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

The play began. A king and a queen sat on a splendid throne: both wore golden crowns, and had robes with long trains. Pretty puppets, with glass eyes and large mustachios, stood at the window, which they kept on opening and shutting, that the royal pair might enjoy the fresh air. All went on well, and without accident; but when the queen rose to walk across the stage, the bull-dog—heaven knows why, or what could put it into his head—made a spring at the stage, seized the lovely queen by her slender waist, and treated her most shamefully.

The poor man, who played the whole piece alone, was so unhappy at this misfortune, that he shed tears; but when the spectators had left the

room, John's companion went up to him, and comforted him with the assurance that he could cure the doll. So he took his little box out of his knapsack, and rubbed the ill-used queen with the wonderful ointment that had cured the leg of the old woman in the wood. Immediately the queen recovered; and now could even move arms and legs herself, as if she were alive.

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

In the night there was suddenly heard a continued groaning in the room, so that every body in the house was awakened by it, and ran to see who was taken ill. The showman went to his puppets; for it seemed to him as if the sighing and lamentation proceeded from them. To his astonishment he saw that all the dolls were lying about in the greatest confusion, and moaned unceasingly, because they wished to be rubbed too, as the queen had been, that they also might have the power of moving alone. The queen herself fell on her knees, lifted her splendid golden crown on high, and said, "Take my crown!—gladly will I give it,—anoint

only my consort and my court !” This scene moved the showman so much, that he offered the stranger the receipts of the next representation, if he would only rub some of his best figures with the wondrous salve. The stranger said he did not ask for money ; he demanded only the sabre which the showman wore ; and when the latter had most readily given it up to him, he rubbed six of the puppets with his ointment, who began to dance immediately, and so naturally, that all the servants, real living people, were seized with a mighty longing to dance also, and the whole household was soon figuring away—coachman and cook, waiter and chambermaid. In this way the whole night passed in the merriest manner imaginable.

The next morning John and his companion left the inn, ascended the high mountains, and wandered through the large pine-forest. They had soon climbed so high that the churches beneath them seemed only like little red-berries amid green bushes ; and their gaze wandered afar for miles. Never before had John seen so much of the glorious world. The gladdening sun shone pleasantly in the sky, and the horn of the hunter resounded

in the valley. "Beneficent God," said John, lost in rapture at the sight, "fain would I thank Thee for Thy goodness to us men, and for the glorious beauty of Thy world in which Thou hast placed us !" and a tear of joy glittered in his eye.

His companion, too, stood lost in thought, and looked down upon the plain with its numerous villages and towns illumined by the sun. At the same moment they heard a strange sound ; and, on looking up, beheld a large white swan soaring in the air. The swan was of extraordinary beauty, and sang as they had never heard bird sing before ; but its song grew fainter and fainter, and at last it bent its long neck downwards, sank slowly, and soon after lay dead at their feet.

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

They now continued their journey over the mountains for many miles, till at last they saw a

large town lying before them, with more than a hundred steeples and domes that glittered in the sunshine like silver. In the middle of this large town was a magnificent palace of marble, the roof of which was of pure gold ; for here dwelt the King of the country.

John and his companion did not enter the town immediately, but went to an inn outside the city-gates, that they might first brush and clean their things ; for they wished to appear as decent people in the streets of so magnificent a town. Here the landlord told them that the King of that country was such a good man, that he never did any thing to displease his subjects, but that the Princess, his daughter, was a sad lady. As to beauty, she did not want for that, for there could not be a more lovely maiden in the world ; but she was a bad witch, for whose sake many a young prince had lost his life. Any one might demand her hand ; but he must then guess her thoughts three times. Should he really guess them, then she married him, and he was to be king over the land when her father died ; but should he be unable to answer the three questions proposed, she had him hanged

or beheaded ; so cruel a creature was this Princess. The old King, her father, was much grieved at the matter ; however, he could not change it, for he had once for all declared he would have nothing to do with the love-affairs of his daughter, and that in this respect she might act quite as she chose.

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

“ The good-for-nothing Princess ! ” said John, when the landlord had finished his story ; “ she ought to have the rod, for she deserves it. Were

I her old father, I would soon teach her to give up her cruelty."

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

When John beheld her, he blushed deeply, and was unable to utter a word; for the Princess looked exactly like that lovely maiden of whom he had dreamed the night his father died. She appeared of matchless beauty, and he could not help loving

her with all his heart. It is certainly not true, thought he, that she is such a wicked witch, and that she has those youths who demand her hand beheaded or hanged if they cannot guess her thoughts. Any one has the right to ask her in marriage, even the poorest. I too will go to the palace as a suitor, for I feel that I cannot be happy without her.

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

“Come in!” cried the old King, when John knocked at the door. He entered, and the good old gentleman advanced towards him in dressing-gown and embroidered slippers ; yet he had his golden crown on his head, the sceptre in his right hand, and the imperial globe in his left. “Stop a moment,” said he, tucking the golden globe under his arm ; and holding out one hand to John, he gave

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

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

“Here you may see what will be your fate,” said the old King. “I counsel you, therefore, to desist from your intention, if you do not wish to

fare like these. You will, besides, make me most unhappy if you persist; for it grieves me to the very heart."

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

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

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

It was now arranged that John was to come to the palace again the next morning, when the judges and the grand council would be assembled to hear

how he succeeded in guessing the thoughts of the Princess. Should he guess right the first time, he was to appear before the judges two other days in the same manner; but as yet no suitors for the Princess's hand had outlived the first day.

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

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

But his companion shook his head doubtingly, and was quite sorrowful. "I love you so well," said he; "we could have kept together for a long time yet, and now we are to part! Good, dear Johnny! I could weep at this approaching separa-

tion ; but I will not disturb your joy on the last evening that we may ever pass together. So let us rather be cheerful ; to-morrow, when you are gone, I shall have time enough to weep !”

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

In the evening John's companion had a large bowl of punch brought in, and said, “they would now be right merry, and drink to the Princess's health.” But John had not drank two glasses, before such a drowsiness came over him, that he could keep his eyes open no longer, and fell asleep in his chair. His comrade then lifted him gently into bed ; and when it was night, took the two wings which he had cut off the dead swan, and fastened them on his own shoulders. He afterwards put the largest bundle of fern and willow-

twigs, which the old woman in the forest had given him, into his pocket, opened a window, and flew out, away over the town, and straight to the palace, where he hid himself in a bow-window, close to the bedchamber of the Princess.

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

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

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

In the middle of the hall stood a large throne, supported by the skeletons of four horses, caparisoned with trappings of red spiders. The throne itself was of milk-white glass; and the cushions were mice, each one holding the tail of another in his mouth. Above was outspread a canopy of rose-coloured cobweb, studded with small flies that shone like precious stones. On the throne sat an old goblin, with a crown on his frightful head, and a sceptre in his hand. He kissed the Princess on the forehead, desired her to sit beside him on the costly throne; and then the music immediately began. Large black grasshoppers played the jews-

harp, and an owl beat his breast instead of a drum, as he had no other. Little fiends, each one with a Will-o'-the-Wisp in his cap, danced to this music about the hall. Not one of the company discovered the man who had placed himself immediately behind the throne, whence he could hear and see all that happened. The courtiers of the mountain-dwarf now entered the saloon; they did so as if they were persons of immense importance; but any one a little skilled in human nature could easily see that they did not feel happy. They were, moreover, nothing but broomsticks, with cabbages for heads; into which the goblin had conjured some life, and had them dressed in embroidered clothes. However, that was of no consequence; as they were only there for parade and show.

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

“I'll tell you, my daughter,” said the old goblin. “Choose something quite simple; then he will be least likely to guess it. Think, for ex-

ample, of your shoe : he'll never dream of that. Then off with his head, and don't forget to bring his eyes with you to-morrow night ; for they are what I am very fond of."

The Princess bowed low, and assured him she would not forget the eyes when she came again. Then the Sprite opened the mountain, and the Princess returned to the palace through the air ; but John's companion followed close behind, and gave her such a whipping with his rod that she complained loudly of the violent hail-storm, till at last she slipped in at her chamber-window. But the stranger returned to his inn, where John still lay fast asleep, took his wings from his shoulders, and went to bed ; for he was, no doubt, pretty tired after so fatiguing a journey.

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

"I can just as well say the shoe as any thing else," said John. "Perhaps what you dreamed is

right ; for I have the firm conviction that God will help me out of this dilemma. Notwithstanding, I will wish you farewell ; for should I not guess the Princess's thoughts, I shall never see you more."

The two travellers then embraced each other, and John bent his steps towards the town and the palace. The festal hall was filled with people ; the judges sat in large arm-chairs, with soft cushions on which they leaned their heads because they were obliged to think so much. The old King got up as soon as he perceived John, and wiped his eyes with his white pocket-handkerchief. Then came the Princess. She was still more beautiful than yesterday, saluting every one in a most friendly manner, and, giving John her hand, said, " Good morrow, worthy friend."

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

Well, how happy the old King was when he heard it ! He turned head over heels for sheer

joy, and all present applauded him and John, who, it was decided, had that day been victorious.

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

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

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

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

The night was as dark as pitch ; there was such a violent storm that the tiles flew off the roofs, and the trees in the Princess's park waved to and fro with the rattling skeletons of the princes that had been hanged. It lightened fearfully, and the thunders rolled so dreadfully that it was but one continued war throughout the whole night. Now the window of the bedchamber flew open, and the Princess soared through the wildly agitated air. The paleness of death was on her face ; but she

laughed at the storm, and thought it was not yet half bad enough. Her garments fluttered in the wind, and the man whipped her so unmercifully with his threefold rod that the blood flowed, and she could at last hardly fly any further. Finally she reached the mountain.

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

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

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

“He shall never guess on what you think this time,” said the fiend. “I will find out something on which he never thought: if he did, he must be a greater sorcerer than I am. Now let us be merry.”

Saying these words, he seized the Princess by the hand, danced with her round the hall, and all

the little imps and wills-o'-the-wisp followed his example. The red spiders ran up and down the wall, so that they looked like flowers of fire ; the owl beat his drum, the cricket sighed, and the black grasshoppers played the jewsharp ; in short, there was a regular witches' ball.

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

They flew now through the air ; but the man made such good use of his three rods, that the mountain-imp confessed he had never been in such a hail-storm before. Arrived at the palace, he bade the Princess farewell, and whispered in her ear, "Think of my head !" But the man heard the words ; and just as the Princess slipped into her bedchamber, and the imp turned round to go to his enchanted mountain, the stranger seized him by his black beard, and with the sabre hewed off his disgusting head close to his shoulders. The trunk he threw into the sea as food for the fishes ; but the head he dipped in the water, and then tied it

up in a silken handkerchief. He carried it home with him to the inn, and laid down to sleep.

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

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

“On what am I thinking at this moment?” asked she of John, who at the same instant opened his handkerchief, and was terribly frightened when he saw the horrid head of the mountain-imp within it. All the spectators shuddered with dread at the sight; and the Princess sat as though she were petrified,—she was unable to utter a word. At last, however, she rose from her seat and gave John her snow-white hand; for he had now for the third

time guessed her thoughts aright. Without looking at any one, she merely said the words, "You are now my lord; this evening we will hold the wedding."

"Now that pleases me," said the old King; "and so it shall be." Then the whole assembly shouted "Hurrah!" the military band played through the streets, the bells rang, and the confectioners took their little sugar-work figures out of mourning: there was nothing but joy in the town. Three whole roasted oxen, stuffed with ducks and fowls, were carried out to the market-place, where any one could eat of them and drink wine from the fountains. Whoever bought a roll at a baker's got half-a-dozen plum-cakes into the bargain.

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

"Now let us be merry, and dance and sing;
Let's drink to the health of our good old king.

THE FELLOW-TRAVELLER.

Now, then, pretty lasses, come join the round,
The fiddles are playing, the tabors sound ;
And he who's not merry to-night, ha ! ha !
We'll soon wake him up with a tra-la-la-la !"

But the Princess was still a witch, and did not care for John. His companion knew this ; so he gave him three feathers out of the wings of the swan, and a little phial with some drops, and desired him to have a bath placed near the bridal bed. Then when the Princess had retired to rest he was to give her a gentle push, so that she fell into the bath ; and then he was to hold her under the water three several times, having beforehand thrown in the three feathers and the drops. After this the Princess would be disenchanted, and would love him very much. John did what his faithful companion had desired him : 'tis true, the Princess screamed aloud when he put her under water, and struggled with hands and feet. When she came up the first time she was like a jet-black swan, with fiery eyes ; the second time she was changed into a white swan, only a black ring was round her neck. John now said a prayer, and held the bird under water for the third time : immediately it was

changed into the most beautiful Princess ; she had become even more beautiful than she was before, and thanked her young consort with tears in her eyes for having freed her from enchantment.

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

As he said this he vanished.

THE FELLOW-TRAVELLER.

The wedding-festivities lasted a whole month ; John and the Princess loved each other dearly, and the old King lived many years and joyous days with his children, and let his merry grandchildren ride on his knee, and play with the polished sceptre. But John reigned over the whole land, and became at last a very powerful monarch.



THE RESOLUTE LEADEN SOLDIER.



HERE were, once upon a time, five-and-twenty leaden soldiers, all brothers; for they had all been made out of an old metal spoon. They “carried arms,” and stood there every one of them with their “eyes right.” Their uniform was red and blue, and was quite beautiful. The very first thing they heard in this world, when the cover was taken off the box, was, “Leaden Soldiers!” These words were uttered by a little boy who clapped his hands for joy; they had been given him because it was his birthday, and he now set them upon the table. One soldier was exactly a counterpart of the other; a single one only was somewhat different from the rest—he had but one leg. He

had been cast the last of all, and there was not lead enough left ; yet he stood on his one leg quite as firmly as the others on two ; and it is this very soldier whose fate is so remarkable.

On the table where they were set up many other playthings were lying ; but what struck one most was a castle of pasteboard. Through the little windows one could see right into the apartments. Before the castle little trees were standing round a little mirror which was meant for a lake ; and swans, made of wax, swam about on it, and were reflected in the water. All was so nice and pretty ; but the nicest of all was a little damsel that stood in the open entrance to the castle. She was cut out of paper, but she had on a dress of the finest gauze, and a narrow blue riband over her shoulders, and in the middle of this was a glittering spangle, just as large as her whole face. The little lady stretched out both her arms, for she was a dancer, and at the same time lifted one leg so high in the air that the leaden Soldier could not find it, and thought she had but one leg, like himself.

“ She would make a good wife for me,” thought

he, "but she is rather a high personage. *She* lives in a castle; *I* have only a wooden-box, and there, too, are our five-and-twenty men : that's not a place for her ! However, I will try to get acquainted with her." And then he laid himself at full length behind a snuff-box that was standing on the table ; whence he could have a perfect view of the little fine lady that stood on one leg without losing her balance.

As evening drew in, all the other soldiers came into their box, and the people in the house went to bed. Then the toys began to play,—they played at visiting, and at ball, and at war. The soldiers in the box made a rattle ; for they wanted to join the game, but the cover would not come off. The nut-crackers threw a somerset, and the slate-pencil jumped about on the slate ; it was such a sight that even the canary awoke, and began to talk with the rest, and in verse, too, into the bargain. The only two who did not move from their places were the leaden Soldier and the little Dancer ; she remained in her graceful position on tip-toe with outstretched arms ; and he, just as firm on his one leg, never took his eyes from off her even for a moment.

Now the clock struck twelve. Suddenly the cover of the snuff-box flew open ; but there was no snuff in it. No, out sprung a little black Magician, for it was a conjuring-box.

“ Soldier ! ” cried the Magician, “ will you keep your eyes to yourself ? ”

But the leaden Soldier pretended not to hear.

“ Well ! only wait ! to-morrow ! ” said the magician.

When the morning was come, and the children were out of bed, the Soldier was placed in the window, and,—whether the Magician did it, or the wind, that I don’t know,—all at once the window flew open, and the Soldier fell down head over heels from the third story into the street. It was a frightful descent ! He stuck one leg into the air, and remained standing on his military cap, with his bayonet between the stones.

The maid and the little boy ran down directly to look for him ; but, although they nearly trod on him, they could not see him. Had but the soldier cried out “ Here I am ! ” they might have found him ; but he did not deem it proper to call out loud, because he was in uniform.

It now began to rain, one drop fell thicker than the other ; it was a perfect shower. When it was over two little boys came by.

“Look here !” said one. “Here is a leaden Soldier ! Let us give him a swim !”

And they made a boat out of a newspaper, put the soldier in it, and now, there he was sailing along down the gutter. Both the boys ran by the side clapping their hands. Heavens ! what waves were rolling in the gutter, and what a stream it was ! for the shower was a pretty smart one, I can tell you. The paper boat heaved and fell, and now and then made such turns that the leaden Soldier became quite giddy ; but he was resolute, never changed countenance, kept his “eyes right,” and “carried arms” as before. All at once the boat was driven into a long covered drain ; it was as dark as if the Soldier were in his own wooden box.

“Where am I going to now !” thought he. “Yes, yes, this is the Magician’s doings ! Oh, were the little maiden with me in the boat, darkness and all else were indifferent to me !”

At the same moment a large water-rat, that lived in the drain, made his appearance.

“Where’s your passport?” asked the rat; “out with your passport!”

But the soldier was silent, and held his musket the tighter. The boat drove onward, the rat pursuing. How horribly he gnashed his teeth, and how dreadful it was to hear straws and floating bits of wood calling out: “Stop him! stop him! he has defrauded the customs! He has not shewn his passport!”

But the stream grew stronger and stronger. Already could the soldier see the light of day before he got to the end of the drain, but he heard, too, a roaring sound, at which the bravest heart would have quaked. Only imagine! at the spot where the drain ended, the water of the gutter was precipitated headlong into a great canal: for the Soldier, that was as dangerous as descending a mighty cataract.

He was already so near that to stop was impossible; the boat shot forward; the poor leaden Soldier stood as upright as he could, for no one should say of him that he had even winked his eyes. The boat rushed round three, four times, and was filled with water up to the very edge. Sink it

THE RESOLUTE LEADEN SOLDIER.

must. The soldier was up to his neck in water : deeper and deeper sank the boat, and looser and looser became the paper. At last the water went over the Soldier's head ; he thought of the pretty little Dancer that he was never to see again, and the words of the song,

O warrior ! dangers must thou brave,
And death must be thy portion,

sounded in his ears. Then the paper fell to pieces, the leaden Soldier tumbled out—but at that very moment a large fish swallowed him.

Well to be sure, how dark it was ! It was worse here than in the drain ; and, besides, there was so little room. But the leaden Soldier was resolute ; there he lay at full length, and still “carried arms.”

The fish darted hither and thither ; he moved about in the most terrible manner, and at last he was quite still. Something like a ray of light darted through him ; all was bright and clear, and a voice cried, “The leaden Soldier !” The fish had been caught, taken to market, bought, and sent into the kitchen, where the cook cut it open with a

large knife. She took the Soldier by the waist with her finger and thumb, and carried him up stairs, where everybody was eager to see the man that had made a journey in the inside of a fish. But the soldier was not proud. They put him on the table, and — no ! how wondrously things fall out in this world !—he was in the very same room where he had been before ; he saw the same children ; the same toys were upon the table—the beautiful castle with the pretty little Dancer—all were the same ! She stood upon one leg still, and held the other high in the air : she, too, was resolute. The leaden Soldier was moved at the thought, and he could have wept tears of lead, but that it did not become him to do so. He gazed at her, and she gazed on him ; but they spoke not a word.

Meanwhile one of the little boys took the Soldier, and flung him without more ado into the fire ! He gave no reason for doing so ; but it was, doubtless, the work of the Magician in the snuff-box.

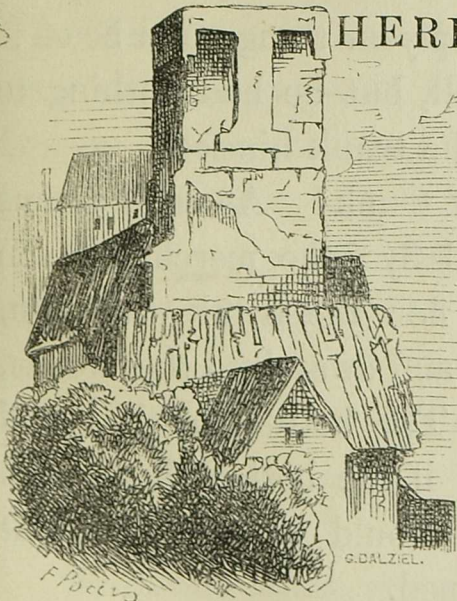
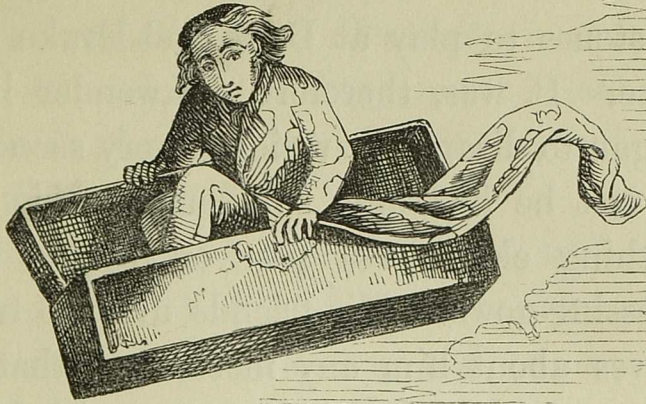
There stood the Soldier in a blaze of light. He felt a terrible glow ; but whether it arose from the fire or from love, he knew not. He had completely changed colour ; however, I am unable to say

THE RESOLUTE LEADEN SOLDIER.

whether that happened on the journey, or was the consequence of his agitation. He looked at the little damsel, she looked at him, and he felt that he was melting ; but there he stood, still resolute, and “carried arms.” Suddenly a door opened, the wind caught the Dancer, and, like a sylphide, she flew straight into the fire to the leaden Soldier, blazed up, and—she was gone ! The Soldier melted together in a lump, and the next morning, when the maid came to take away the ashes, she found his remains in the form of a little leaden heart. Of the Dancer, however, only the spangle remained, and that was burnt as black as a coal.



THE FLYING TRUNK.



HERE was once a merchant, who was so rich that he could pave the whole street, and almost a little alley into the bargain, with silver coin; but he did not do it: he knew better what to do with his money; and when he spent a shilling he gained a crown, so good a trader was he; and — he died.

His son inherited all his money. But he led a merry life, went every evening to the masquerade, made kites of bank-notes, and took guineas instead of stones to play at Duck-and-Drake with on the lake. It was, therefore, no wonder if the money began to disappear, which it very soon did ; so that at last he had only two-pence in his pocket, and nothing else but a pair of slippers and an old dressing-gown. His friends did not trouble themselves about him any more, now that they could not even walk across the street with him ; but one of these, who had a kind heart, sent him an old trunk, and said, "Pack up your things, and be off!"

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

'Twas a droll sort of trunk ! As soon as one pressed the lock, it could fly : the merchant's son did so ; and, halloa ! up flew the trunk with him, straight up the chimney, and away into the clouds, farther and farther off. The bottom cracked, and he was very uneasy ; for if the bottom had given way, a pretty tumble he would have had ! But nothing of the sort happened.

Well, in this way he reached Turkey. He hid

the trunk in a wood, under the dry leaves, and went into the town ; for this he could very well do, as among the Turks every body walked about in dressing-gown and slippers. Presently he met a nurse with a little child. "I say, nurse," said he, "what castle is that yonder with high windows, just outside the town?"

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

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

She lay on a sofa and slept. She was so beautiful that the son of the merchant could not help giving her a kiss. This awoke her, nor was she a little afraid ; but he said he was the Prophet of the Turks, who had come to her through the air ; and this satisfied her.

So he sat down, and told her stories about her eyes : these were the most beautiful dark lakes ;

and thoughts swam about in them like mermaids. And he told her a story about her forehead : this was a mountain of snow, with glorious vaulted halls. They were such pretty stories ; and then he made the Princess an offer, and she immediately said “ Yes.”

“ But you must come here on Saturday,” said she. “ The King and the Queen are coming to me to tea ; they will be so glad to hear that I am to marry the Prophet of the Turks ! But take care to have a very pretty fairy-tale to relate ; for my parents like that above any thing. My mother likes it to be very moral, and very aristocratic ; and my father likes it to be merry, so that one may have a hearty laugh.”

“ Very well ; I shall bring no other bridal gift than a fairy-tale,” said he. And so they parted ; but before he went, the Princess gave him a sabre studded with gold ; and a very acceptable present it was.

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

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

“Will you relate us a fairy-tale?” said the Queen; “one that has a profound meaning, and that is instructive—”

“But that is laughable too,” said the King.

“Yes, certainly,” said he, and began his tale; and now you must listen very attentively.

There was once upon a time a bundle of matches, and they were very proud of their high descent. Their genealogical tree—that is to say, the great fir-tree, of which each of them was a chip—had been once a very stately old tree in the forest. Now the matches lay on the shelf between a flint and steel and an old iron saucepan, and to them they told the history of their youth.

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

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

"Ah ! my fate has been very different," said the iron saucepan, near which the matches lay. "From the very moment that I came into the world I've been scoured and boiled, oh, how often ! I always side with the respectable and conservative ; and belong, in reality, to the very first in the house. My sole pleasure is to lie down, nice and clean, after dinner, and to have a little rational talk with my comrades ; but if I except the bucket, that now and then comes into the yard, our life here is a very homely and quiet one. Our only newsmonger is the coal-scuttle ; but he talks so

demagogically about 'the people' and 'the government,' that a short time ago an old earthen pot was so shocked at his conversation that it dropped down and broke into a thousand pieces. Oh, he belongs to the Radicals, let me tell you."

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

"Shall we not have a merry evening?"

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

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

"On the shores of the Baltic, beneath the Danish beeches"——

"That is a splendid beginning!" said all the plates; "that is certainly a very interesting story!"

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

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

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

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

All the plates rattled with delight; and the duster took some green parsley off the dresser, and crowned the dish, for he knew this would annoy the others; and, thought he, if I crown her to-day, she will crown me to-morrow.

“Now let us dance!” said the tongs, beginning immediately; and, good heavens, how she could fling one leg up in the air! The old arm-chair-covering in the corner burst at the sight. “Am I not to be crowned now?” said the tongs; and so forthwith she got a laurel-wreath too.

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

It was now the tea-urn's turn to sing something; but she said she had taken cold, indeed,

she could only sing when excited; but that was nothing but pride; for she *would* only sing when standing on the drawing-room table among ladies and gentlemen.

Behind, in the window, sat an old pen, that the maid used to write with. There was nothing remarkable about it, except that it was too deeply immersed in ink; but that was just what it was proud of, and made a fuss about. "If the tea-urn will not sing," it said, "why, she may leave it alone: but there is a nightingale in a cage; she can sing. It is true she has been taught nothing. However, this evening we will speak ill of nobody."

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

"As to me, I am vexed," said the latter; "thoroughly vexed! Is this the way to spend the evening? Would it not be far better to turn the whole house upside-down, and to establish a new and natural order of things? In this way each

one would find his proper place, and I would undertake to direct the change."

"Yes, let us kick up a row!" cried all at once. At the same moment the door opened: it was the house-maid! All were silent; not one dared to utter a word. Yet there was not a single grease-pot but knew what he COULD do, and of what consequence he was: "Yes, if I had chosen," thought they, "fine work there would have been this evening!"

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

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

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

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

All was fixed for the wedding; and the evening

THE FLYING TRUNK.

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

"I must also do a something," said the merchant's son; and he bought rockets, squibs, crackers, and all imaginable fireworks, seated himself in his trunk, and flew up in the air.

Hurrah! that was a sight! how it blazed!

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

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

Well to be sure! What stories the people told! Each one whom he asked had seen it in his way; but they all had thought it superb.

"I saw the Prophet himself," said one; "he

had eyes like gleaming stars, and a beard like foaming water."

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

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

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

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

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

THE GARDEN OF PARADISE.



ONCE upon a time there lived the son of a King ; nobody ever had so many and such beautiful books as he ; and in them he could read of all that had happened in the world, and see it represented in magnificent pictures. He could get information about every country and every people : but of where the Garden of Paradise was to be found, not a word was

said ; and that was the very thing he most wished to know.

While he was still quite little, and just when he ought to have been sent to school, his grandmother told him that every flower in the Garden of Paradise was made of the sweetest cake, and its stamina of the choicest wine : on one stood history, on another geography, or English grammar ; so that one only need eat the cakes in order to know one's lesson perfectly ; and the more one ate the more one learned, and the more one understood of history, geography, or English grammar.

This story he believed then ; but by degrees, as he grew older and wiser, he saw very well that the glory of the Garden of Paradise must be a very different sort of thing.

“ Oh, why did Eve pluck the fruit from the tree of knowledge ? Why did Adam eat of what was forbidden ? *I* ought to have been there, and then it would not have happened ! Never should sin have entered into the world ! ”

So spoke he then ; and so he spoke still, when he was seventeen years old. The Garden of Paradise occupied all his thoughts. One day he strolled

into the forest. He was alone ; for to be so was his greatest pleasure.

The evening was closing in, the clouds were gathering, and it began to rain as if the whole heaven were one great floodgate from which the water was bursting. It was, too, as dark as it could be at night in the deepest well. Now he slipped on the wet grass, now he fell over bare stones which projected from the rocky ground. He was, besides, dripping wet : the poor Prince had not a dry thread on his body. He was forced to climb over huge blocks of stone, where the water trickled down from the high moss. He was near falling, when he heard a strange humming noise ; and before him he saw a large illumined cavern. In the middle of it burned a fire, at which a buck might have been roasted whole. And it was the case too ;—the finest buck, with zig-zag antlers, was stuck on the spit, and turned slowly between two enormous pine-trees. An elderly woman, tall and strong, as though she were a man in disguise, sat by the fire, and threw in one piece of wood after the other.

“Come, come nearer,” said she ; “seat yourself by the fire, and dry your clothes.”

“There’s a terrible draught here,” said the Prince, and he sat down on the ground.

“That will be still worse when my sons come home,” said the woman. “You are in the Cavern of the Winds; my sons are the Four Winds of the world. Do you understand me?”

“Where are your sons?” asked the Prince.

“Stupid questions are not easily answered,” said the woman. “My sons live just as they please; they play at ball with the clouds up there,” and so saying she pointed on high.

“Oh, indeed!” said the prince. “As to yourself, you speak rather roughly, and are altogether not so gentle as the women that I generally see around me.”

“Yes; they, I suppose, have nothing else to do. I must be harsh, if I am to keep my boys in order: but I can do it, though they have stiff necks of their own! D’ye see the four sacks yonder by the wall? they stand as much in awe of them as you once did of the rod on the shelf. I bang them together, let me tell you, and then off they march into the sack; we don’t stand on much ceremony here,—there they sit, nor out do they come

till I choose to let them. But, see, here is one of them !”

This was the North Wind. He entered with an icy coldness ; large hailstones danced upon the ground and flakes of snow flew about. He had on a jacket and breeches of bear-skin ; a seal-skin cap hung over his ears ; long icicles were hanging at his beard, and one hailstone after the other slipped out from under his jacket-collar.

“ But don’t go to the fire directly !” said the Prince. “ Your face and hands might get frost-bitten !”

“ Frostbitten !” said the North Wind, laughing loudly ; “ Frostbitten ! why that is just my greatest delight ! But pray who are you, Mr. Spindle-shanks ? How came you into the Cavern of the Winds ?”

“ He is my guest,” said the old woman ; “ and if you are not satisfied with the explanation, you shall be off to the sack. So now you know my mind.”

This had the desired effect ; and the North Wind related whence he came, and where he had been the whole month.

“I came from the icy sea : I have been on Bear Island,” said he, “with the Russian whale-fishers. I sat and slept at the helm as they sailed past the North Cape. When I now and then woke up, the stormy-petrel flew about my legs ; it is a strange bird ! he gives a quick stroke with his wings, and then keeps them stretched out immovably, and needs no further exertion.”

“Don’t be so circumstantial,” said the Mother of the Winds. “And so you came to Bear Island?”

“’Tis splendid there ! A floor just fit for dancing, as flat as a board ! Half-thawed snow and moss, sharp stones, and the skeletons of whales and polar bears lay about, and they looked exactly like the legs and arms of giants covered over with a mouldy green. One would think the sun never shone upon them. I blew into the mist a little, that I might see the hut. That was a fine house ! It was built of the remains of a wreck, and covered with the skin of a whale ; the fleshy side outwards, all green and red ; and on the roof there sat a live bear, and growled. I went along the shore, looked into the birds’ nests, and saw the callow young ones screaming and chirping with open mouths ; so I

blew into their throats by thousands, and then they learnt to hold their tongue. Beneath me the walruses rolled, looking like gigantic worms with heads of swine and tusks ells long."

"You tell your story well, my son," exclaimed the mother; "it makes one freeze to listen to you!"

"Now, then, the fishing began; the harpoon was thrust into the breast of the walrus, and the reeking stream of blood spouted like a fountain over the ice. Then I thought of my sport. I gave a blast, and made my ships, the stupendous icebergs, hem in the boats. Ha, ha! how they all whistled and cried, but I whistled louder! The pieces of the dead whales, chests, and tackle—all were obliged to be unpacked upon the ice. I shook snow-flakes about them, and sent them and their boat, locked up in the ice, drifting to the southward, to get a taste of salt-water. They won't make their appearance at Bear Island again!"

"You have been doing harm, then!" said the Mother of the Winds.

"The good I have done others may relate," said he; "but here comes my brother from the

West ; I love him best of all—he smells so of the sea, and has such a healthy cold about him.”

“Is that little Zephyr?” asked the Prince.

“Yes, to be sure it is,” said the old woman ; “but he is no longer so very little either. Once upon a time he was a nice little fellow, but that’s over now.”

He looked like a wild man, but on his head he had a sort of padded covering, to save him from hurt. In his hand he held a club of mahogany, hewn in the American forests. Nothing less than this would have done.

“Where do you come from?” inquired his old mother.

“From the forest wilderness,” said he, “where the thorny lianas form a hedge between every tree, where the water-serpent lies in the wet grass, and where man seems to be useless.”

“What did you do there?”

“I looked into the deep river, saw how it rolled from the rocks, and, dashed into spray, flew up towards the clouds. I saw a buffalo swimming in the stream, but the current bore him down : he drifted onwards with a flock of wild-fowl ; they

flew up where the water fell, but the buffalo was forced down. That pleased me, and I blew such a storm that the primeval trees were hurled cracking to the earth, and were crashed to atoms."

"And have you done nought beside?" asked the old woman.

"I have tumbled head over heels in the Savannahs, I have chased the wild horses, and rattled down the cocoa-nuts. Yes, yes; I have enough to tell about. But one must not tell all one knows; that you know very well, old mammy." And so saying, he kissed his mother to such a degree that she nearly tumbled down. He was a wild fellow, that West Wind!

Now came the South Wind, with turban and flying Bedouin mantle.

"It's cold enough here," said he, throwing wood upon the fire; "one feels that the North Wind was here first."

"It's so hot here that one might roast a polar bear," said the North Wind.

"You are a polar bear yourself," said the South Wind.

"D'ye want to be put in the sack?" asked the

old woman. "Sit down there on the stone, and tell where you have been."

"In Africa, mother," answered he. "I was lion-hunting with the Hottentots in the land of the Caffres. What fine grass grows there in the plains, as green as the olive! There frisked the gnu, and the ostrich ran races with me; but I am the quicker of foot. I came to the desert, to the yellow sand: it looks like the bottom of the sea. I met a caravan; they killed their last camel to get water to drink, but they did not get much. From above they were scorched by the sun, from below they were burned by the sand. The vast desert was endless. There I rolled myself in the fine loose sand, and in great pillars whirled it up into the air. Oh, it was a glorious dance! You should have seen how stupified the dromedary stood, and how the merchant drew his caftan over his head! He threw himself down before me, as before Allah, his God. Now they are all buried, but a pyramid of sand stands above them. When some day or other I blow it away, the sun will bleach the white bones, and travellers may see that men have been there. But for this no one would believe it in the desert."

“So, then, you have done nothing but evil,” said his mother. “March! to the sack!” And before he was aware of it, she had seized hold of the South Wind by the body, and—into the sack with him. He kicked and rolled about the floor; but she sat down on him, and then he was forced to lie still.

“They are confounded wild fellows, these sons of yours!” said the Prince.

“Yes, indeed they are,” answered she; “but they must obey for all that. Ha! here we have the fourth.”

This was the East Wind, who was dressed like a Chinese.

“What! are you come out of the corner?” said his mother. “I thought you had been to the Garden of Paradise?”

“I am going there to-morrow,” said the East Wind; “to-morrow it will be a hundred years since I was there. I come from China now, where I danced round the porcelain tower till I set all the bells a-tinkling. Below in the street the officers of state got such a beating that the bamboo-canes split across their shoulders; and these were personages from the first to the ninth degree. They

called out, 'Thanks, thanks, paternal benefactor!' but they didn't mean it; and I tinkled the bells all the while, and sang, 'Tsing, tsang, tsu!'

"You are a harum-scarum youth," said the old woman. "It is a good thing you are going to the Garden of Paradise to-morrow; your education requires it. Do but drink deep of the fountain of wisdom, and bring a little bottleful back for me."

"I will," said the East Wind; "but why have you put my brother from the south into the sack? Let him out; he must tell me about the phoenix; about this bird the Princess in the Garden of Paradise wants always to hear something, when I go to pay my visit every hundred years. Open the sack; you are my own sweet dear little mother; and I'll give you two pocketsful of tea, quite fresh and green, just as I picked it myself on the spot."

"Well, then, for the sake of the tea, and because, after all, you are my darling, I'll open the sack." And she did so, and the South Wind crept out; but he looked very crest-fallen, because the Prince, who was a stranger, had seen the whole affair.

“Here is a palm-leaf for the Princess,” said the South Wind; “it was given me by the old phoenix-bird—the only one that was in the whole world. On it he has scribbled with his bill his whole history during the hundred years that he lived; so now she can read it herself. I saw how the phoenix set fire to his nest, seated himself on it, and was burnt like the Hindoo widow. How the green boughs crackled, and what a smoke and fragrance! At length all was in flames; the old bird was turned to ashes, but his egg lay red and glowing in the fire. It burst with a loud noise, and the young phoenix flew out. He is now lord over all the birds, and the only phoenix in the world. He has bitten a hole in the leaf I have given you; that is his greeting to the Princess.”

“Let us now take something to refresh ourselves,” said the old woman; and they all sat down to eat of the roasted buck; and the Prince took a place next to the East Wind, which was the reason of their soon being very good friends.

“I say,” began the Prince, “just tell me what Princess that is who is so much talked about? and where does the Garden of Paradise lie?”

“ Ho, Ho !” said the East Wind ; “ will you go there ? If you will, set off to-morrow with me ; but this much must I tell you, no human being was ever there since Adam and Eve’s time. You know them, of course, from the Bible history ?”

“ Yes, to be sure,” said the Prince.

“ When they were driven away, the Garden of Paradise sank into the earth ; but it retained its warm sunshine, its genial air, and all its glory. The Queen of the Fairies lives there ; there lies the Island of Bliss, which Death can never reach, and where life is so very beautiful. Seat yourself to-morrow on my back, and I will take you with me ; I think we shall be able to manage it. But now hold your tongue, for I want to go to rest.”

And now all fell asleep. Early in the morning the Prince awoke, and was not a little astonished to see that he was already far above the clouds. He was sitting on the back of the East Wind, who carefully held him fast ; they were so high in the air that woods and fields, rivers and lakes, looked like a large coloured map.

“ Good morning,” said the East Wind. “ You may, if you like, sleep a little longer ; for as yet

there is not much to be seen on the flat land beneath us, unless you would like to count the churches, which stand like little white dots down there on the green board." They were the fields and meadows which he called a green board.

"It was unpolite of me not to take leave of your mother and brothers," said the Prince.

"If one sleeps, it is excusable," answered the East Wind; and now they flew on still more quickly. One could hear it by the tops of the trees; when they passed over them, all the leaves and the branches rustled: one could hear it on the sea, and on the lakes; for wherever they flew, the waves rose higher, and the tall ships bent low down to the water like swans.

Towards evening, as it was getting dark, the great cities appeared very strange. Lights were burning below, now here, now there; and it looked exactly as if one had burned a piece of paper, and shaken the sparks in all directions. And the Prince clapped his hands; but the East Wind begged him to leave off, and rather to hold fast; otherwise it was not unlikely he might fall down, and be left hanging to some church-steeple.

The eagle in the dark forests flew quickly enough; but the East Wind flew more quickly. The Cossack on his little horse rode at full speed over the steppes; but the Prince rode along in a very different manner.

“Now you can see the Himalaya,” said the East Wind, “that is the highest mountain in Asia: we shall soon be at the Garden of Paradise.” They afterwards turned more to the south; and the fragrance of spices and flowers soon floated through the air. Figs and pomegranates grew wild, and red and white grapes hung in profusion on the wild vine. Here they both descended, and lay in the soft grass, where the flowers nodded to the wind, as though they would say, “Welcome, welcome!”

“Are we now in the Garden of Paradise?” asked the Prince.

“No, not yet,” said the East Wind; “but we shall soon be there. Do you see yon wall of rock, and the great cavern, where the tendrils of the vine hang like large green curtains? There we must pass. Wrap yourself up in your cloak: here the sun is burning; but a step further and it is icy

cold. The bird that flies before the cavern has one wing out here in the warm summer, and the other within in the cold winter."

"And that is the way to the Garden of Paradise?" asked the Prince.

So now they entered the cavern: oh, how icy cold it was! but it did not last long. The East Wind spread out his wings, and they shone like a glowing fire. But what a cavern! The huge blocks of stone, from which the water trickled, hung over them in the most extraordinary shapes. Sometimes the passage was so narrow that they were obliged to creep along on hands and feet; and again it was as broad and high as under the open heaven. It looked like a crypt, with silent organ-pipes and petrified organ.

"We are going by the Path of Death into the Garden of Paradise, are we not?" said the Prince. But the East Wind answered not a word: he only pointed forwards, where the loveliest blue light gleamed towards them. The blocks of stone above their heads became more and more like a vapour, and at last were as clear as a white cloud in the moonlight. They were now in the mildest air, as

refreshing as on the mountains, and as fragrant as among the roses of the valley.

Here flowed a river as transparent as the air itself; and the fish that were in it were of silver and gold; purple-coloured eels, that at every turn sent forth a shower of blue sparks, sported in the water; and the broad leaves of the water-lily displayed every colour of the rainbow — the flower itself was a pale-yellow burning flame, which was sustained by the water, as the lamp is fed by the oil. A firm bridge of marble, but so fine and so curiously wrought as though it were made of glass beads and lace, led over the water to the Island of Bliss.

The East Wind took the Prince on his arm and carried him across. Then the leaves and the flowers sang the most beautiful songs about his childhood; but in such sweet and swelling tones, that no human voice could imitate them. Whether they were palms or gigantic water-plants that grew here, the Prince knew not; but such great luxurious trees he had never before seen; and there in long garlands were hanging the most curious creepers, just as one sees them in colours and gold

on the margin of old Prayer-books, or twining round the initial letters. There was the most beautiful mixture of birds, and wreaths, and flowers. Close by in the grass stood a flock of peacocks, with their radiant tails outspread. Yes, indeed it was so—but no, when the Prince touched them, he found that they were not animals, but plants. They were large burrs, which here shone like the magnificent tail of the peacock. Lions and tigers leaped like cats between the green hedges, that smelt as sweetly as the blossom of the olive; and the lions and the tigers were tame. The wild dove, shining like the fairest pearl, fanned the lion's mane with her wings; and the antelope, usually so shy, stood and nodded its head, as though it would play with the rest.

Now came the Fairy of Paradise. Her clothes shone like the sun; and her countenance was as mild as that of a happy mother when she rejoices over her child. She was young and beautiful; and following her were the loveliest maidens, each one with a gleaming star in her hair.

The East Wind gave her the leaf with the writing from the phœnix, and her eyes beamed

with joy. She took the Prince by the hand, and led him to her palace, where the walls were coloured like the leaf of the most beautiful tulip when held up to the sun. The ceiling was a single shining flower; and the more one looked into the calix, the deeper it seemed. The Prince advanced to the window, and looked through one of the panes: he saw there the Tree of Knowledge, with the Serpent; and Adam and Eve stood by.

“Were they not driven away?” asked he. And the Fairy smiled, and explained to him that on every pane Time had burnt its image; but it was not such a picture as one generally sees: no, there was life in it; the leaves of the trees moved, and human beings went and came as in a mirror. And he looked through another pane; there was Jacob’s dream. The ladder went straight up into heaven, and the angels with their broad wings moved up and down. Yea, all that had happened in this world lived and moved on the window-panes; but such beautiful glass-painting as this could only be produced by Time.

The Fairy smiled, and led him to a large high hall, whose walls seemed covered with transparent

paintings : there were thousands of happy beings, who laughed and sang so that their voices formed a wondrous harmony. The highest were so very small ; smaller than the least rose-bud, when it is drawn like a mere dot upon the paper. In the middle of the hall stood a large tree, with luxuriant pendent branches ; and golden apples, large and small, hung like oranges between the green leaves. This was the Tree of Knowledge, of whose fruit Adam and Eve had eaten. From every leaf a red gleaming dew-drop was falling : it was as if the tree shed tears of blood.

“ Now let us get into the boat,” said the Fairy ; “ we will refresh ourselves on the heaving water. The boat rocks, yet it moves not from the spot ; but all the countries of the earth glide by before our eyes.” And it was wonderful to behold how the whole coast moved. There came the lofty snow-covered Alps, with clouds and dark pines : the deep melancholy sound of the horn was heard ; and the herdsman shouted merrily from the valley. Now the long drooping branches of the Bananas hung down into the boat, jet-black swans swam on the water, and the strangest animals and flowers

were to be seen on the banks. This was New Holland, the fifth quarter of the Globe, that glided by with a view of the Blue Mountains. One heard the songs of the priests, and saw the wild inhabitants dance to the sound of the drum and of the bone tuba. Egypt's pyramids climbing to the clouds, overthrown columns, and sphynxes sailed by. The aurora borealis burned over the mountains of the north : that was a firework that no one can imitate. The Prince was so happy, and he saw a hundred times more than is related here !

“ And may I always stay here ? ” asked he.

“ That depends on yourself,” answered the Fairy. “ If you do not allow yourself to be seduced, like Adam, to do that which is forbidden, you may stay here for ever.”

“ I will not touch the apple of the Tree of Knowledge,” said the Prince. “ Here are a thousand fruits as beautiful as that one.”

“ Examine yourself, and if you are not strong enough, then go with the East Wind that brought you : he is about to fly back, and will not come again for a hundred years. To you the time here will pass away as though it were a hundred hours ;

but it is a long time for temptation and sin. Every evening, when I leave you, I must call, ‘Come with me!’ I must beckon to you with my hand—but do not attend. Do not follow me; for with every step temptation will increase. Should you come into the hall where the Tree of Knowledge stands, under whose fragrant boughs I sleep, and bend over me, and press a kiss on my mouth, then the garden will sink into the earth, and be lost to you. The chill winds of the desert will whistle around you, the cold rain trickle from your hair, and want and sorrow will be your portion.”

“I will remain,” said the Prince; and the East Wind kissed him on the forehead, and said, “Be firm, and we shall meet again in a hundred years! Farewell, farewell!” And the East Wind spread out his large wings: they shone like lightning seen at harvest-time; or like the aurora borealis in cold winter. “Farewell! farewell!” was re-echoed by tree and flower. Storks and pelicans flew in long rows like fluttering streamers, as they accompanied him to the boundary of the garden.

“Now begin our dances!” said the Fairy. “At the end, when I shall dance with you, you will see

how, as the sinking sun departs, I shall beckon to you. You will hear me call, ‘Come, oh come!’ but do not follow me. For a hundred years must I repeat the call every evening. With each evening will your moral strength increase, till at last you will not give it a thought. This is the first day—I have given you warning!”

And the Fairy led him to a large hall of white transparent lilies; and the yellow stamina of the lilies were little golden harps, which gave forth a music as of stringed instruments and flutes. Lovely maidens, light and slender, danced gracefully around him, and sang of life and its delights; and the burden of their songs was, that death should never approach, and that the Garden of Paradise should bloom for ever.

It was sunset: the whole sky was as pure gold; and in the purple light the lilies shone like the most beautiful roses. And the Prince drank of the sparkling wine which the maidens handed him, and he felt a joy unknown to him till then. He saw how the background of the hall opened, and beheld the Tree of Knowledge standing amidst dazzling brightness.

And again the sound of song was wafted towards him, mild and gentle as his mother's voice; and he seemed to hear her sing, "My child, my dear, dear child!"

And the Fairy beckoned with tenderness, and cried, "Come, oh come!" and he rushed towards her; forgot his vow, forgot it even on the very first evening; and again she beckoned and smiled.

The air, the spicy air around, grew still more balmy; and the harps sounded more deliciously; and it seemed as if the millions of laughing faces in the hall, where the tree grew, nodded and said, "One should know all! Man is Lord of the Earth." And it was no longer tears of blood that dropped from the leaves of the Tree of Knowledge, but red, shining stars; such, at least, did they seem to him.

"Come, oh come!" sounded with trembling tones; and at every step the cheeks of the Prince burned more ardently, and more quickly flowed his blood.

"I must," said he; "it surely is no sin; cannot possibly be a sin! Why not pursue what is beautiful and joyous? I will see her while she sleeps.

In doing that I shall have lost nothing : but if I were to kiss her,—but kiss her I will not—I am strong, and am resolute !”

And the Fairy threw off her shining mantle, bent aside the branches, and was hidden in a moment from his sight.

“ As yet I have not sinned,” said the Prince ; “ nor will I ;” and he pushed the boughs aside : she slept—as beautiful as only the Fairy of the Garden of Paradise can be. She smiled in her dream : he bent over her, and saw tears beneath her eyelashes. “ Dost thou weep for me ?” he murmured : “ oh, weep not, beautiful maiden ! Now, for the first time, do I comprehend the joy of Paradise ! I feel it in every vein : every thought is possessed by it. I feel the cherub’s strength, and everlasting life in my mortal body ; let darkness enwrap me for ever—one moment like this is enough !” And he kissed the tears from her eyes ; his lips touched hers—a frightful clap of thunder was heard, so loud and terrible that none has ever heard the like. And all disappeared : the charming Fairy and the blooming Paradise sunk deep into the earth : down into dark night the

Prince saw it sinking ; and like a small twinkling star it shone in the far distance. An icy coldness spread over his limbs ; he closed his eyes, and lay for a long while as dead.

The cold rain fell on his face, the chill wind blew on his forehead, and at last his senses returned. “ What have I done ! ” said he ; “ I have sinned like Adam ; I have sinned, and Paradise has sunk from my sight ! ” And he opened his eyes ; the distant star, the star that twinkled like the sunken Paradise, he could see still : it was the Morning-star shining in the sky.

He rose and found himself in the wood, near the Cave of the Winds. The Mother of the Winds sat by his side ; she looked displeased, and lifted her arm on high.

“ Already, the first evening ! ” said she : “ I thought as much ; yes, if you were my son, by my faith, you should march into the sack.”

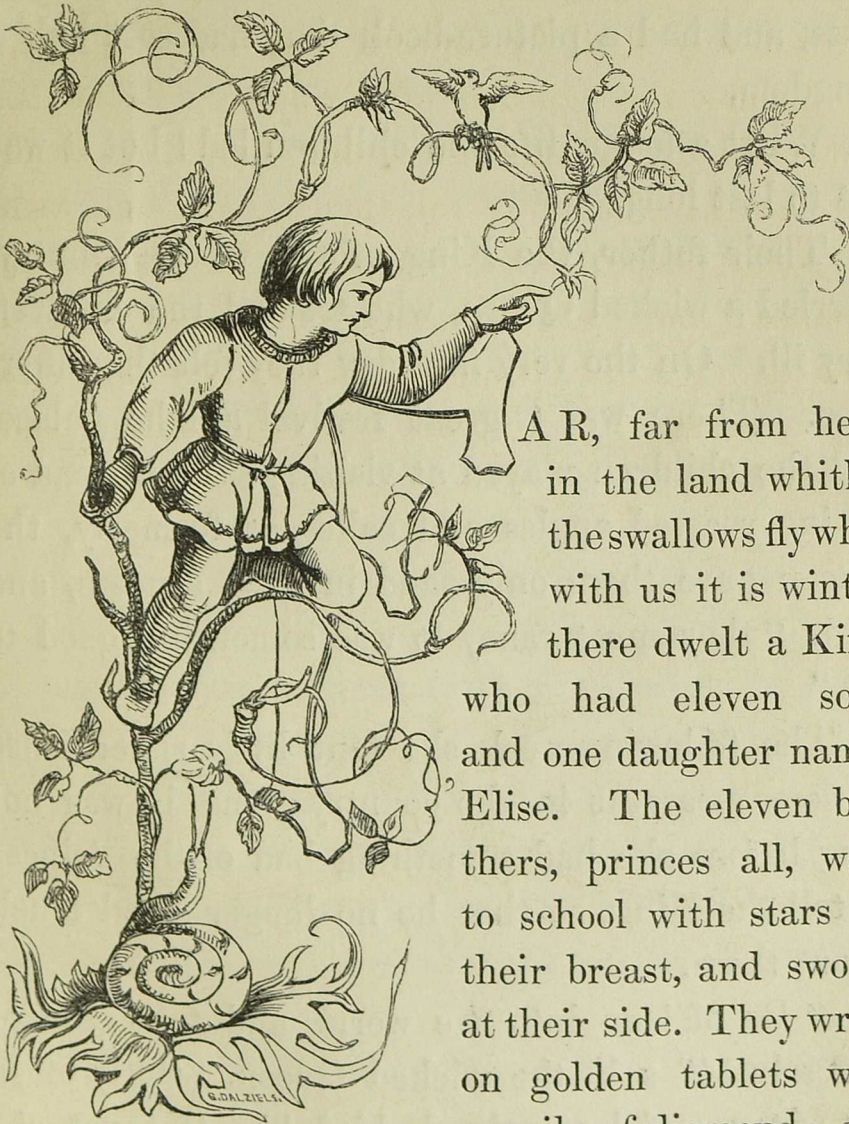
“ In he shall go ! ” said Death. This was a strong old man with a scythe in his hand, and with large black wings. “ He shall be laid in the coffin, but not now ; I have marked him, but I will leave him yet a little while to wander on the earth, to

THE GARDEN OF PARADISE.

repent his sins and to improve. Some day I shall come again. When he least expects it, I shall push him into the black coffin. I shall put it on my head, and shall fly towards the stars. There, too, blooms the Garden of Paradise. If he be good and holy, he may enter; but should his head and heart be still full of sin, then he will sink with the coffin deeper than ever sank the Garden of Paradise; and every thousand years only shall I come to fetch him, that he may either sink still deeper, or dwell in the star—in the shining star there yonder!”



THE WILD SWANS.



AR, far from here,
in the land whither
the swallows fly when
with us it is winter,
there dwelt a King,
who had eleven sons,
and one daughter named
Elise. The eleven bro-
thers, princes all, went
to school with stars on
their breast, and swords
at their side. They wrote
on golden tablets with
pencils of diamond; and

they could read in any book, and out of any book : you heard in a moment that they were Princes. Their sister Elise sat on a little stool of looking-glass, and had a picture-book that had cost half a kingdom.

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

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

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

“ Be off ! go into the world, and take care of yourselves !” said the wicked Queen. “ Fly off in the shape of large dumb birds !” But yet she

could not make it quite so bad as she wished ; and into eleven beautiful white swans were the Princes changed. With a strange cry, they flew out of the windows of the palace, and disappeared over the park and the wood.

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

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

Each day passed like the other. If the wind blew through the great rose-tree before the house,

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

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

One morning early, the Queen went into her bath, which was of marble, and ornamented with soft cushions and costly carpets. She took three toads, kissed them, and said to one of them, "Do thou sit on the head of Elise when she goes to bathe, that she may become as lazy and drowsy as thou art." "Sit thou on her forehead," said she to another, "that she may grow as ugly as thou art,

so that her father may not recognise her.” “Do thou lie in her bosom,” said she to the third, “that her heart may be tainted, and that she may grow wicked, and be her own punishment.”

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

When the wicked Queen saw this, she rubbed the child all over with walnut-juice, till she was of a dark-brown colour; smeared her lovely face with a stinking ointment, and made her fine long hair hang in wild confusion. To recognise the beautiful Elise was now impossible.

When her father saw her he started, and said

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

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

She had not been long in the forest before night came on, and she lost her way in the dark. So she laid herself down in the soft moss, said her evening prayer, and leaned her head on the stump of a tree. It was so still in the forest, the air was so mild, and around in the grass and on the moss there gleamed the green light of many hundred glow-worms ; and when she gently touched one of the branches with her hand, the radiant insects came down to her like falling stars.

The whole night she dreamed of her brothers :

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

When Elise awoke, the sun was already high in the heaven : it is true she could not see it, the high trees interwove their leafy branches so closely ; but the sunbeams played upon them, and looked like a waving golden gauze. There was such a fragrance from the verdure ; and the birds almost perched on Elise's shoulder. She heard the water splashing ; for there were many considerable brooks which all met in a pond with a beautiful sandy bottom : 'tis true thick bushes grew all round it ; but the deer had broken a broad way through, and on this path Elise went to the water. It was so clear,

that if the boughs and the bushes had not been waved backwards and forwards by the wind, one would have been forced to believe that they were painted, and lay down at the bottom, so distinctly was every leaf reflected, those that glowed in the sunlight as well as those which lay in the shade.

When Elise saw her face in the water she was much frightened, so brown and ugly did she look ; but when she wetted her little hand and rubbed her eyes and forehead, the white skin appeared again ; and Elise laid her clothes aside and stepped into the fresh water,—a more lovely royal child than she was not to be found in the whole world.

After she had dressed herself and braided her long hair, she went to the bubbling spring, drank out of the hollow of her hand, and wandered farther into the wood—she herself knew not whither. She thought of her brothers, thought of the ever-watchful and good God, Who would certainly not forsake her ; for it was He Who made the wild apples to grow, to give food to the hungry ; and He shewed her a tree whose branches bent down under the weight of the fruit. Here she dined, put props under the branches, and then went into the thickest

part of the wood. It was so still there that she heard her own footsteps, and the rustle of every withered leaf that bent beneath her feet. Not a bird was to be seen, not a sunbeam penetrated the thick foliage-roof; and the high trunks stood so near together, that when she looked straight forward, a grating of wooden beams seemed to close around her: oh, it was a solitude such as Elise had never known! And the night was so dark—not a single glow-worm shone! Much afflicted, she lay down to sleep; and there it seemed to her as if the boughs above her parted, and the ever-watchful and good God looked down upon her with an eye of love, and a thousand little angels peeped forth to gaze at her from the clouds.

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

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

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

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

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

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

On the sea-weed which was washed up on the shore lay eleven white swans’ feathers; Elise col-

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

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

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

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

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

we pass the night in our human form ; and without this cliff we should never be able to visit our beloved country ; for it takes two of the longest days of the year to accomplish our flight. Once a year only are we permitted to revisit the home of our fathers : we may stay here eleven days ; and then we fly over the large forest, whence we can espy the palace in which our father dwells, and where we were born ; whence we can see the high tower of the church in which our mother lies. Here the very trees and bushes seem familiar to us ; here the wild horses still dash over the plains as when we saw them in our childhood ; the charcoal-burner sings the same old tune to which we danced in our youth ;—all here has charms for us, and here we have found thee, dear little sister ! Two days more are we permitted to stay, and then we must away over the sea to a pleasant land ; but, lovely as it is, it is not the country of our birth. And thou, Elise, how can we take thee with us—we have neither ship nor boat ?”

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

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

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

"Yes, take me with you," said Elise. And they spent the whole night in weaving a sort of mat of the flexible bark of the willow and of tough bull-rushes; and when finished it was large and strong. Elise laid herself upon it; and when the sun appeared, and her brothers were again changed into wild swans, they took the mat in their bills, and flew

THE WILD SWANS.

with their dear sister, who still slept, high up into the clouds. The rays of the sun fell full upon her face ; so one of the swans flew above her head, that he might overshadow her with his broad wings.

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

They flew so high, that the first ship they saw below them seemed like a white sea-mew hovering over the waves. Elise beheld a large cloud behind them : it was a mountain, and on it she saw in gigantic proportions the shadows of herself and of the eleven swans. It was a picture more magnificent than eye had ever gazed on ; but as the sun rose higher and the cloud was left behind, the shadowy picture vanished. The whole day they flew

on like a whizzing arrow ; but yet it was more slowly than usual, for they had their sister to carry. The sky looked threatening ; the evening was closing in ; and Elise, full of anxiety, saw the sun sinking down ; but the solitary rock was not to be discerned. She fancied by the beating of their wings that the swans were exerting themselves very much. Alas, it was her fault that her brothers could not advance more quickly ! Should the sun set, then they would be men, — they would fall into the sea and be drowned. From her very inmost heart did she pray to God ; but as yet no rock was to be seen : the black cloud drew nearer ; the violent gusts of wind announced a storm ; the clouds stood upreared on a frightfully large wave, that rolled onwards with the speed of the hurricane ; and it lightened, one flash quickly following the other.

The sun was now on the very margin of the sea. Elise's heart beat violently ; when suddenly the swans darted downwards so rapidly that she thought she was falling ; but now again she floated in the air. The sun was half in the water when she perceived for the first time the small rock below

her, which to her eyes did not appear larger than the head of a seal when the creature sticks it out of the water. And the sun went down so fast : already it was only like a star ; when at the same moment her foot touched the firm ground, and the sun vanished like the last spark of a piece of burning paper. She saw her brothers standing round her arm-in-arm ; but there was not more room than just enough for them and for her. The sea dashed boisterously against the rock, and fell on them like a heavy shower of rain ; the sky was one continual blaze of fire, and the thunder rolled uninterruptedly ; but the brothers and their sister held each other by the hand and sang a psalm, and it gave them consolation and strength.

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

As the sun rose higher, Elise saw before her, half swimming as it were in the air, a mountainous

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

* Mirage.

before sunset she was sitting on a hill before a large cavern, which was so thickly covered by green creeping-plants, that it looked as if overspread with embroidered hangings.

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

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

“Thy brothers may be released,” said the Fairy; “but hast thou patience and fortitude? ’Tis true the sea is softer than thy delicate hands, and yet it changes the form of the hard stones; but it feels not the pain which your tender fingers would suffer. It has no heart, and suffereth not the anguish and

suspense which thou wouldst have to endure. Dost thou see these nettles in my hand? Many such grow around the cave where thou sleepest: these only, and such as shoot up out of the graves in the churchyard, are of use; and mark this—thou must gather them although they sting thy hands; thou must brake* the nettles with thy feet, and then thou wilt have yarn; and of this yarn, with weaving and winding, thou must make eleven shirts of mail with long sleeves; and if thou throwest these over the eleven wild swans, then the enchantment is at an end. But remember, from the moment thou beginnest thy work until its completion, even should years pass by meanwhile, thou must not utter a single word: the first sound of thy lips will pass like a fatal dagger through thy brothers' hearts—on thy tongue depends their life. Mark well all that I say!”

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

* A brake is an instrument for dressing flax.

thanked God, and went out of the cavern to begin her work.

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

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

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

Suddenly the horn of a hunter was heard among

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

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

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

“ Come with me, ” said he ; “ thou must not stay here. If thou art as good as thou art beautiful, I will clothe thee in silk and velvet, I will put a golden crown upon thy head, and thou shalt dwell in my palace with me. ” So saying, he lifted her



on his horse. She wept and wrung her hands ; but the King said, " I only seek thy happiness ! one day thou wilt be thankful to me ! " And he galloped away over hill and valley, holding her fast before him ; and the huntsmen followed at full speed.

As the sun was going down, she saw before her the magnificent capital, with its churches and domes ; and the King led her to the palace, where jets of water were splashing on the high marble walls ; where wall and ceiling shone with the richest paintings : but all this delighted not her eyes ; she mourned and wept, and in silence suffered the women to array her in royal robes ; to braid her hair with pearls, and to put soft gloves on her burned hands.

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

But the King gave no heed to his words : he ordered the music to sound, and the richest meats

were served, and the loveliest girls danced before her, and she was led through odorous gardens to the most magnificent halls. But no smile played on her lip, nor in her eye : affliction only was hers ; it was her sole possession. Then the King opened a small chamber adjoining her sleeping-room : it was covered with costly green carpeting, and resembled exactly the cavern in which she had formerly been. On the floor lay a bundle of flax, which she had spun from the fibres of the nettles ; and from the ceiling hung the shirt of mail which she had completed. All this had been collected and brought hither by one of the hunters as a curiosity.

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

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

the wedding-festival. The beautiful forest maiden became Queen of the country.

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

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

“ Oh, what’s the smarting of my fingers compared to the anguish that my heart endures ? ” thought she : “ venture I must ; and God will surely not withdraw His hand from me.”

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

Only a single person had seen her : it was the archbishop. He watched while the others slept.

Now he was sure he was right when he said the Queen was not what she should be : that she was a witch ; and that the King and the people were beguiled by her enchantments.

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

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

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

tears rolled down on the royal velvet and purple, and lay there like sparkling diamonds; and all who saw the splendour and magnificence with which she was surrounded, wished themselves in Elise's place. In the meantime, however, her work was nearly completed; one shirt of mail only was wanting, but her flax was exhausted: she had not a single nettle more. Once more, only once, would she be obliged to go to the churchyard and pluck a handful. She thought with terror of the lonely walk, and of the horrible Lamias; but her resolve was as firm as her trust in God.

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

“She shall be judged by the people!” said he. And the people condemned her to the flames!

From the magnificent royal hall she was now led to a dismal damp cell, where the wind whistled

through the grated window. Instead of velvet and silk, they gave her the bundle of nettles which she had collected, as a pillow for her head ; and the coarse hard shirts of mail were to serve her as bed and covering : but nothing could have delighted her more ; and she set to work again, and prayed fervently to God. Before her prison-door the populace sang jeering songs about her : not a soul comforted her with one word of affection.

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

The archbishop came to pass the last hour with her, for he had promised the King to do so ; but she shook her head, and begged him, by look and gesture, to leave her. This night her task must be accomplished, or all would have been in vain ; tears, sorrows, and many a sleepless night. The archbishop went away with angry words upon

his lips ; but poor Elise knew she had done nothing wrong, and continued her work.

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

It began to dawn ; it was still an hour before the sun would be up, when the eleven brothers stood before the palace-gates, and asked to be led into the presence of the King. They were told it could not be, for it was still night ; besides, the King was asleep, and no one dared to wake him. They entreated, they threatened ; the guard came, and at last even the King appeared, and asked what was the matter ; when just at that moment the sun rose, and there were no longer any brothers to be seen, but eleven white swans flew over the palace.

The people streamed out of the city-gates ; for all wished to see the witch burnt. A miserable horse dragged the cart on which she sat : they had dressed her in a sort of frock of coarse sackcloth ; her beautiful long hair hung loose around her head ;

her cheeks were deathly pale ; her lips moved almost imperceptibly while she spun the green-flax ; for even on the way to death she ceased not from the work she had begun. The ten shirts of mail lay at her feet ; she was weaving the eleventh.

“Look at the witch !” shouted the people ; “how she is muttering ! She has no book of psalms in her hand ; no, there she sits with her accursed conjuration : take it from her ! tear it in a thousand pieces !”

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

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

The executioner seized her hand ; when quickly she threw the eleven shirts of mail over the swans, and eleven handsome princes stood before her ; but the youngest had one swan’s wing instead of an arm, for a sleeve was wanting on his shirt of mail.

“Now I may speak,” said she ; “I am innocent !”

And the populace, that had seen what had happened, bowed before her as before a saint ; but she sank insensible in the arms of her brothers, overcome by suspense, pain, and sorrow.

“ Yes, she is innocent !” said the eldest brother ; and he related all that had befallen her. While he spake, an odour as of a million roses spread around ; for each billet of wood in the pile had taken root, and put forth branches and blossoms ; so that there was now a sweetly smelling hedge full of red roses : and on the top of all was a flower of dazzling whiteness, and shining like a star. The King plucked this flower, and laid it on Elise’s bosom ; and she awoke with joy and peace in her heart.

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

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES.



OME many years ago there lived an Emperor who cared so very much about having new clothes, that he spent all his money merely for the sake of being very smartly dressed.

He did not care much about his troops ; he did not care either about going to the play, or driving out, unless it were that he might shew his new clothes. He had a new suit for every hour in the day ; and as one usually says of a King or Emperor, he held a priyy council, so of him it was said, his majesty sat in council with his tailors.

In the large town where he resided people led a merry life. Day after day fresh visitors arrived at court: one day, too, a couple of swindlers, who called themselves first-rate weavers, made their appearance. They pretended that they were able to weave the richest stuffs, in which not only the colours and patterns were extremely beautiful, but that the clothes made of such stuffs possessed the wonderful property of remaining invisible to him who was unfit for the office he held, or who was extremely silly.

“What capital clothes they must be!” thought the Emperor. “If I had but such a suit, I could directly find out what people in my empire were not equal to their office; and, besides, I should be able to distinguish the clever from the stupid. By Jove, I must have some of this stuff made directly for me!” And so he ordered large sums of money to be given to the two swindlers, that they might set to work immediately.

The men erected two looms, and did as if they worked very diligently; but in reality they had got nothing on the loom. They boldly demanded the finest silk and gold thread, put it all in their own

pockets, and worked away at the empty loom till quite late at night.

"I should like to know how the two weavers are getting on with my stuff," said the Emperor one day to himself; but he was rather embarrassed when he remembered that a silly fellow, or one unfitted for his office, would not be able to see the stuff. 'Tis true, he thought, as far as regarded himself, there was no risk whatever; but yet he preferred sending some one else, to bring him intelligence of the two weavers, and how they were getting on, before he went himself. Everybody in the whole town had heard of the wonderful property that this stuff was said to possess, and all were curious to know how clever or foolish their neighbours might be found to be.

"I will send my worthy old minister," said the Emperor at last, after much consideration; "he will be able to say how the stuff looks better than any body; for he is a man of understanding, and no one can be found more fitted for his office than he."

So the worthy old minister went to the room where the two swindlers were working away with

all their might and main. "Lord help me!" thought the old man, opening his eyes as wide as possible; "why, I can't see the least thing whatever on the loom!" But he took care not to give voice to his thoughts.

The swindlers begged him most politely to have the goodness to approach nearer to the looms; and then, pointing to the empty frame, asked him if the colours were not of great beauty. And the poor old minister looked, and looked, and could see nothing whatever; for, indeed, there was nothing at all there. "Bless me!" thought he to himself, "am I, then, really a simpleton? Well, I never thought so, and nobody dare know it. I not fit for my office! No, nothing on earth shall make me say that I have not seen the stuff!"

"Well, sir," said one of the swindlers, still working busily, "you don't say if the stuff pleases you or not."

"Oh, beautiful, beautiful! the work is admirable!" said the old minister, looking at the beam through his spectacles. "This pattern, and these colours!—well, well; I shall not fail to tell the Emperor that both are most beautiful!"

“ Well, we shall be delighted if you do so,” said the swindlers, and named the different colours and patterns which were in the stuff. The old minister listened attentively to what they said, in order that he might be able to repeat all to the Emperor.

The swindlers then asked for more money, and silk and gold thread, which they said they wanted to finish the piece they had begun. But they put, as before, all that was given them into their own pocket, and still continued to work with apparent diligence at the empty loom.

Some time after, the Emperor sent another officer to see how the work was getting on, and if the piece of brocade would soon be finished. But he fared like the other : he stared at the loom from every side ; but as there was nothing there, of course he could only see the empty frame.

“ Does the stuff not please you as much as it did the minister ?” asked the men, making the same gestures as before, and talking of splendid colours and of patterns which did not exist.

“ Stupid I certainly am not,” thought the new commissioner ; “ then it must be that I am not fitted for my lucrative office,—that were a good

joke! however, no one dare even suspect such a thing." And so he began praising the stuff that he could not see, and told the two swindlers how pleased he was to behold such beautiful colours, and such charming patterns. "Indeed, your majesty," said he to the Emperor on his return, "the stuff which the weavers are making is extraordinarily fine."

The magnificent brocade that the Emperor was having woven at his own expense was the talk of the whole town.

The Emperor wished to see the costly stuff while it was on the loom; so, accompanied by a chosen train of courtiers, among whom were the two trusty men who had so admired the work, off he went to the two cunning cheats. As soon as they heard of the Emperor's approach they began working with all diligence, although as yet there was not a single thread on the loom.

"Is it not magnificent!" said the two officers of the crown. "Will your Majesty only look? What a charming pattern! what beautiful colours!" said they, pointing to the empty frames, for they thought the others really could see the stuff.

“What’s the meaning of this!” said the Emperor to himself. “I see nothing! This is a terrible matter! Am I a simpleton; or am I not fit to be emperor? Why that were the worst that could happen to me.”—“Oh, charming; the stuff is really charming,” said he then. “I approve it highly!” And he smiled graciously, and examined the empty looms minutely; for he would not for all in the world say that he could not see what his two officers had so much praised. The whole suite strained their eyes to discover something on the looms, but they could see as little as the others. At the same time, in order to please their master the Emperor, they all cried, “Oh, how beautiful!” and counselled his Majesty to have new robes made out of this magnificent stuff for the grand procession which was about to take place. “Excellent! charming!” was echoed from mouth to mouth, and all were extremely pleased. The Emperor was as satisfied as his courtiers, and conferred on each of the cheats an Order, which they were to wear in their button-hole, and gave them the title of “Knights of the Most Honourable Order of the Loom.”

The night preceding the day on which the procession was to take place the two men stayed up all night, and had sixteen candles burning; so that every body might see how they worked to get the Emperor's new dress ready in proper time. They pretended to unroll the stuff from the loom; they cut in the air with their scissors, and sewed with needles that had no thread. "Now then," said they, "the Emperor's new suit is ready at last."

The Emperor then made his appearance in the chamber of his two Knights of the Most Honourable Order of the Loom, accompanied by his chamberlains of the highest rank; and the two cheats held up their arms as though they had something in their hands, and said, "Here are your Majesty's knee-breeches; here is the coat, and here the mantle. The whole suit is as light as a cobweb; and when one is dressed one would almost fancy one had nothing on: but that is just the beauty of this stuff!"

"Of course!" said all the courtiers, although not a single one of them could see anything of the clothes.

"Will your Imperial Majesty most graciously



be pleased to undress? we will then try on the new things before the glass."

The Emperor allowed himself to be undressed, and then the two cheats did exactly as if each one helped him on with an article of dress, while his Majesty turned himself round on all sides before the mirror.

"How well the dress becomes your Majesty! and how well all fits! What a pattern! What colours! This is indeed a dress worthy of a king!"

"The canopy which is to be borne above your Majesty in the procession is in readiness without," announced the chief master of the ceremonies.

"I am quite ready," replied the Emperor. "Do my new things sit well?" asked he, turning round once more before the looking-glass, in order that it might appear that he examined the dress very minutely.

The pages who were to carry the Emperor's train felt about on the ground as if to lift up the end of the mantle, and did exactly as if they were carrying something; for they also did not wish to betray simplicity or unfitness for their post.

And so the Emperor walked on, under the high

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES.

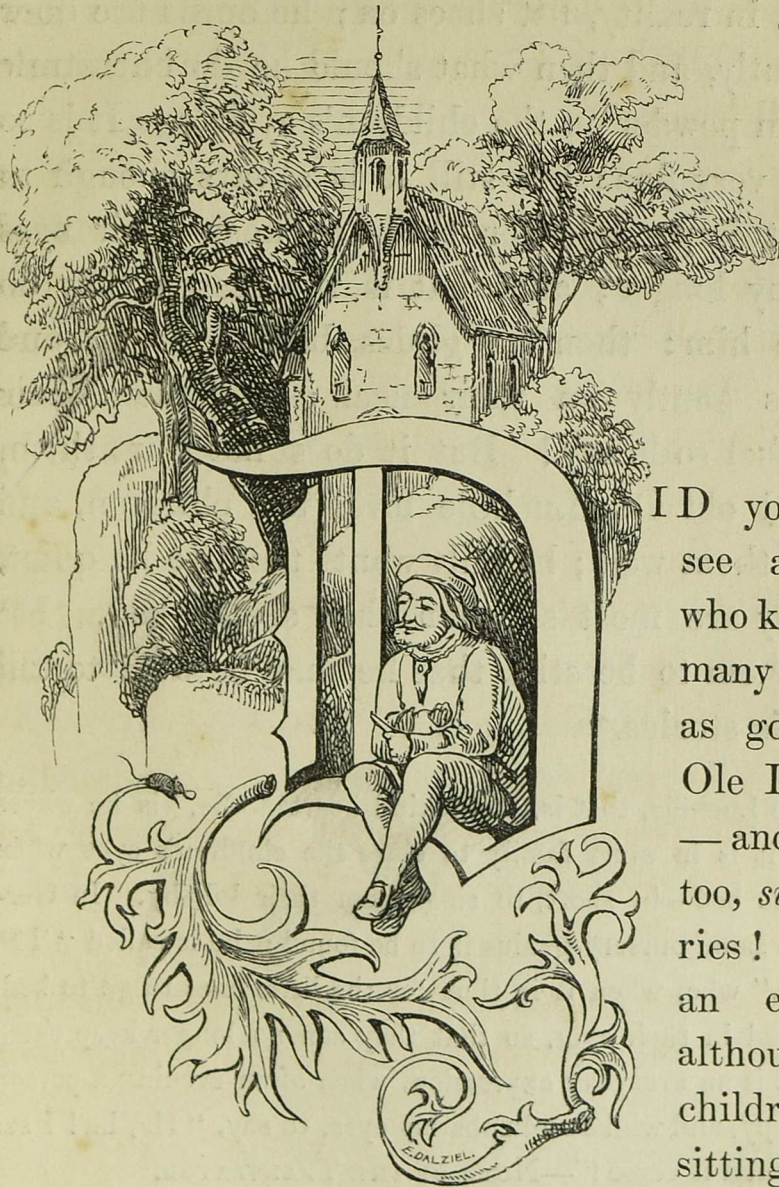
canopy, through the streets of the metropolis, and all the people in the streets and at the windows cried out, "Oh, how beautiful the Emperor's new dress is! What a splendid train, and the mantle how well it sits!"

In short, there was nobody but wished to cheat himself into the belief that he saw the highly valued clothes, for otherwise he would have had to acknowledge himself either a simpleton or an awkward fellow. As yet none of the Emperor's new dresses had met with such approval as the suit made by the two weavers.

"But the Emperor has nothing on!" said a little child. "Ah, hear the voice of innocence!" said the father, and one person whispered to the other what the child had said.

"But he really has nothing on!" exclaimed at last all the people. This vexed the Emperor, for he felt that they were right, but he thought,—
"However, I must bear the thing to the end!"
And the pages placed themselves further from him, as if they were carrying a train which did not even exist.

OLE LUCKÖIE.



WID you ever see anybody who knows so many stories as good old Ole Lucköie — and then, too, *such* stories! Yes, of an evening, although the children be sitting never

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

* Ole Lucköie, that is, "old kind-hearted Ole," is he whose business it is in every family to close the children's eyes when they go to bed—in short, to sing them their lullaby. In Germany the same nursery-genius is to be found: he is called "The Sandman," who, when it is time for the little ones to go to bed, strews sand in their eyes, so that they can no longer keep them open. It is an everyday expression, when of an evening a person looks sleepy, and winks and rubs his eyes, to say, "Ha, ha! I see the Sandman is come!"—NOTE OF THE TRANSLATOR.

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

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

MONDAY.

“ Now, then, listen to me !” said the kind old man, when he had got Hjalmar to bed. “ Now I’ll shew you a pretty sight !” and suddenly all the flowers in the flower-pots were changed into great trees, that spread their long branches up to the

very ceiling, and along the walls, so that the whole room looked like the prettiest bower; and all the boughs were full of flowers, and every flower was more beautiful than a rose, and smelt delightfully. If one chose to eat it, it tasted sweeter than sugar-plums. The fruits shone like gold; and plum-cakes were then almost bursting with raisins: there was nothing could be compared to it! But at the same moment a terrible lamentation was heard in the table-drawer, where Hjalmar's school-books were lying.

"What's that?" said Ole, going to the drawer and pulling it out. There lay the slate, on which the figures were pushing and knocking each other; for a wrong number had got into the sum, so that the whole was on the point of breaking down: the pencil jumped and hopped about, chained as he was to the slate by a piece of string, just like a little dog: he wanted to help the sum, but was not able. And a little further lay Hjalmar's copy-book: here, too, was a moaning and lamentation within. On every leaf, from top to bottom, were capital letters, each with a small one beside it, and so all the way down. That was the copy; and by

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these some other letters were standing, that fancied they looked like them. Hjalmar had written these ; but there they lay, pretty much as if they had tumbled over the pencil-line on which they were meant to stand.

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

“ Oh ! we should be glad enough to do so,” said Hjalmar’s letters, “ but we can’t ; we are such poor wretched creatures ! ”

“ Then you must have some pepper,” said Ole.

“ Oh, no ! ” they all cried, and stood so upright that it was a pleasure to look at them.

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

TUESDAY.

As soon as Hjalmar was in bed, Ole touched all the furniture in the room with his magic wand,

and it immediately began to speak ; and each thing spoke of itself.

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

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

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

That was an excursion! Sometimes the woods were thick and gloomy; now they were like the most pleasing gardens, full of flowers and sunshine, and there were two large castles of marble and crystal. On the balconies Princesses were standing, all of whom were quite little girls, acquaintances of Hjalmar, with whom he had often played. They stretched out their hands, each one holding the nicest little sucking-pig imaginable, made of sugar; and Hjalmar took hold of one end as he sailed by, and a Princess held the other; so that each got a piece,—she the smaller, and he the larger one. Before each castle little Princes were standing sentry; they shouldered arms with their golden swords, and sent down showers of raisins and games of soldiers. They were the right sort

of Princes ! Hjalmar now sailed through a wood, now through large halls, or the middle of a town ; he passed, too, through the town where his nurse lived, she who had carried him about when he was quite a little boy, and had loved him so dearly. She nodded and beckoned to him, and sang the pretty verse which she had composed herself and had sent to Hjalmar :

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

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

WEDNESDAY.

Well, to be sure ! How the rain is pouring down without ! Hjalmar could hear it even in his

sleep ; and when Ole opened the window the water reached to the very sill ; it was quite a lake : but the most magnificent ship lay just before the house.

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

And all at once there stood Hjalmar in his Sunday clothes on the deck of the splendid ship ; and it grew beautiful weather immediately, and they sailed through the streets, and round about by the church, and the whole place was now a large wild sea. They sailed on so long till at last no land was to be seen, and they perceived a flight of storks coming from Hjalmar’s home, and going to warmer climes. They always flew one behind the other, and they had already flown so very, very far ! One of them was so tired, that his wings could scarcely carry him further ; he was the last of all, and he soon remained a great way behind. At last, with outspread wings, he sank lower and lower, beat the air a few times with his pinions, but in vain. His wings touched the rigging of the ship,

he slipped down from the sail, and, plump!—there he stood on the deck!

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

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

And the stork told them of sultry Africa, of the pyramids, and of the ostrich that races over the desert like a wild horse. But the ducks did not understand him, and again nodded their heads, and said one to another, “Shall we not agree that he is a simpleton?”

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

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

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

“Quack! quack! quack!” giggled all the

ducks; but the stork did as if he had not heard them.

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

But Hjalmar went to the hen-coop, and called the stork, who hopped out to him on the deck. He had now rested, and it seemed as if he nodded to Hjalmar to thank him; then he spread out his wings and flew away to warm lands; but the fowls clucked, the ducks gabbled, and the turkey grew as red as fire.

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

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THURSDAY.

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

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

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

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

“If you will have the goodness to take a seat

in your mamma's thimble," said the little mouse, "I will do myself the honour to draw you."

"Oh, your ladyship surely won't take the trouble yourself!" said Hjalmar, and on they drove to the wedding.

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

"Does it not smell deliciously here?" said the mouse that drew him along; "the whole corridor has been rubbed with bacon-rind—there can be nothing nicer!"

Now they came into the hall where was the bridal pair. On the right stood the lady mice, who whispered as if they were amusing themselves at the others' expense; and on the left stood the gentlemen mice, stroking their whiskers with their paws; and in the middle of the room one beheld the marriage pair, standing in a hollow cheese; and they kissed each other before every body, for they were betrothed and were just going to be married. More and more company came; the mice almost

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trampled each other to death, and the two whose wedding was to be celebrated stationed themselves right in the door-way, so that there was no going in or out. The whole room, like the corridor, had been rubbed with bacon-rind: this was all the refreshment they got; but as dessert, a pea was shewn, in which a little mouse of the family had bitten the names of the wedding pair; that is to say, the initials only. It was beautiful beyond all description.

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

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

FRIDAY.

“It is incredible what a quantity of old people are always wanting to have me,” said Ole Lucköie; “particularly those who have done something wicked! ‘Good, dear Ole Lucköie,’ say they to me, ‘we cannot close our eyes; and we lie the whole night, and see all our misdeeds, that sit like

little ugly goblins at the foot of the bed, and sprinkle us with hot water. Do come and drive them away, that we may get a little sound sleep!’ And then they heave deep sighs. ‘We will willingly pay you:—good night, Ole; the money lies on the window-sill!’ But I don’t do it for money,” said the old man.

“What shall we undertake to-night?” said Hjalmar.

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

“Yes, I know,” said Hjalmar; “every time the doll wants new clothes, my sister says it is her birthday, or her wedding. That has happened a hundred times already for certain.”

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

And Hjalmar looked on the table. There stood

the little pasteboard baby-house, with lights in the windows, and before the door were all the leaden soldiers presenting arms; the wedding pair were sitting on the floor, leaning thoughtfully against the leg of the table. Then Ole Lucköie put on grand-mamma's black gown, and married them. When the wedding was over, all the furniture in the room began singing the following song, which the lead-pencil had written for the occasion :

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“But it is cold here, it freezes!”

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

tears ran down the Hen's cheeks. "I have travelled too! I have travelled in a hamper more than twelve miles. There is no such great pleasure in travelling that I can see!"

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

And so the matter was settled.

SATURDAY.

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

"We have no time this evening," said Ole, spreading out his handsomest umbrella over him. "Look at these Chinese!" And the large umbrella looked like a great china plate with blue trees and pointed bridges, full of little Chinese standing and nodding their heads.

"We must get the whole in order for to-morrow," said Ole Lucköie; "to-morrow is a holyday, it is Sunday. I must go up to the church-tower, to see

if all the little church-sprites have polished the bells, that they may sound melodiously. I must away into the fields, to see if the winds have swept the dust from the grass and the leaves; I must take down all the stars and polish them. I take them all in my apron; but they must first be numbered, and the holes where they belong must be numbered too, so that each may get his right place again, otherwise they would not sit tight; and we should have a quantity of falling stars if one after the other were to tumble down."

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Ole Lucköie," said an old Portrait, that hung on the wall near which Hjalmar slept. "I am Hjalmar's great-grandfather. I am very much obliged to you for telling the boy pretty stories, but you must not set his ideas in confusion. Stars cannot be taken down and polished. Stars are globes like our world, and that is the very best thing about them."

"Many thanks, old great-grandfather!" said Ole. "Very many thanks! You are, it is true, an old great-grandfather, but I am older than you. I am an old heathen; the Greeks and Romans named me the God of Dreams. I have been in

the houses of the great, and still go there. I know how to deal with great and little! Now, then, do you tell a story!" And old Ole went away and took his umbrella with him.

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

And here Hjalmar awoke.

SUNDAY.

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

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

"One can have too much of a good thing," said Ole. "I will rather shew you something. I will shew you my brother; but he never comes but once; and when he does come to any body he takes him on his horse, and tells him stories. He knows

only two; the one is indescribably beautiful, such as no one in the world can imagine; and the other is so horrible and frightful—I cannot say how dreadful!” And he lifted little Hjalmar up to the window, and said: “There, look at my brother, the other Ole; he is, it is true, sometimes called Death! You see, he does not look half so horrid as he is made in picture-books, where he is all bones. All that is silver embroidery that he has on his dress! it is the richest hussar uniform! a cloak of black velvet flies behind him over his horse: look! how he gallops!”

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

“Oh, good ones,” said they all. “Yes, but let me look myself,” said he; and then they were obliged to shew him the book: and all those who had “VERY GOOD,” or “PARTICULARLY GOOD,” came before him on horseback, and heard the beautiful story; but those who had “PRETTY WELL,” or “BAD,” in their books, were obliged to get behind and hear

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the dreadful one. They trembled and cried, and wanted to jump down from the horse, but they could not, for they and the horse had grown together.

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

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

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

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



