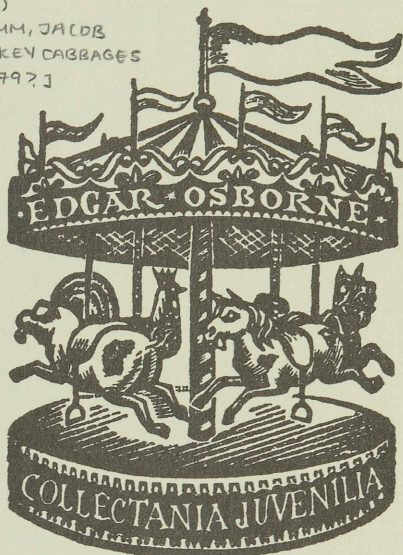


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THE DONKEY CABBAGES.

THE
DONKEY CABBAGES

AND OTHER TALES

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GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS

LONDON: BROADWAY, LUDGATE HILL

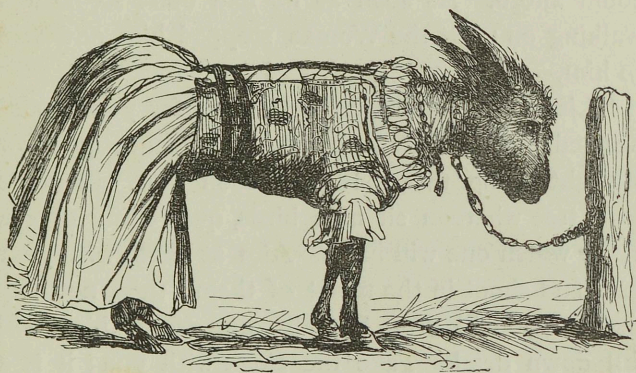
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THE DONKEY CABBAGES.

ONCE upon a time there was a young Sportsman who was out in search of game. He had an honest and merry heart, and whistled as he went along; and by-and-by he met an ugly old Woman, who spoke to him and said, "Good day, my good huntsman; you are merry and well fed, but I am suffering from hunger and thirst; give me an alms, I pray you,"

The Sportsman pitied the poor woman, and, putting his hand in his pocket, gave her what he could afford. As soon as he had done so, he was walking on ; but the Woman stopped him, and said to him,—

“Listen to what I have to say ; for your good-heartedness I will make you a present ; go now straight along this road, and soon you will come to a tree whereon sit nine birds, quarrelling over a cloak which one will have. Aim at them with your gun, and shoot in the midst of them ; then, not only the mantle will drop, but also one of the birds will fall down dead. Take the cloak with you ; it is a wishing-cloak, which if you put on your shoulders, you have only to wish yourself where you would be, and at the moment you will be there. Take out also the heart of the dead bird, and swallow it whole, and then every morning when you arise you will find a gold piece under your pillow.”

The Huntsman thanked the wise woman, and thought to himself, “These indeed are good gifts, if they turn out as is promised.”

He had not gone a hundred yards from the spot before he heard a great chirping and rustling among the trees, and, looking up, he saw on one of them a bevy of birds, who were plucking at a cloth with their bills and claws, tearing it among them, for each one wanted it for itself.

"Now, this is wonderful!" cried the Sportsman; "it is come to pass just as the old woman promised!" and, lifting his gun to his shoulder, he shot at the birds, who all flew away but one, which fell dead with the cloak over which they had been disputing. Then the Huntsman did as the old Wife had said; he cut out the heart of the bird and swallowed it whole, but the cloak he took home with him.

The next morning when he awoke he remembered the promise, and, lifting his pillow up, he found under it a bright, shining piece of gold. The morrow morning it was the same, and so it went on: every day he got up he found another piece. Soon he collected a heap of gold, and thought, "What use is all this gold to me if I stay at home? I will go away and look about the world."

So he took leave of his parents, and, hanging around him his belt and pouch, he set out on his travels.

One day it chanced that he passed through a thick forest, and as he came to the end of it he saw in the distance before him a magnificent castle. At one window of it stood an old Woman, with a wonderfully beautiful Maiden by her side looking out. But this old lady was a Witch, and said to her daughter, "Here comes one out of the forest who has a wonderful treasure in his body, which we must have; for,

my beloved daughter, it is more fit for us than for him: it is a bird's heart, and whoever possesses it finds a gold piece every morning under his pillow." She further told her daughter how it was to be procured, and what she was to do; and threatened her, if she did not obey, to visit her with some misfortune.

As soon as the Huntsman approached he perceived the Maiden, and said to himself, "I am weary enough with travelling about, so I will now rest, and turn into this fine castle, for I have money enough." But the real reason was the beautiful face which he saw at the windows.

He entered the house, and was hospitably received and courteously entertained; and soon it came to pass that he was so in love with the daughter of the Witch that he could think of nothing else, and followed her with his eyes everywhere, willing to do all she wished.

Then the old Woman said, "Now we must get the bird's heart, for he will not miss it when it is gone!"

She concocted, therefore, a drink; and when it was ready, she put it into a cup and gave it to her daughter, who had to hand it to the Huntsman, and say, "Now, dearest, drink to me!" He took the cup, and as soon as he swallowed the draught the heart fell out of his mouth. The maiden carried it

secretly away, and then swallowed it, for the old Woman wanted it herself.

Ever after the Huntsman no longer found gold pieces under his pillow, for they lay now beneath the Maiden's head, and the old Witch fetched them every morning. But he never troubled himself about the matter, and was content so long as he passed his time with the Maiden.

Soon the old Witch began to say to her daughter, "We have the bird's heart, but not the cloak, which we ought also to have."

This the Maiden would fain have left him, since he had lost his riches; but the old mother flew into a passion and said, "This cloak is a wonderful thing, and such as is seldom found in the world, and I must and will have it!"

With these words she beat her daughter, and vowed, if she did not obey her, to do her some injury. The daughter, therefore, at the bidding of her mother, placed herself at the window one day, and looked sadly at the far distance.

"Why stand you so sorrowfully there?" asked the Huntsman.

"Ah, my treasure!" she replied, "over there lies the granite mountain, where grow precious stones, and when I think about them I become quite sad, for I long so for them; but who can get them? only the birds which fly to and fro; no man ever can."

"Is that all you have to complain of?" said the Huntsman; "then I will soon remove that grief from your heart."

Thereupon he put her under his cloak, and wished himself over the granite mountain; and in a moment they were set down in the place. There glittered the precious stones on all sides, so that it was a pleasure to see them; and they collected the most costly ones together.

But now the Witch had caused by her arts a great drowsiness to come over the poor Huntsman, and he said to the Maiden, "We will sit down and rest awhile, for I am so tired I cannot keep upon my feet."

So they sat down, and he laid his head in her lap, and went to sleep; and while he slept the Maiden took the cloak from his shoulder and threw it over her own back, and then, gathering up the precious stones, she wished herself home again.

By-and-by the Huntsman awoke, and found that his mistress had deceived him, and left him alone on the wild mountain.

"Alas!" he cried, "what faithlessness there is in the world!" and he remained lost in care and anxiety, ignorant what to do.

The mountain belonged to some rough and mighty Giants, who dwelt upon it and earned their living there; and in a short time the Huntsman perceived

three of them striding towards him. He laid himself down and feigned to be in a deep sleep, and presently the three Giants came striding along, and the first kicked him with his foot and exclaimed, "What earthworm is this lying here?"

"Tread him to death!" said the second Giant.

But the third said, contemptuously, "That is not worth while; let him alone, he cannot remain here, and if he climbs higher up the hill the clouds will take him and carry him away."

After this conversation they went away; but the Huntsman had noted all they said, and as soon as they were gone he got up and climbed to the top of the mountain. After he had sat there a little while a cloud came sweeping by, which caught him up and carried him floating through the air. Then it began to sink down over a large walled-in vegetable garden, where, among the cabbages and other herbs, he fell softly to the ground.

Then the Huntsman looked round, and said, "If I had only something to eat, for with the distance I have travelled I am very hungry; but here I cannot see a single apple, berry, or fruit of any kind; everywhere nothing but cabbages."

At length he thought that out of necessity he would eat a salad, which, although it had not a delicate flavour, would yet refresh him. Thereupon he looked out for a good head of cabbage, and ate

thereof; but he had scarcely tasted a couple of bites before he felt a wondrous change come over him, and found himself quite transformed. From his body grew four legs, a thick head, and two long ears; and he perceived with anguish that he was changed into a donkey! Still, however, his appetite was not appeased, and because the cabbage tasted well now to his animal appetite, he ate with greater pleasure. At last he tasted a different kind, and immediately he felt another change come over him, and his human form returned.

The Huntsman now lay down and slept with weariness; and when he awoke in the morning he broke off a head of the bad and one of the good cabbages, and thought to himself, "These shall help me to my own again and punish the faithless one."

With these words he concealed the cabbages about him, and, clambering over the wall, he set out to search for the castle of his love. He luckily discovered it when he had journeyed only a couple of days, and, quickly browning his face, so that his own mother would not have recognized him, he went into the castle and begged a night's lodging.

"I am so tired," he said, "I can go no further."

The Witch asked him who he was, and what was his business; and he told her he was one of the King's messengers, and had been sent to seek the most delicate cabbage which grew upon the earth,

"I have been successful," said he, "and have the herb with me; but the heat of the sun is so strong that the tender leaves threaten to wither, and I know not if I can carry it further."

As soon as the old Woman heard of this precious cabbage, she became very agreeable, and begged the Huntsman to allow her to taste the vegetable.

"Why not?" he replied; "I have got two cabbages with me, and will give you one;" and, opening his sack, he handed her the bad herb.

The Witch, suspecting nothing wrong, took the cabbage into the kitchen to cook it, for her mouth watered for the unknown delicacy. As soon as it was ready she could not wait until it was put on the table, but snatched a part of it, and put it into her mouth. Scarcely had she swallowed it when she lost her human form, and ran like a donkey into the stable-yard. Presently the servant went into the kitchen and saw the cabbage ready dressed, which she took up to carry in-doors; but, according to old custom, she tasted it on the way to the parlour. Immediately the charm began to work, and she became a donkey, and ran away to the other; while the dish fell on the ground, and its contents were spilled.

The messenger meanwhile sat with the Maiden and when the cabbage did not come she took a fancy to have some also, and wondered where it was.

The Huntsman thought, "The cabbage has begun to work;" and said to the Maiden, "I will go into the kitchen and see what has happened."

As soon as he went down he saw the two donkeys running about the court, and the cabbage lying on the floor.

"All right!" cried he; "two have received their share!" and, picking up the rest of the cabbage, he laid it on a dish and took it to the Maiden.

"I have brought you this delicate dish myself," said he, "that you may not have to wait longer." Thereupon she ate some of it, and soon, like the rest, lost her human form, and ran as a donkey round the court.

Afterwards, when the Huntsman had washed his face, so that the changed ones might recognize him, he went down into the court, and said to the three, "Now you shall be rewarded for your inconstancy!"

He bound them all three together with a rope, and drove them away to a mill. There he knocked at the window, and the Miller, putting his head out, asked him what his wishes were.

"I have three unruly animals here," he said, "whom I cannot keep any longer. Will you take them of me, and give them food and work, and treat them as I will tell you; because, if so, you shall have what you wish for so doing?"

“Why not?” replied the Miller; “but how shall I treat them?”

The Huntsman told him that the old donkey, which was the Witch, must be given daily three beatings and one meal only; that the youngest, which was the Servant, should receive one beating and three meals; but the other, which was the Maiden, no blows, but three meals; for he could not make up his mind to cause her pain. Thereupon the Huntsman returned to the castle, in which he found all that he wanted.

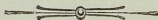
After three days came the Miller, and told him he wished to mention that the donkey for whom he had ordered only one meal and three beatings was dead. “The two others,” he said further, “are certainly not dead, for they eat their three meals a day, but they are so weak and ill they cannot last very long.”

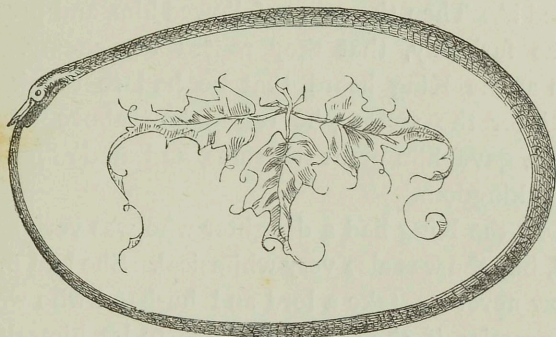
At this relation the Huntsman pitied the poor beasts, and told the Miller to drive them up again. As soon as they came he gave them a piece of the good cabbage to eat, and in a few minutes their human form returned.

Then the beautiful Maiden fell on her knees before him, and said, “Oh, my dear Huntsman, pardon me for the wrong I did you, for it was not of my own free will, but because my mother compelled me, that I acted so; then and now I love you with

my whole heart. Your wishing-cloak hangs in yon closet, and the heart of the bird I will bring to you again."

When she had thus spoken the Huntsman pardoned her freely, and begged her to keep the heart, for he meant to make her his bride. Soon afterwards the marriage was performed, and they lived happily together to the end of their lives.





THE THREE SNAKE-LEAVES.

THERE was once a poor man who was unable to feed his only son any longer ; so the son said, "My dear father, everything goes badly with you, and I am a burden to you ; I would rather go away and try to earn my own bread." So the father gave him his blessing, and took leave of him with great grief. At that time the King of a powerful empire was at war, and the youth taking service under him went with him to the field. When he came in sight of the enemy, battle was given and he was in great peril, and the arrows flew so fast that his comrades fell around him on all sides. And when the captain was killed the rest would have taken to flight ; but

the youth, stepping forward, spoke to them courageously, exclaiming, "We will not let our fatherland be ruined!" Then the others followed him, and pressed on so furiously, that they routed the enemy. As soon as the King heard that he had to thank the youth for the victory, he raised him above all the others, gave him great treasures, and made him first in his kingdom.

Now the King had a daughter who was very beautiful, but she was also very whimsical. She had made a vow never to take a lord and husband who would not promise, if she should die first, to let himself be buried alive with her. "Does he love me with all his heart?" said she: "what use to him, then, can his life be afterwards?" At the same time she was prepared to do the same thing, and if her husband should die first to descend with him to the grave. This vow had hitherto frightened away all suitors, but the youth was so taken with her beauty that he waited for nothing, but immediately asked her in marriage of her father.

"Do you know," said the King, "what you must promise?"

"I must go with her into the grave," he replied, "if I survive her; but my love is so great that I mind not the danger." Then the King consented, and the wedding was celebrated with great splendour.

For a long time they lived happily and contented

with one another, until it happened that the young Queen fell grievously sick, so that no physician could cure her. When she died the young Prince remembered his forced promise, and shuddered at the thought of laying himself alive in the grave; but there was no escape, for the King had set watchers at all the doors, and it was not possible to avoid his fate. When the day came that the body should be laid in the royal vault, he was led away with it, and the door closed and locked behind him. Near the coffin stood a table, having upon it four lights, four loaves of bread, and four bottles of wine; as soon as this supply came to an end he must die of hunger. Full of bitterness and sorrow, he sat down eating each day but a little morsel of bread, and taking but one draught of wine: every day he saw death approaching nearer and nearer. Whilst he thus sat gazing before him he saw a snake creeping out of the corner of the vault, which approached the dead body. Thinking that it came to feed on the body, he drew his sword, and exclaiming, "So long as I live you shall not touch her!" he cut it in three pieces. After a while another snake crawled out of the corner; but when it saw the other lying dead it went back, and returned soon with three green leaves in its mouth. Then it took the three pieces of the snake, and, laying them together so as to join, it put one leaf on each wound. As soon as the divided

parts were joined the snake moved and was alive again, and both snakes hastened away together. The leaves remained lying on the ground, and the unfortunate man, who had seen all, bethought himself whether the miraculous power of the leaves, which had restored a snake to life, might not help him. So he picked up the leaves, and laid one on the mouth of the corpse of his wife, and the other two on her eyes ; and he had scarcely done so when the blood circulated again in the veins, and mounting into the pale countenance, flushed it with colour. Then she drew her breath, opened her eyes, and said, "Ah, where am I?"

"You are with me, dear wife," he replied, and told her how everything had happened, and how he had brought her to life. Then he helped her to some wine and bread ; and, when her strength had returned, she raised herself up, and they went to the door, and knocked and shouted so loudly, that the watchers heard them and told the King. The King came down himself and opened the door, and there found them both alive and well, and he rejoiced with them that their trouble had passed away. But the young Prince took away the three snake-leaves, and gave them to his servant, saying, "Preserve them carefully for me, and carry them with you at all times. Who knows in what necessity they may not help us?"

A change, however, had come over the wife after

she was restored to life, and it was as if all love for her husband had passed out of her heart. And when, some little time after, he wished to make a voyage over the sea to his old father, and they had gone on board the ship, she forgot the great love and fidelity which he had shown, and through which he had saved her life, and disclosed a wicked plan to the Captain. When the young Prince lay asleep, she called up the Captain, and, taking the sleeper by the head, while he carried the feet, they threw the Prince into the sea. And as soon as the evil deed was done she said to the Captain, "Now let us return home, and say he died on the voyage. I will so praise and commend you to my father that he shall give you to me in marriage, and you shall sit as his heir."

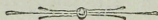
But the faithful servant, who had seen all unremarked, let loose a little boat from the ship, and getting in it himself, rowed after his master, and let the betrayers sail away. He fished the dead body up again, and, by the help of the three snake-leaves, which he carried with him, he brought it happily to life again. Then they both rowed away with all their strength day and night, and their little boat glided on so fast that they arrived before the others at the old King's palace. He marvelled to see them return alone, and asked what had happened. When he heard of the wickedness of his daughter, he said, "I can scarcely believe that she has done such evil; but the

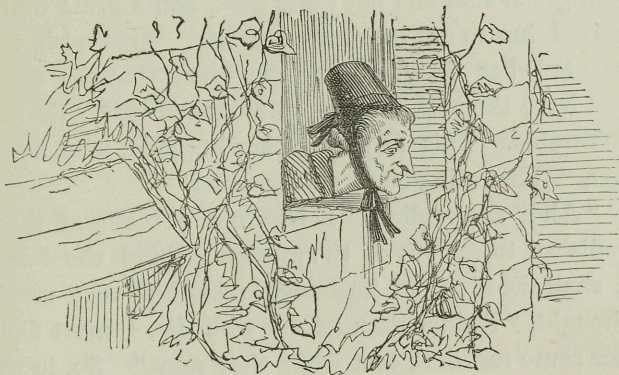
truth will soon come to light." Then he bade them both go into a secret chamber, and keep themselves private from everybody. Soon afterwards the great vessel came sailing up, and the godless wife appeared before her father with a sorrowful countenance.

"Why are you returned alone?" he asked. "Where is your husband?"

"Alas! dear father," she replied, "I return home with great grief, for my husband was suddenly taken ill during the voyage and died; and if the good Captain had not given me his assistance it would have gone terribly with me; he was present at my husband's death, and can tell you all about it."

The King said, "I will bring the dead to life," and, opening the chamber, he bade the Prince and his servant both to come forth. As soon as the wife perceived her husband she was struck as if by lightning, and, falling on her knees, she begged his pardon. But the King answered, "For you there is no pardon. He was ready to die with you, and gave you life again; but you have conspired against him in his sleep, and shall receive your due reward." Then she was put, with her companion in crime, on board a ship which was pierced with holes, and drawn out into the sea; and they soon sank beneath the waves.





RAPUNZEL.

ONCE upon a time there lived a man and his wife, who much wished to have a child, but for a long time in vain. These people had a little window in the back part of their house, out of which one could see into a beautiful garden which was full of fine flowers and vegetables ; but it was surrounded by a high wall, and no one dared to go in, because it belonged to a Witch, who possessed great power, and who was feared by the whole world. One day the

woman stood at this window looking into the garden, and there she saw a bed which was filled with the most beautiful radishes, and which seemed so fresh and green that she felt quite glad, and a great desire seized her to eat of these radishes. This wish tormented her daily, and as she knew that she could not have them she fell ill, and looked very pale and miserable. This frightened her husband, who asked her, "What ails you, my dear wife?"

"Ah!" she replied, "if I cannot get any of those radishes to eat out of the garden behind the house I shall die!" The husband, loving her very much, thought, "Rather than let my wife die, I must fetch her some radishes, cost what they may." So, in the gloom of the evening, he climbed the wall of the Witch's garden, and, snatching a handful of radishes in great haste, brought them to his wife, who made herself a salad with them, which she relished extremely. However, they were so nice and so well-flavoured, that the next day after she felt the same desire for the third time, and could not get any rest, so that her husband was obliged to promise her some more. So, in the evening, he made himself ready, and began clambering up the wall; but, oh! how terribly frightened he was, for there he saw the old Witch standing before him. "How dare you,"—she began, looking at him with a frightful scowl,—"how dare you climb over into my garden to take away my

radishes like a thief? Evil shall happen to you for this."

"Ah!" replied he, "let pardon be granted before justice; I have only done this from a great necessity; my wife saw your radishes from her window, and took such a fancy to them that she would have died if she had not eaten of them."

Then the Witch ran after him in a passion, saying, "If she behave as you say, I will let you take away all the radishes you please, but I make one condition; you must give me the child which your wife will bring into the world. All shall go well with it, and I will care for it like a mother." In his anxiety the man consented, and when the child was born the Witch appeared at the same time, gave the child the name "Rapunzel," and took it away with her.

Rapunzel grew to be the most beautiful child under the sun, and when she was twelve years old the Witch shut her up in a tower, which stood in a forest, and had neither stairs nor door, and only one little window just at the top. When the Witch wished to enter, she stood beneath, and called out,—

"Rapunzel! Rapunzel!
Let down your hair."

For Rapunzel had long and beautiful hair, as fine as spun gold; and as soon as she heard the Witch's voice she unbound her tresses, opened the window,

and then the hair fell down twenty ells, and the Witch mounted up by it.

After a couple of years had passed away it happened that the King's son was riding through the wood, and came by the tower. There he heard a song so beautiful that he stood still and listened. It was Rapunzel, who, to pass the time of her loneliness away, was exercising her sweet voice. The King's son wished to ascend to her, and looked for a door in the tower, but he could not find one. So he rode home, but the song had touched his heart so much that he went every day to the forest and listened to it; and as he thus stood one day behind a tree, he saw the Witch come up and heard her call out,—

“Rapunzel ! Rapunzel !
Let down your hair.”

Then Rapunzel let down her tresses, and the Witch mounted up.

“Is that the ladder on which one must climb ? Then I will try my luck too,” said the Prince ; and the following day, as he felt quite lonely, he went to the tower, and said,—

“Rapunzel ! Rapunzel !
Let down your hair.”

Then the tresses fell down, and he climbed up. Rapunzel was much frightened at first when a man came in, for she had never seen one before ; but the

King's son talked in a loving way to her, and told how his heart had been so moved by her singing that he had no peace until he had seen her himself.

So Rapunzel lost her terror, and when he asked her if she would have him for a husband, and she saw that he was young and handsome, she thought, "Any one may have me rather than the old woman:" so, saying "Yes," she put her hand within his: "I will willingly go with you, but I know not how I am to descend. When you come, bring with you a skein of silk each time, out of which I will weave a ladder, and when it is ready I will come down by it, and you must take me upon your horse."

Then they agreed that they should never meet till the evening, as the Witch came in the daytime. The old woman remarked nothing about it, until one day Rapunzel innocently said, "Tell me, mother, how it happens you find it more difficult to come up to me than the young King's son, who is with me in a moment!"

"Oh, you wicked child!" exclaimed the Witch; "what do I hear? I thought I had separated you from all the world, and yet you have deceived me." And, seizing Rapunzel's beautiful hair in a fury, she gave her a couple of blows with her left hand, and, taking a pair of scissors in her right, snip, snap, she cut off all her beautiful tresses, and they fell upon the ground. Then she was so hard-hearted that she

took the poor maiden into a great desert, and left her to die in great misery and grief.

But the same day when the old Witch had carried Rapunzel off, in the evening she made the tresses fast above to the window-latch, and when the King's son came, and called out,—

“Rapunzel ! Rapunzel !
Let down your hair,”

she let them down. The Prince mounted ; but when he got to the top he found, not his dear Rapunzel, but the Witch, who looked at him with furious and wicked eyes.

“Aha !” she exclaimed, scornfully, “you would fetch your dear wife ; but the beautiful bird sits no longer in her nest, singing ; the cat has taken her away, and will now scratch out your eyes. To you Rapunzel is lost ; you will never see her again.”

The Prince lost his senses with grief at these words, and sprang out of the window of the tower in his bewilderment. His life he escaped with, but the thorns into which he fell put out his eyes. So he wandered blind, in the forest, eating nothing but roots and berries, and doing nothing but weep and lament for the loss of his dear wife.

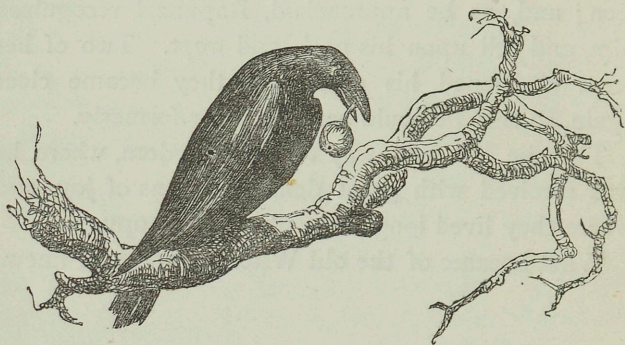
He wandered about thus, in great misery, for some few years, and at last arrived at the desert where Rapunzel, with her twins, a boy and a girl which had

been born, lived in great sorrow. Hearing a voice which he thought he knew he followed in its direction; and, as he approached, Rapunzel recognized him, and fell upon his neck and wept. Two of her tears moistened his eyes, and they became clear again, so that he could see as well as formerly.

Then he led her away to his kingdom, where he was received with great demonstrations of joy, and where they lived long, contented and happy.

What became of the old Witch no one ever knew.





THE WHITE SNAKE.

A LONG while ago there lived a King whose wisdom was world-renowned. Nothing remained unknown to him, and it seemed as if the tidings of the most hidden things were borne to him through the air. But he had one strange custom: every noontime, when the table was quite cleared, and no one was present, his trusty servant had to bring him a dish, which was covered up, and the servant himself did not know what lay in it, and no man knew, for the King never uncovered it nor ate thereof until he was quite alone.

This went on for a long time, until one day such a violent curiosity seized the servant, who as usual

carried the dish, that he could not resist the temptation, and took the dish into his chamber. As soon as he had carefully locked the door, he raised the cover, and there lay before him a White Snake. At the sight he could not restrain the desire to taste it, so he cut a piece off and put it in his mouth. But scarcely had his tongue touched it, when he heard before his window a curious whispering of low voices. He went and listened, and found out that it was the Sparrows who were conversing with one another, and relating what each had seen in field or wood. The morsel of the Snake had given him the power to understand the speech of animals.

Now it happened just on this day that the Queen lost her finest ring, and suspicion fell on this faithful servant, who had the care of all her jewels, that he had stolen it. The King ordered him to appear before him, and threatened in angry words that he should be taken up and tried if he did not know before the morrow whom to name as the guilty person. He protested his innocence in vain, and was sent away without any mitigation of the sentence.

In his anxiety and trouble he went away into the courtyard, thinking how he might help himself. There, on a running stream of water, the Ducks were congregated familiarly together, and smoothing themselves down with their beaks while they held a confidential conversation.

The servant stood still and listened to them as they narrated to each other whereabouts they had waddled, and what nice food they had found ; and one said in a vexed tone, "Something very hard is in my stomach, for in my haste I swallowed a ring which lay under the Queen's window."

Then the servant caught the speaker up by her neck, and carried her to the cook, saying, "Just kill this fowl, it is finely fat."

"Yes," said the cook, weighing it in her hand, "it has spared no trouble in cramming itself ; it ought to have been roasted long ago." So saying, she chopped off its head, and, when she cut it open, in its stomach was found the Queen's ring.

Now, the servant was able to prove easily his innocence to the Queen, and, as she wished to repair her injustice, she granted him her pardon, and promised him the greatest place of honour which he wished for at court. The servant refused everything, and only requested a horse and money, for he had a desire to see the world, and to travel about it for a while.

As soon as his request was granted, he set off on his tour and came one day by a pond, in which he remarked three fishes which were caught in the reeds, and lay gasping for water. Although men say Fishes are dumb, yet he understood their complaint, that they must soon die so miserably. Having a compassionate heart, he dismounted and put the

three prisoners again into the water. They splashed about for joy, and putting their heads above water said to him, "We shall be grateful, and repay you for saving us."

He rode onwards, and, after a while, it happened that he heard, as it were, a voice in the sand at his feet. He listened, and perceived that an Ant King was complaining thus: "If these men could but keep away with their great fat beasts! Here comes an awkward horse treading my people under foot unmercifully." So he rode on to a side path, and the Ant King called to him, "We will be grateful and reward you."

His way led him into a forest, and there he saw a male and female Crow, standing by their nest, and dragging their young out.

"Off with you, you gallows birds!" they exclaimed, "we can feed you no longer, you are big enough now to help yourselves." The poor young ones lay on the ground fluttering and beating their wings, and crying, "We, helpless children, we must feed ourselves, we who cannot fly yet! what is left to us but to die here of hunger?"

Then the Servant dismounted, and, killing his horse with his sword, left it for the young Crows to feed upon. They soon hopped upon it, and when they were satisfied they exclaimed, "We will be grateful, and reward you in time of need!"

He was obliged now to use his own legs, and after he had gone a long way he came to a large town, where in the streets there was a great crowd and shouting, and a man upon horseback riding along, who proclaimed, "The Princess seeks a husband; but he who would win her must perform a difficult task, and, if he should not luckily complete it, his life will be forfeited."

Many had tried already, but in vain; their life had been forfeited. But the youth, when he had seen the Princess, was so blinded by her beauty, that he forgot all danger, and stepping before the King, offered himself as a suitor. Immediately he was conducted to the sea, and a golden ring thrown in before his eyes. Then the King bade him fetch this ring up again from the bottom of the sea, adding, "If you rise without the ring, you shall be thrown in again and again, until you perish in the waves."

Every one pitied the handsome Youth, and then left him alone on the sea-shore. There he stood, considering what he should do, and presently he saw three Fishes at once swimming towards him, and they were no others than the three whose lives he had saved. The middle one bore a mussel-shell in its mouth, which it laid on the shore at the feet of the Youth, who, taking it up and opening it, found the gold ring within. Full of joy, he brought it to the

King, expecting that he should receive his promised reward.

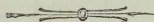
But the proud Princess, when she saw that he was not her equal in birth, was ashamed of him, and desired that he should undertake a second task. She went into the garden, and strewed there ten bags of millet-seed in the grass, "These he must pick up by the morning, before the sun rise, and let him not venture to miss one grain."

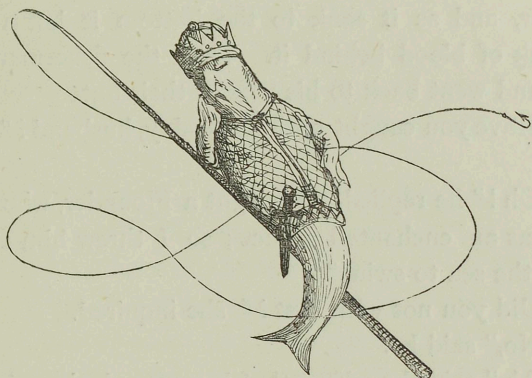
The Youth sat himself down in the garden, thinking how it was possible to perform this task, but he could imagine no way, so he sat there sorrowfully awaiting at the dawn of day to be conducted to death. But, as soon as the first rays of the sun fell on the garden, he saw that the ten sacks were all filled, and standing by him, while not a single grain remained in the grass. The Ant King had come in the night with his thousands and thousands of men, and the grateful insects had collected the millet with great industry, and put it into the sacks. The Princess herself came into the garden, and saw with wonder that the Youth had performed what was required of him. But still she could not bend her proud heart, and she said, "Although he may have done these two tasks, yet he shall not be my husband until he has brought me an apple from the tree of life."

The Youth did not know where the tree of life stood ; he got up, indeed, and was willing to go so

long as his legs bore him, but he had no hope of finding it. After he had wandered through three kingdoms, he came by evening into a forest, and sitting down under a tree, he wished to sleep; when he heard a rustling in the branches, and a golden apple fell into his hand. At the same time three Ravens flew down, and settled on his knee, saying, "We are the three young ravens whom you saved from dying of hunger; when we were grown up, and heard that you sought the golden apple, then we flew over the sea, even to the end of the world where stands the tree of life, and we have fetched you the apple."

Full of joy, the Youth set out homewards, and presented the golden apple to the beautiful Princess, who now had no more excuses. So they divided the apple of life, and ate it between them; then her heart was filled with love towards him, and they lived to a great age in undisturbed tranquillity.





THE FISHERMAN AND HIS WIFE.

THERE was once upon a time a fisherman and his wife, who lived together in a little hut near the sea, and every day he went down to fish. There he sat with his rod, and looked out upon the blank water ; and this he did for many a long day. One morning the line went to the bottom, and when he drew it up a great Flounder was hooked at the end. The Flounder said, " Let me go, I pray you, fisherman ; I am not a real fish, but an enchanted Prince. What good shall I do you if you pull me up ? I should not taste well ; put me back into the water, and let me swim."

" Ah," said the man, " you need not make such a palaver, a fish which can speak I would rather let

swim ;” and so saying, he put the fish into the water, and as it sank to the bottom it left a long streak of blood behind it. Then the fisherman got up, and went back to his wife in their hut.

“Have you caught nothing to-day, husband ?” said she.

“Oh !” he replied, “I caught a Flounder, who said he was an enchanted Prince ; so I threw him again into the sea to swim.”

“Did you not wish first ?” she inquired.

“No,” said he.

“Ah,” said the wife, “that is very unlucky ; is one to remain in this hovel for ever ? you might have wished for a better hut, at least. Go again and call him ; tell him we choose to have a better hut, and for certain you’ll get it.”

“Ah !” replied he, “how shall I manage that ?”

“Why,” said his wife, “you must catch him again, and before you let him swim away he will grant what you ask : be quick.”

The man was not much pleased, and wished his wife further ; but, nevertheless, he went down to the sea. When he came to the water, it was green and yellow, and looked still more blank ; he stood by it and said,—

“Flounder, Flounder, in the sea,
Hither quickly come to me,
For my wife, dame Isabel,
Wishes what I dare not tell.”

Then the Fish came swimming up, and said, "What do you want with me?"

"Oh!" said the man, "I was to catch you again; for my wife says I ought to have wished before. She won't stay any longer in her hovel, and desires a cottage."

"Go home again," said the Flounder, "she has it already." So the fisherman departed, and there was his wife, no longer in the dirty hovel, for in its place stood a clean cottage, before whose door she sat upon a bench. She took him by the hand, saying, "Come in now and see: is not this much better?" So in they went, and in the cottage there was a beautiful parlour, and a fine fireplace, and a chamber where a bed stood; there were also a kitchen and a store-room, with nice earthenware, all of the best; tinware and copper vessels, and everything very clean and neat. At the back was a large yard, with hens and chickens, as well as a nice garden, full of fruit-trees and vegetables. "See," said the wife, "is not this charming?"

"Yes," said her husband, "so long as it blooms you will be very well content with it."

"We will consider about that," she replied, and they went to bed.

Thus eight to fourteen days passed on, when the wife said, "Husband, the hut is far too narrow for me, and the yard and garden are so small; the

Flounder may very well give us a larger house. I wish to live in a large stone palace ; go, then, to the Flounder, and ask him to give us a castle."

"Ah, wife!" said he, "the cottage is good enough ; why should you choose to have a castle?"

"Go along," she replied, "the Flounder will soon give you that."

"Nay, wife," he said, "the Flounder gave us the cottage at first, but when I go again he will perhaps be angry."

"Never you mind," said she, "he can do what I wish for very easily and willingly ; go and try." The husband was vexed at heart, and did not like going, and said to himself, "This is not right." But as last he set off.

When he came to the sea, the water was quite clouded and deep blue coloured, and black and thick : it looked green no longer, yet it was calm. So he went and said,—

"Flounder, Flounder, in the sea,
Hither quickly come to me,
For my wife, dame Isabel,
Wishes what I scarce dare tell."

"Now, then, what do you want?" said the Flounder. "Oh," said the man, half-frightened, "she wants to live in a great stone castle." "Go home, and see it at your door," replied the Fish.

The fisherman went away, and lo! where for-

merly his house stood, there was a great stone castle; and his wife called to him from the steps to come in, and, taking him by the hand, she said, "Now let us look about." So they walked about, and in the castle there was a great hall, with marble tables, and there were ever so many servants, who ushered them through folding-doors into rooms hung all round with tapestry, and filled with fine golden stools and chairs, with crystal looking-glasses on the walls; and all the rooms were similarly fitted up. Outside the house were large courtyards with horse and cow-stalls, and waggons, all of the best, and besides a beautiful garden filled with magnificent flowers and fruit-trees, and a meadow full a mile long, covered with deer, and oxen, and sheep, as many as one could wish for.

"Is not this pretty?" said the wife.

"Ah," said her husband, "so long as the humour lasts you will be content with this, and then you will want something else."

"We will think about that," said she, and with that they went to bed.

The next morning the wife woke up just as it was day, and looked out over the fine country which lay before her. Her husband did not get up, and there she stood with her arms akimbo, and called out, "Get up, and come and look here at the window; see, shall I not be Queen over all the land? Go,

and say to the Flounder, we choose to be King and Queen."

"Ah, wife," said he, "why should I wish to be King?"

"No," she replied, "you do not wish, so I will be Queen. Go, tell the Flounder so."

"Oh, why do you wish this? I cannot say it."

"Why not? go off at once; I *must* be Queen."

The husband set out quite stupefied, but she would have her way, and when he came to the sea it was quite black-looking, and the water splashed up and smelled very disagreeably. But he stood still, and repeated,—

"Flounder, Flounder, in the sea,
Hither quickly come to me,
For my wife, dame Isabel,
Wishes what I scarce dare tell."

"What does she want now?" asked the Flounder.

"Ah!" said he, "she would be Queen."

"Go home, she is so already," replied the Fish.

So he departed, and when he came near the palace he saw it had become much larger, with a great tower and gateway in front of it; and before the gate stood a herald, and there were many soldiers, with kettledrums and trumpets. When he came into the house he found everything made of the purest marble and gold; with magnificent curtains fringed with gold. Through the hall he went in at

the doors where the great court apartment was, and there sat his wife upon a high throne of gold and diamonds, having a crown of gold upon her head, and a sceptre of precious stones in her hand ; and upon each side stood six pages, in a row, each one a head taller than the other. Then he went up, and said, " Ah, wife, are you Queen now ? "

" Yes," said she, " now I am Queen ! " There he stood looking for a long time. At last he said, " Ah, wife, how do you like being Queen ? now we have nothing else to choose. "

" No, indeed ! " she replied, " I am very dissatisfied ; time and tide do not wait for me ; I can bear it no longer. Go then to the Flounder : Queen I am ; now I must be Pope. "

" Ah, wife ! what would you ? Pope thou canst not be, the Pope is the head of Christendom, the Flounder cannot make you that. "

" I *will* be Pope," replied the wife, and he was obliged to go, and, when he came to the shore, the sea was running mountains high, and the sky was so black that he was quite terrified, and began to say in a great fright,—

“ Flounder, Flounder, in the sea,
Quickly, quickly, come to me,
For my wife, dame Isabel,
Wishes what I dare not tell. ”

" What now ? " asked the Flounder. " She wants

to be Pope," said he. "Go home, and find her so," was the reply.

So he went back, and found a great church, in which she was sitting upon a much higher throne, with two rows of candles on each side, some as thick as towers, down to those no bigger than rushlights, and before her footstool were Kings and Queens kneeling.

"Wife," said he, "now be contented: since you are Pope, you cannot be anything else."

"That I will consider about," she replied, and so they went to bed; but she could not sleep for thinking what she should be next. Very early she rose, and looked out of the window, and as she saw the sun rising, she thought to herself, "Why should I not do that?" and so she shook her husband, and called out to him, "Go, tell the Flounder I want to make the sun rise." Her husband was so frightened that he tumbled out of bed, but she would hear nothing, and he was obliged to go.

When he got down to the sea a tremendous storm was raging, and the ships and boats were tossing about in all directions. Then he shouted out, though he could not hear his own words,---

"Flounder, Flounder, in the sea,
Quickly, quickly, come to me,
For my wife, dame Isabel,
Wishes what I dare not tell."

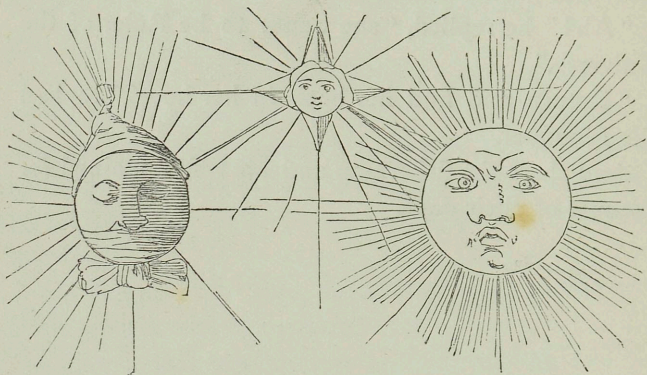
“What would she have now?” said the Fish.

“Ah!” he replied, “she wants to be Ruler of the Universe.”

“Return, and find her back in her hovel,” replied the Flounder.

And there the fisherman and his wife remained for the rest of their days.





THE SEVEN CROWS.

THERE was a man who had seven sons, but never a daughter, although he wished very much for one ; at last his wife promised him another child, and when it was born, lo ! it was a daughter. Their happiness was great, but the child was so weak and small that, on account of its delicate health, it had to be baptized immediately. The father sent one of his sons hastily to a spring in order to fetch some water, but the other six would run as well ; and as each strove to be first to fill the pitcher, between them all it fell into the water. They stood by, not knowing what to do, and none of them dared to go home. As they did not come back, the father became impatient, saying, " They have forgotten all

about it in a game of play, the godless youths." Soon he became anxious lest the child should die unbaptized, and in his haste he exclaimed, "I would they were all changed into Crows!" Scarcely were the words out of his mouth, when he heard a whirring over his head, and looking up, he saw seven coal-black Crows flying over the house.

The parents could not recall their curse, and grieved very much for their lost sons; but they comforted themselves in some measure with their dear daughter, who soon grew strong, and became more and more beautiful every day. For a long time she did not know she had any brothers, for her parents were careful not to mention them; but one day accidentally she overheard some people talking about her, and saying, "She is certainly very beautiful; but still the guilt of her seven brothers rests on her head." This made her very sad, and she went to her parents and asked whether she had any brothers, and whither they were gone. The old people durst no longer keep their secret, but said it was the decree of Heaven, and her birth had been the unhappy cause. Now the maiden daily accused herself, and thought how she could again deliver her brothers. She had neither rest nor quiet, until she at last set out secretly, and journeyed into the wide world to seek out her brothers, and to free them, wherever they were, cost what it might. She

took nothing with her but a ring of her parents' for a remembrance, a loaf of bread for hunger's sake, a bottle of water for thirst's sake, and a little stool for weariness.

Now on and on went the maiden, further and further, even to the world's end. Then she came to the Sun, but he was too hot and fearful, and burnt up little children. So she ran hastily away to the Moon, but she was too cold, and even wicked-looking, and said, "I smell, I smell man's flesh!" So she ran away quickly, and went to the Stars, who were friendly and kind to her, each one sitting upon his own little seat. But the Morning Star was standing up, and gave her a crooked bone, saying, "If you have not this bone you cannot unlock the glass castle where your brothers are."

The maiden took the bone, and wrapped it up well in a handkerchief, and then on she went again till she came at last to the glass castle. The door was closed, and she looked therefore for the little bone; but when she unwrapped her handkerchief it was empty—she had lost the present of the good Star. What was she to do now? She wished to save her brothers, and she had no key to the glass castle. The good little sister bent her little finger, and put it in the door, and luckily it unlocked it. As soon as she entered a little Dwarf came towards her, who said, "My child, what do you seek?"

"I seek my brothers, the seven Crows," she replied.

The Dwarf answered, "My Lord Crows are not at home ; but if you wish to wait their return, come in and sit down."

Thereupon the little Dwarf carried in the food of the seven Crows upon seven dishes and in seven cups, and the maiden ate a little piece off each dish, and drank a little out of every cup ; but in the last cup she dropped the ring which she had brought with her.

All at once she heard a whirring and cawing in the air, and the Dwarf said, "My Lord Crows are now flying home."

Presently they came in and prepared to eat and drink ; each seeking his own dish and cup. Then one said to the other, "Who has been eating off my dish ? Who has been drinking out of my cup ? There has been a human mouth here !"

When the seventh came to the bottom of his cup, the little ring rolled out. He looked at it, and recognized it as a ring of his parents, and said, "God grant that our sister be here ; then are we saved ?"

As the maiden, who stood behind the door watching, heard these words, she came forward, and immediately all the Crows received again their human forms, and embraced and kissed their sister, and then they all went joyfully home together.



THE VALIANT LITTLE TAILOR.

ONE summer's morning a Tailor was sitting on his bench by the window in very good spirits, sewing away with all his might, and presently up the street came a peasant woman, crying, "Good preserves for sale! Good preserves for sale!"

This cry sounded nice in the Tailor's ears, and, sticking his diminutive head out of the window, he called out, "Here, my good woman, just bring your wares here!"

The woman mounted the three steps up to the Tailor's house with her heavy basket, and began to unpack all the pots together before him. He

looked at them all, held them up to the light, put his nose to them, and at last said, "These preserves appear to me to be very nice, so you may weigh me out four half-ounces, my good woman; I don't mind even if you make it a quarter of a pound." The woman, who expected to have met with a good customer, gave him what he wished, and went away grumbling, very much dissatisfied.

"Now!" exclaimed the Tailor, "Heaven will send me a blessing on this preserve, and give me fresh strength and vigour;" and, taking the bread out of the cupboard, he cut himself a slice the size of the whole loaf, and spread the preserve upon it. "That will taste by no means badly," said he; "but, before I have a bite, I will just get this waistcoat finished."

So he laid the bread down near him and stitched away, making larger and larger stitches every time for joy. Meanwhile the smell of the preserve mounted to the ceiling, where flies were sitting in great numbers, and enticed them down, so that soon a regular swarm of them had settled on the bread.

"Holloa! who invited you?" exclaimed the Tailor, hunting away the unbidden guests; but the flies, not understanding his language, would not be driven off, and came again in greater numbers than before. This put the little man in a boiling passion, and, snatching up in his rage a rag of cloth, he brought it down with an unmerciful swoop upon

them. When he raised it again he counted no less than seven lying dead before him with outstretched legs.

"What a fellow you are!" said he to himself, wondering at his own bravery. "The whole town shall know of this." In great haste he cut himself out a band, hemmed it, and then put on it in large characters, "SEVEN AT ONE BLOW!"

"Ah," said he, "not one city alone, the whole world shall know it!" and his heart fluttered with joy, like a lambkin's tail.

The little Tailor bound the belt round his body, and prepared to travel forth into the wide world, thinking the workshop too small for his valiant deeds. Before he set out, however, he looked round his house to see if there was anything he could take with him; but he found only an old cheese, which he pocketed, and remarking a bird before the door which was entangled in the bushes, he caught it, and put that in his pocket also. Directly after he set out bravely on his travels; and, as he was light and active, he felt no weariness. His road led him up a hill, and when he reached the highest point of it he found a great Giant sitting there, who was looking about him very composedly.

The little Tailor, however, went boldly up, and said, "Good day, comrade; in faith you sit there and see the whole world stretched below you. I am

also on my road thither to try my luck. Have you a mind to go with me ? ”

The Giant looked contemptuously at the little Tailor, and said, “ You vagabond ! you miserable fellow ! ”

“ That may be,” replied the Tailor ; “ but here you may read what sort of a man I am ; ” and, unbuttoning his coat, he showed the Giant his belt.

The Giant read, “ Seven at one blow ; ” and thinking they were men whom the Tailor had slain, he conceived a little respect for him. Still he wished to prove him first ; so taking up a stone, he squeezed it in his hand, so that water dropped out of it. “ Do that after me,” said he to the other, “ if you have any strength.”

“ If it be nothing worse than that,” said the Tailor, “ that’s play to me.” And, diving into his pocket, he brought out the cheese, and squeezed it till the whey ran out of it, and said, “ Now, I think, that’s a little better.”

The Giant did not know what to say, and could not believe it of the little man ; so, taking up another stone, he threw it so high that one could scarcely see it with the eye, saying, “ There, you manikin, do that after me.”

“ Well done,” said the Tailor ; “ but your stone must fall down again to the ground. I will throw one up which shall not come back : ” and, dipping

into his pocket, he took out the bird and threw it into the air. The bird, rejoicing in its freedom, flew straight up, and then far away, and did not return.

"How does that little affair please you, comrade?" asked the Tailor.

"You can throw well, certainly," replied the Giant; "now let us see if you are in trim to carry something out of the common." So saying he led him to a huge oak-tree, which lay upon the ground, and said, "If you are strong enough, just help me to carry this tree out of the forest."

"With all my heart," replied the Tailor; "do you take the trunk upon your shoulder, and I will raise the boughs and branches, which are the heaviest, and carry them."

The Giant took the trunk upon his shoulder, but the Tailor placed himself on the branch, so that the Giant, who was not able to look round, was forced to carry the whole tree and the Tailor besides. He, being behind, was very merry, and chuckled at the trick, and began to whistle the song, "There rode three tailors out at the gate," as if the carrying of trees were child's play.

The Giant, after he had staggered along a short distance with his heavy burden, could go no further, and shouted out, "Do you hear? I must let the tree fall." The Tailor, springing down, quickly embraced

the tree with both arms, as if he had been carrying it, and said to the Giant, "Are you such a big fellow, and yet cannot you carry this tree by yourself?"

Then they journeyed on further, and as they came to a cherry-tree, the Giant seized the top of the tree where the ripest fruits hung, and, bending it down, gave it to the Tailor to hold, bidding him eat. But the Tailor was much too weak to hold the tree down, and when the Giant let go the tree flew up into the air, and the Tailor was carried with it. He came down on the other side, however, without injury, and the Giant said, "What does that mean? Have you not strength enough to hold that twig?"

"My strength did not fail me," replied the Tailor; "do you suppose that that was any hard thing for one who has killed seven at one blow? I have sprung over the tree because the hunters were shooting below there in the thicket. Spring after me if you can." The Giant made the attempt, but could not clear the tree, and stuck fast in the branches; so that in this affair, too, the Tailor was the better man.

After this the Giant said, "Since you are such a valiant fellow, come with me to our house, and stop a night with us." The Tailor consented, and followed him; and when they entered the cave, there sat by the fire two other Giants, each having a roast sheep in his hand, of which he was eating.

The Tailor sat down thinking, "Ah, this is much more like the world than is my workshop." And soon the Giant showed him a bed where he might lie down and go to sleep. The bed, however, was too big for him, so he slipt out of it, and crept into a corner. When midnight came, and the Giant thought the Tailor would be in a deep sleep, he got up, and, taking a great iron bar, beat the bed right through at one stroke, and supposed he had thereby given the Tailor his death-blow."

At the earliest dawn of morning the Giants went forth into the forest, quite forgetting the Tailor, when presently up he came, quite merry, and showed himself before them. The Giants were terrified, and, fearing he would kill them all, they ran away in great haste.

The Tailor journeyed on, always following his nose, and after he had wandered some long distance, he came into the courtyard of a royal palace; and as he felt rather tired he laid himself down on the grass and went to sleep. Whilst he lay there the people came and viewed him on all sides, and read upon his belt, "Seven at one blow."

"Ah," said they, "what does this great warrior here in time of peace? This must be some mighty hero." So they went and told the King, thinking that, should war break out, here was an important and useful man, whom one ought not to part with

at any price. The King took counsel, and sent one of his courtiers to the Tailor, to ask for his fighting services, if he should be awake. The messenger stopped at the sleeper's side, and waited till he stretched out his limbs and opened his eyes, and then he laid before him his message.

"Solely on that account did I come here," was the reply ; "I am quite ready to enter into the King's service." Then he was conducted away with great honour, and a fine house was appointed him to dwell in.

The courtiers, however, became jealous of the Tailor, and wished he were a thousand miles away.

"What will happen?" said they to one another. "If we go to battle with him, when he strikes out seven will fall at one blow, and nothing will be left for us to do."

In their rage they came to the resolution to resign, and they went all together to the King, and asked his permission, saying, "We are not prepared to keep company with a man who kills seven at one blow." The King was grieved to lose all his faithful servants for the sake of one, and wished that he had never seen the Tailor, and would willingly have now been rid of him. He dared not, however, dismiss him, because he feared the Tailor would kill him and all his subjects, and place himself upon the throne. For a long time he deliberated, till at last he came to

a decision ; and, sending for the Tailor, he told him that, seeing he was so great a hero, he wished to ask a favour of him.

“In a certain forest in my kingdom,” said the King, “there live two Giants, who, by murder, rapine, fire, and robbery, have committed great havoc, and no one dares to approach them without perilling his own life. If you overcome and kill both these Giants, I will give you my only daughter in marriage, and the half of my kingdom for a dowry : a hundred knights shall accompany you, too, in order to render you assistance.”

“Ah, that is something for such a man as I,” thought the Tailor to himself ; “a beautiful Princess and half a kingdom are not offered to one every day.” “Oh yes,” he replied, “I will soon manage these two Giants, and a hundred horsemen are not necessary for that purpose ; he who kills seven at one blow need not fear two.”

Thus talking the little Tailor set out, followed by the hundred knights, to whom he said, as soon as they came to the borders of the forest, “Do you stay here ; I would rather meet these Giants alone.”

Then he sprang off into the forest, peering about him right and left ; and after a while he saw the two Giants lying asleep under a tree, snoring so loudly, that the branches above them shook violently. The

Tailor, full of courage, filled both his pockets with stones and clambered up the tree. When he got to the middle of it he crept along a bough, so that he sat just above the sleepers, and then he let fall one stone after another upon the breast of one of them. For some time the Giant did not stir, until, at last awaking, he pushed his companion, and said, "Why are you beating me?"

"You are dreaming," he replied; "I never hit you."

They laid themselves down again to sleep, and presently the Tailor threw a stone down upon the other. "What is that?" he exclaimed. "What are you knocking me for?"

"I did not touch you; you must dream," replied the first.

So they wrangled for a few minutes; but, being both very tired with their day's work, they soon fell asleep again. Then the Tailor began his sport again, and, picking out the biggest stone, threw it with all his force upon the breast of the first Giant.

"That is too bad!" he exclaimed; and, springing up like a madman, he fell upon his companion, who, feeling himself equally aggrieved, they set to in such good earnest, that they rooted up trees and beat one another about until they both fell dead upon the ground.

Now the Tailor jumped down, saying, "What a piece of luck they did not uproot the tree on which I sat, or else I must have jumped on another like a squirrel, for I am not given to flying."

Then he drew his sword, and, cutting a deep wound in the breast of each, he went to the horsemen and said, "The deed is done ; I have given each his death-stroke ; but it was a hard job, for in their necessity they uprooted trees to defend themselves with ; still, all that is of no use when such an one as I come, who killed seven at one stroke."

"Are you not wounded, then?" asked they.

"That is not to be expected : they have not touched a hair of my head," replied the little man. The knights could scarcely believe him, till, riding away into the forest, they found the Giants lying in their blood and the uprooted trees around them.

Now the Tailor demanded his promised reward of the King ; but he repented of his promise, and began to think of some new scheme to get rid of the hero.

"Before you receive my daughter and the half of my kingdom," said he to him, "you must perform one other heroic deed. In the forest there runs wild a unicorn, which commits great havoc, and which you must first of all catch."

"I fear still less for a unicorn than I do for two

Giants! Seven at one blow! that is my motto," said the Tailor. Then he took with him a rope and an axe and went away to the forest, bidding those who were ordered to accompany him to wait on the outskirts. He had not to search long, for presently the unicorn came near and prepared to rush at him as if it would pierce him on the spot.

"Softly, softly!" he exclaimed; "that is not done so easily;" and, waiting till the animal was close upon him, he sprang nimbly behind a tree. The unicorn, rushing with all its force against the tree, fixed its horn so fast in the trunk, that it could not draw it out again, and so it was made prisoner. "Now I have got my bird," said the Tailor; and, coming from behind the tree, he first bound the rope around its neck, and then, cutting the horn out of the tree with his axe, he put all in order, and, leading the animal, brought it before the King.

The King, however, would not yet deliver up the promised reward, and made a third request, that, before the wedding, the Tailor should catch a wild boar which did much injury, and he should have the huntsmen to help him. "With pleasure," was the reply; "it is mere child's play."

The huntsmen, however, he left behind, to their entire content, for this wild boar had already so often hunted them, that they had no pleasure in hunting it. As soon as the Boar perceived the Tailor, it ran

at him with gaping mouth and glistening teeth, and tried to throw him on the ground; but our flying hero sprang into a little chapel which was near, and out again at a window on the other side in a trice. The boar ran after him, but he, skipping round, shut the door behind it, and there the raging beast was caught, for it was much too unwieldy and heavy to jump out of the window.

The Tailor now called the huntsmen up, that they might see his prisoner with their own eyes; but our hero presented himself before the King, who was compelled now, whether he would or no, to keep his promise, and surrender his daughter and the half of his kingdom.

Had he known that it was no warrior, but only a Tailor, who stood before him, it would have gone to his heart still more!

So the wedding was celebrated with great splendour, though with little rejoicing, and out of a Tailor was made a King.

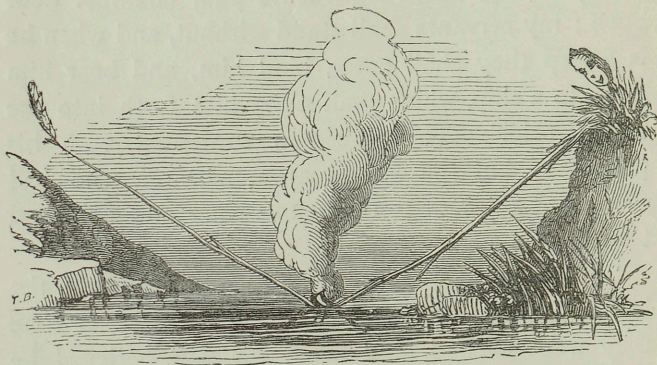
Some little while afterwards the young Queen heard her husband talking in his sleep, and saying, "Boy, make me a waistcoat, and stitch up these trousers, or I will lay the yard-measure over your ears!"

Then she remarked of what condition her lord was, and complained in the morning to her father, and begged he would deliver her from her husband, who

was nothing else than a tailor. The King comforted her by saying, "This night leave your chamber door open ; my servants shall stand without, and when he is asleep they shall enter, bind him, and bear him away to a ship, which shall carry him forth into the wide world." The wife was contented with his proposal ; but the King's armour-bearer, who had overheard all, went to the young King and disclosed the whole plot.

"I will shoot a bolt upon this affair," said the brave Tailor. In the evening at their usual time they went to bed, and when his wife believed he slept she got up, opened the door, and laid herself down again. The Tailor, however, only feigned to be asleep, and began to exclaim in a loud voice, "Boy, make me this waistcoat, and stitch up these trousers, or I will beat the yard-measure about your ears ! Seven have I killed with one blow, two Giants have I slain, a unicorn have I led captive, and a wild boar have I caught, and shall I be afraid of those who stand without my chamber ?"

When the men heard these words spoken by the Tailor, a great fear overcame them, and they ran away as if the wild huntsmen were behind them ; neither afterwards durst any man venture to oppose him. Thus became the Tailor a King, and so he remained the rest of his days.



THE STRAW, THE COAL, AND THE BEAN.

IN a certain village there dwelt a poor old woman, who had gathered a dish of beans, which she wished to cook. So she made a fire upon the hearth, and, that it might burn the quicker, she lighted it with a handful of straw. And as she shook the beans up in the saucepan, one fell out unperceived, and came down upon the ground, near a straw ; soon after a glowing coal burst out of the fire, and fell just by these two.

Then the Straw began to say, "My dear friend, whence do you come?"

The Coal replied, "By good luck I have sprung out of the fire, and, if I had not jumped away by force, my death had been certain, and I should have been reduced to ashes."

The Bean continued, "I also have got away with a whole skin, but, had the old woman put me in the pot with the others, I should have been boiled to pieces, as my comrades are."

"Would a better fate have fallen to my share?" said the Straw; "for the old woman has suffocated in fire and smoke all my brothers; sixty has she put on at once, and deprived of life; happily, I slipped between her fingers."

"But what shall we do now?" asked the Coal.

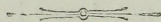
"I think," answered the Bean, "since we have so luckily escaped death, we will join in partnership, and keep together like good companions; lest a new misfortune overtake us, let us wander forth, and travel into a strange country."

This proposition pleased the two others, and they set out together on their travels. Presently they came to a little stream, over which there was no bridge nor path, and they did not know how they should get over. The Straw gave good advice, and said, "I will lay myself across, so that you may cross over upon me, as upon a bridge."

So the Straw stretched itself from one bank to the other, and the Coal, which was of a fiery nature,

tripped lightly upon the newly-built bridge. But when it came to the middle of it, and heard the water running along beneath, it was frightened, and stood still, not daring to go further. The Straw, however, beginning to burn, broke in two and fell into the stream, and the Coal slipping after, hissed as it reached the water, and gave up the ghost. The Bean, which had prudently remained upon the shore, was forced to laugh at this accident, and the joke being so good, it laughed so immoderately that it burst itself.

Now they would all have been done for alike, if a tailor, who was out on his wanderings, had not just then, by great good luck, sat himself down near the stream. Having a commiserating heart, he took out needle and thread, and sowed the Bean together. The Bean thanked him exceedingly ; but as the tailor used black thread, it has happened since that time every Bean has a black seam.





LITTLE RED-CAP.

ONCE upon a time there lived a sweet little girl, who was beloved by every one who saw her ; but her grandmother was so excessively fond of her that she never knew when she had thought and done enough for her.

One day the grandmother presented the little girl with a red velvet cap ; and as it fitted her very well, she would never wear anything else ; and so she was called Little Red-Cap.

One day her mother said to her, " Come, Red-Cap, here is a piece of nice meat, and a bottle of wine : take these to your grandmother ; she is ill and weak, and will relish them. Make haste before she gets up ; go quietly and carefully ; and do not run, lest

you should fall and break the bottle, and then your grandmother will get nothing. When you go into her room, do not forget to say 'Good-morning ;' and do not look about in all the corners."

"I will do everything as you wish," replied Red-Cap, taking her mother's hand.

The grandmother dwelt far away in the wood, half an hour's walk from the village, and as Little Red-Cap entered among the trees, she met a wolf ; but she did not know what a malicious beast it was, and so she was not at all afraid. "Good day, Little Red-Cap," he said.

"Many thanks, Wolf," said she.

"Whither away so early, Little Red-Cap?"

"To my grandmother's," she replied.

"What are you carrying under your apron?"

"Meat and wine," she answered. "Yesterday we baked the meat, that grandmother, who is ill and weak, might have something nice and strengthening."

"Where does your grandmother live?" asked the Wolf.

"A good quarter of an hour's walk further in the forest. The cottage stands under three great oak-trees ; near it are some nut bushes, by which you will easily know it."

But the Wolf thought to himself, "She is a nice tender thing, and will taste better than the old

woman : I must act craftily, that I may snap them both up."

Presently he came up again to Little Red-Cap, and said, "Just look at the beautiful flowers which grow around you ; why do you not look about you ? I believe you don't hear how beautifully the birds sing. You walk on as if you were going to school ; see how merry everything is around you in the forest."

So little Red-Cap opened her eyes ; and when she saw how the sunbeams glanced and danced through the trees, and what splendid flowers were blooming in her path, she thought, "If I take my grandmother a fresh nosegay she will be very pleased ; and it is so very early that I can, even then, get there in good time ;" and running into the forest she looked about for flowers. But when she had once begun she did not know how to leave off, and kept going deeper and deeper among the trees in search of some more beautiful flower. The Wolf, however, ran straight to the house of the old grandmother, and knocked at the door.

"Who's there ?" asked the old lady.

"Only Little Red-Cap, bringing you some meat and wine : please open the door," replied the Wolf.

"Lift up the latch," cried the grandmother ; "I am too weak to get up."

So the Wolf lifted the latch, and the door flew open ; and jumping without a word on the bed, he gobbled up the poor old lady. Then he put on her clothes, and tied her cap over his head ; got into the bed, and drew the blankets over him.

All this time Red-Cap was still gathering flowers ; and when she had plucked as many as she could carry, she remembered her grandmother, and made haste to the cottage. She wondered very much to see the door wide open ; and when she got into the room, she began to feel very ill, and exclaimed, "How sad I feel ! I wish I had not come to-day." Then she said, "Good morning," but received no answer ; so she went up to the bed, and drew back the curtains, and there lay her grandmother, as she thought, with the cap drawn half over her eyes, looking very fierce.

"Oh, grandmother, what great ears you have !"

"The better to hear with," was the reply.

"And what great eyes you have !"

"The better to see with."

"And what great hands you have !"

"The better to touch you with."

"But, grandmother, what great teeth you have !"

"The better to eat you with ;" and scarcely were the words out of his mouth, when the Wolf made a spring out of bed, and swallowed up poor Little Red-Cap.

As soon as the Wolf had thus satisfied his appetite, he laid himself down again in the bed, and began to snore very loudly. A huntsman passing by overheard him, and thought, "How loudly the old woman snores! I must see if she wants anything."

So he stepped into the cottage; and when he came to the bed, he saw the Wolf lying in it.

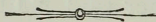
"What! do I find you here, you old sinner? I have long sought you," exclaimed he; and taking aim with his gun, he shot the old Wolf dead.

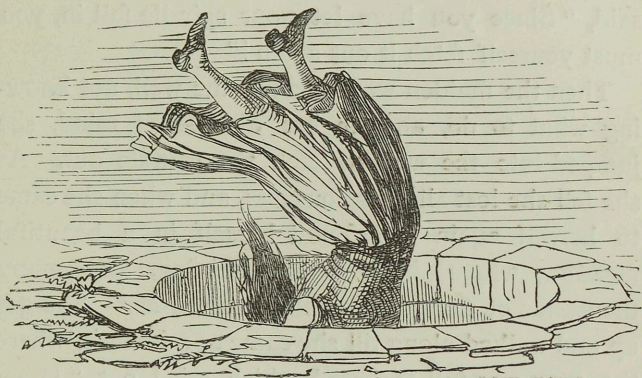
Some folks say that the last story is not the true one, but that one day, when Red-Cap was taking some baked meats to her grandmother's, a Wolf met her, and wanted to mislead her; but she went straight on, and told her grandmother that she had met a Wolf, who wished her good-day; but he looked so wickedly out of his great eyes, as if he would have eaten her had she not been on the high-road.

So the grandmother said, "Let us shut the door, that he may not enter."

Soon afterwards came the Wolf, who knocked, and exclaimed, "I am Red-Cap, grandmother; I bring you some roast meat." But they kept quite still, and did not open the door; so the Wolf, creeping several times round the house, at last jumped on the roof, intending to wait till Red-Cap went home

in the evening, and then to sneak after her and devour her in the darkness. The old woman, however, saw all that the rascal intended ; and as there stood before the door a great stone trough, she said to Little Red-Cap, "Take this pail, child : yesterday I boiled some sausages in this water, so pour it into that stone trough." Red-Cap poured many times, until the huge trough was quite full. Then the Wolf sniffed the smell of the sausages, and smacked his lips, and wished very much to taste ; and at last he stretched his neck too far over, so that he lost his balance, and slipped quite off the roof, right into the great trough beneath, wherein he was drowned ; and Little Red-Cap ran home in high glee, but no one sorrowed for Mr. Wolf!





OLD MOTHER FROST.

THERE was once a widow who had two daughters, one of whom was very beautiful and industrious, and the other ugly and lazy. She behaved most kindly, however, to the ugly one, because she was her own daughter ; and made the other do all the hard work, and live like a kitchen-maid. The poor maiden was forced out daily on the highroad, and had to sit by a well and spin so much that the blood ran from her fingers.

Once it happened that her spindle became quite covered with blood, so, kneeling down by the well, she tried to wash it off, but, unhappily, it fell out of her hands into the water. She ran crying to her step-mother, and told her misfortune ; but she scolded

her terribly, and behaved very cruelly, and at last said, "Since you have let your spindle fall in, you must yourself fetch it out again!"

Then the maiden went back to the well, not knowing what to do, and, in her distress of mind, she jumped into the well to fetch the spindle out. As she fell she lost all consciousness, and when she came to herself again she found herself in a beautiful meadow, where the sun was shining, and many thousands of flowers blooming around her. She got up and walked along till she came to a baker's, where the oven was full of bread, which cried out, "Draw me, draw me, or I shall be burnt. I have been baked long enough." So she went up, and, taking the bread-peel, drew out one loaf after the other. Then she walked on further, and came to an apple-tree, whose fruit hung very thick, and which exclaimed, "Shake us, shake us ; we apples are all ripe!" So she shook the tree till the apples fell down like rain, and, when none were left on, she gathered them all together in a heap, and went further. At last she came to a cottage, out of which an old woman was peeping, who had such very large teeth that the maiden was frightened and ran away. The old woman, however, called her back, saying, "What are you afraid of, my child? Stop with me : if you will put all things in order in my house, then shall all go well with you ; only you must take care that you

make my bed well, and shake it tremendously, so that the feathers fly ; then it snows upon earth. I am 'Old Mother Frost.'"

As the old woman spoke so kindly, the maiden took courage, and consented to engage in her service. Now, everything made her very contented, and she always shook the bed so industriously that the feathers blew down like flakes of snow ; therefore her life was a happy one, and there were no evil words ; and she had roast and baked meat every day.

For some time she remained with the old woman ; but, all at once, she became very sad, and did not herself know what was the matter. At last she found she was home-sick ; and, although she fared a thousand times better than when she was at home, still she longed to go. So she told her mistress, "I wish to go home, and if it does not go so well with me below as up here, I must return."

The mistress replied, "It appeared to me that you wanted to go home, and, since you have served me so truly, I will fetch you up again myself." So saying, she took her by the hand and led her before a great door, which she undid ; and, when the maiden was just beneath it, a great shower of gold fell, and a great deal stuck to her, so that she was covered over and over with gold.

"That you must have for your industry," said the old woman, giving her the spindle which had

fallen into the well. Thereupon the door was closed, and the maiden found herself upon the earth, not far from her mother's house ; and, as she came into the court, the cock sat upon the house, and called,—

“ Cock-a-doodle-doo !

Our golden maid's come home again.”

Then she went in to her mother, and, because she was so covered with gold, she was well received.

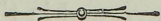
The maiden related all that had happened ; and when the mother heard how she had come by these great riches, she wished her ugly, lazy daughter to try her luck. So she was forced to sit down by the well and spin ; and, in order that her spindle might become bloody, she pricked her finger by running a thorn into it ; and then, throwing the spindle into the well, she jumped in after it. Then, like the other, she came upon the beautiful meadow, and travelled on the same path. When she arrived at the baker's, the bread called out, “ Draw me out, draw me out, or I shall be burnt. I have been baked long enough.” But she answered, “ I have no wish to make myself dirty about you,” and so went on. Soon she came to the apple-tree, which called out, “ Shake me, shake me ; my apples are all quite ripe.” But she answered, “ You do well to come to me ; perhaps one will fall on my head ;” and so she went on further. When she came to “ Old Mother Frost's ” house she

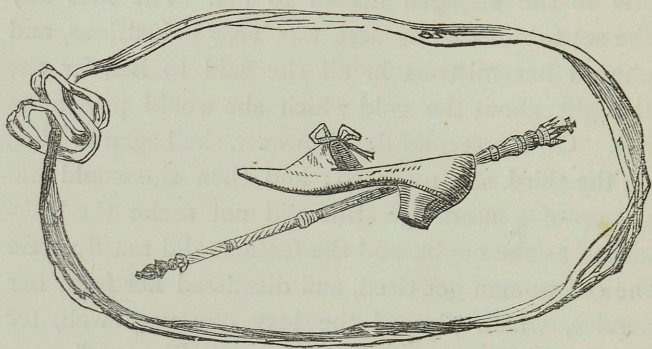
was not afraid of the teeth, for she had been warned ; and so she engaged herself to her. The first day she set to work in earnest, was very industrious, and obeyed her mistress in all she said to her, for she thought about the gold which she would present to her. On the second day, however, she began to idle ; on the third, still more so ; and then she would not get up of a morning. She did not make the beds, either, as she ought, and the feathers did not fly. So the old woman got tired, and dismissed her from her service, which pleased the lazy one very well, for she thought, " Now the gold-shower will come."

Her mistress led her to the door ; but when she was beneath it, instead of gold, a tubful of pitch was poured down upon her. " That is the reward of your service," said " Old Mother Frost," and shut the door to. Then came Lazy-bones home, but she was quite covered with pitch ; and the cock upon the house, when he saw her, cried—

" Cock-a-doodle-doo !
Our dirty maid's come home again."

But the pitch stuck to her, and, as long as she lived, would never come off again.





CINDERELLA.

ONCE upon a time the wife of a certain rich man fell very ill, and as she felt her end drawing nigh she called her only daughter to her bedside, and said, "My dear child, be pious and good, and then the good God will always protect you, and I will look down upon you from heaven and think of you." Soon afterwards she closed her eyes and died. Every day the maiden went to her mother's grave and wept over it, and she continued to be good and pious; but when the winter came, the snow made a white covering over the grave, and in the spring-time, when the sun had withdrawn this covering, the father took to himself another wife.

The wife brought home with her two daughters, who were beautiful and fair in the face, but treacherous and wicked at heart. Then an unfortunate era began in the poor step-child's life. "Shall the stupid goose sit in the parlour with us?" said the two daughters. "They who would eat bread must earn it; out with the kitchen-maid!" So they took off her fine clothes, and put upon her an old grey cloak, and gave her wooden shoes for her feet.

"See how the once proud princess is decked out now," said they, and they led her mockingly into the kitchen. Then she was obliged to work hard from morning to night, and to go out early to fetch water, to make the fire, and cook and scour. The sisters treated her besides with every possible insult, derided her, and shook the peas and beans into the ashes, so that she had to pick them out again. At night, when she was tired, she had no bed to lie on, but was forced to sit in the ashes on the hearth; and because she looked dirty through this, they named her CINDERELLA.

One day it happened that the father wanted to go to the fair, so he asked his two daughters what he should bring them.

"Some beautiful dresses," said one; "Pearls and precious stones," replied the other.

"But you, Cinderella," said he, "what will you have?"

“The first bough, father, that knocks against your hat on your way homewards, break it off for me,” she replied.

So he bought the fine dresses, and the pearls and precious stones, for his two step-daughters; and on his return, as he rode through a green thicket, a hazel-bough touched his hat, which he broke off and took with him. As soon as he got home, he gave his step-daughters what they had wished for, and to Cinderella he gave the hazel-branch. She thanked him very much, and going to her mother’s grave she planted the branch on it, and wept so long that her tears fell and watered it, so that it grew and became a beautiful tree. Thrice a day Cinderella went beneath it to weep and pray; and each time a little white Bird flew on the tree, and if she wished aloud, then the little Bird threw down to her whatever she wished for

After a time it fell out that the King appointed a festival, which was to last three days, and to which all the beautiful maidens in the country were invited, from whom his son was to choose a bride.

When the two step-daughters heard that they might also appear, they were very glad, and calling Cinderella, they said, “Comb our hair, brush our shoes, and fasten our buckles, for we are going to the festival at the King’s palace.” Cinderella obeyed, crying, because she wished to go with them to the

dance ; so she asked her step-mother whether she would allow her.

“ You, Cinderella ! ” said she ; “ you are covered with dust and dirt—will you go to the festival ? You have no clothes or shoes, and how can you dance ? ” But, as she urged her request, the mother said at last, “ I have now shaken into the ashes a tubful of beans ; if you have picked them up again in two hours, you shall go.”

Then the maiden left the room, and went out at the back-door into the garden, and called out, “ You tame pigeons, and doves, and all you birds of heaven, come and help me to gather the good beans into the tub, and the bad ones you may eat.”

Presently, in at the kitchen-window came two white pigeons, and after them the doves, and soon all the birds under heaven flew chirping in down upon the ashes. They then began, pick, pick, pick, and gathered all the good seeds into the tub ; and scarcely an hour had passed when all was completed, and the birds flew away again. Then the maiden took the tub to the step-mother, rejoicing at the thought that she might now go to the festival ; but the step-mother said, “ No, Cinderella, you have no clothes, and cannot dance ; you will only be laughed at.” As she began to cry, the step-mother said, “ If you can pick up quite clean two tubs of beans which I throw amongst the ashes in one hour, you shall

accompany them ;” and she thought to herself, “ She will never manage it.”

As soon as the two tubs had been shot into the ashes, Cinderella went out at the back door into the garden, and called out as before, “ You tame pigeons, and doves, and all you birds under heaven, come and help me to gather the good ones into the tubs, and the bad ones you may eat.”

Presently, in at the kitchen-window came two white pigeons, and soon after them the doves, and soon all the birds under heaven flew chirping in down upon the ashes. They then began, pick, pick, pick, and gathered all the seeds into the tub ; and scarcely had half an hour passed before all was picked up, and off they flew again. The maiden now took the tubs to the step-mother, rejoicing at the thought that she could go to the festival. But the mother said, “ It does not help you a bit ; you cannot go with us, for you have no clothes, and cannot dance ; we should be ashamed of you.” Thereupon she turned her back upon the maiden, and hastened away with her two proud daughters.

As there was no one at home, Cinderella went to her mother’s grave, under the hazel-tree, and said,—

“ Rustle and shake yourself, dear tree,
And silver and gold throw down to me.”

Then the Bird threw down a dress of gold and

silver, and silken slippers ornamented with silver. These Cinderella put on in great haste, and then she went to the ball. Her sisters and step-mother did not know her at all, and took her for some foreign princess, as she looked so beautiful in her golden dress ; for of Cinderella they thought not but that she was sitting at home picking the beans out of the ashes.

Presently the Prince came up to her, and, taking her by the hand, led her to the dance. He would not dance with any one else, and even would not let go her hand ; so that when any one else asked her to dance, he said, " She is my partner."

They danced till evening, when she wished to go home ; but the Prince said, " I will go with you, and see you safe," for he wanted to see to whom the maiden belonged. She flew away from him, however, and sprang into the pigeon-house ; so the Prince waited till the father came, whom he told that the strange maiden had run into the pigeon-house. Then the step-mother thought, " Could it be Cinderella ?" And they brought an axe wherewith the Prince might cut open the door, but no one was found within. And when they came into the house, there lay Cinderella, in her dirty clothes, among the ashes, and an oil-lamp was burning in the chimney ; for she had jumped quickly out on the other side of the pigeon-house, and had run to the hazel-tree, where she had taken off her fine clothes, and laid

them on the grave, and the Bird had taken them again, and afterwards she had put on her little grey cloak, and seated herself among the ashes in the kitchen.

The next day, when the festival was renewed, and her step-mother and her sisters had set out again, Cinderella went to the hazel-tree and sang as before :—

“ Rustle and shake yourself, dear tree,
And silver and gold throw down to me.”

Then the Bird threw down a much more splendid dress than the former, and when the maiden appeared at the ball every one was astonished at her beauty. The Prince, however, who had waited till she came, took her hand, and would dance with no one else ; and if others came and asked, he replied as before, “ She is my partner.”

As soon as evening came she wished to depart, and the Prince followed her, wanting to see into whose house she went ; but she sprang away from him, and ran into the garden behind the house. Therein stood a fine large tree, on which hung the most beautiful pears, and the boughs rustled as though a squirrel was among them ; but the Prince could not see whence the noise proceeded. He waited, however, till the father came, and told him, “ The strange maiden has escaped from me, and I think she has climbed up into this tree.”

The father thought to himself, "Can it be Cinderella?" and taking an axe he chopped down the tree, but there was no one on it. When they went into the kitchen, there lay Cinderella among the ashes, as before, for she had sprung down on the other side of the tree, and, having taken her beautiful clothes again to the Bird upon the hazel-tree, she had put on once more her old grey cloak.

The third day, when her step-mother and her sisters had set out, Cinderella went again to her mother's grave, and said,—

"Rustle and shake yourself, dear tree,
And silver and gold throw down to me."

Then the Bird threw down to her a dress which was more splendid and glittering than she had ever had before, and the slippers were of pure gold. When she arrived at the ball they knew not what to say for wonderment, and the Prince danced with her alone as at first, and replied to every one who asked her hand, "She is my partner."

As soon as evening came she wished to go, and as the Prince followed her she ran away so quickly that he could not overtake her. But he had contrived a stratagem, and spread the whole way with pitch, so that it happened as the maiden ran that her left slipper came off. The Prince took it up, and saw it was small and graceful, and of pure gold; so the following morning he went with it to the father,

and said, "My bride shall be no other than she whose foot this golden slipper fits." The two sisters were glad of this, for they had beautiful feet, and the elder went with it to her chamber to try it on, while her mother stood by. She could not, however, get her great toe into it, and the shoe was much too small ; but the mother, reaching a knife, said, "Cut off your toe, for if you are queen, you need not go any longer on foot." The maiden cut it off, and squeezed her foot into the shoe, and, concealing the pain she felt, went down to the Prince. Then he placed her as his bride upon his horse, and rode off ; and as they passed by the grave, there sat two little doves upon the hazel-tree, singing,—

“ Backwards peep, backwards peep,
There's blood upon the shoe ;
The shoe's too small, and she behind
Is not the bride for you.”

Then the Prince looked behind, and saw the blood flowing ; so he turned his horse back, and took the false bride home again, saying, she was not the right one. Then the other sister must needs fit on the shoe, so she went to the chamber and got her toes nicely into the shoe, but the heel was too large. The mother, reaching a knife, said, "Cut a piece off your heel, for when you become queen you need not go any longer on foot." She cut a piece off her heel, squeezed her foot into the shoe, and, concealing the

pain she felt, went down to the Prince. Then he put her upon his horse as his bride, and rode off; and as they passed the hazel-tree, there sat two little doves, who sang,—

“ Backwards peep, backwards peep,
There’s blood upon the shoe ;
The shoe’s too small, and she behind
Is not the bride for you.”

Then he looked behind, and saw the blood trickling from her shoe, and that the stocking was dyed quite red ; so he turned his horse back, and took the false bride home again, saying, “ Neither is this one the right maiden ; have you no other daughter ? ”

“ No,” replied the father, “ except little Cinderella, daughter of my deceased wife, who cannot possibly be the bride.” The Prince asked that she might be fetched ; but the step-mother said, “ Oh, no ! she is much too dirty ; I dare not let her be seen.” But the Prince would have his way ; so Cinderella was called, and she, first washing her hands and face, went in and curtsied to the Prince, who gave her the golden shoe.

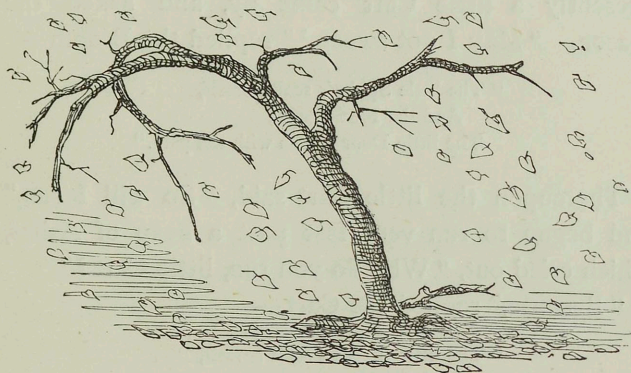
Cinderella sat down on a stool, and taking off her heavy wooden shoes, put on the slipper, which fitted her to a shade ; and as she stood up, the Prince looked in her face, and recognizing the beautiful maiden with whom he had danced, exclaimed,

"This is my true bride." The step-mother and the two sisters were amazed and white with rage, but the Prince took Cinderella upon his horse, and rode away ; and as they came up to the hazel-tree the two little white doves sang,—

" Backwards peep, backwards peep,
There's no blood on the shoe ;
It fits so nice, and she behind
Is the true bride for you."

And as they finished they flew down and lighted upon Cinderella's shoulders, and there they remained ; and the wedding was celebrated with great festivities, and the two sisters were smitten with blindness as a punishment for their wickedness.





THE SPIDER AND THE FLEA.

A SPIDER and a Flea dwelt together in one house, and brewed their beer in an egg-shell. One day, when the Spider was stirring it up, she fell in and scalded herself. Thereupon the Flea began to scream. And then the Door asked, "Why are you screaming, Flea?"

"Because little Spider has scalded herself in the beer-tub," replied she.

Thereupon the Door began to creak as if it were in pain; and a Broom which stood in the corner asked, "What are you creaking for, Door?"

"May I not creak?" it replied:

"The little Spider's scalt herself,
And the Flea weeps."

So the Broom began to sweep industriously, and presently a little Cart came by, and asked the reason. "May I not sweep?" replied the Broom—

"The little Spider's scalt herself,
And the Flea weeps;
The little Door creaks with the pain."

Thereupon the little Cart said, "So will I run," and began to run very fast past a heap of Ashes, which cried out, "Why do you run, little Cart?"

"Because," replied the Cart,—

"The little Spider's scalt herself,
And the Flea weeps;
The little Door creaks with the pain,
And the Broom sweeps."

"Then," said the Ashes, "I will burn furiously." Now, next the Ashes there grew a Tree, which asked, "Little heap, why do you burn?"

"Because," was the reply,—

"The little Spider's scalt herself,
And the Flea weeps;
The little Door creaks with the pain,
And the Broom sweeps;
The little Cart runs on so fast."

Thereupon the Tree cried, "I will shake myself!" and went on shaking till all its leaves fell off.

A little girl passing by with a water-pitcher saw it shaking, and asked, "Why do you shake yourself, little Tree?"

“Why may I not?” said the Tree,—

“The little Spider’s scalt herself,
And the Flea weeps;
The little Door creaks with the pain,
And the Broom sweeps;
The little Cart runs on so fast,
And the Ashes burn.”

Then the Maiden said, “If so, I will break my pitcher;” and she threw it down and broke it.

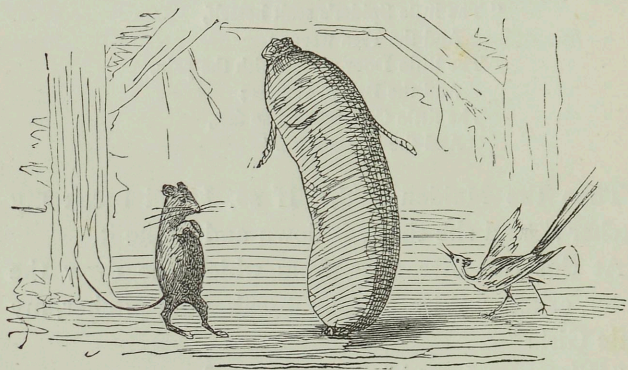
At this the Streamlet, from which she drew the water, asked, “Why do you break your pitcher, my little Girl?”

“Why may I not?” she replied; for

“The little Spider’s scalt herself,
And the Flea weeps;
The little Door creaks with the pain,
And the Broom sweeps;
The little Cart runs on so fast,
And the Ashes burn;
The little Tree shakes down its leaves—
Now it is my turn!”

“Ah, then,” said the Streamlet, “now must I begin to flow.” And it flowed and flowed along, in a great stream, which kept getting bigger and bigger, until at last it swallowed up the little Girl, the little Tree, the Ashes, the Cart, the Broom, the Door, the Flea, and, last of all, the Spider, all together.





THE LITTLE MOUSE, THE LITTLE BIRD, AND THE SAUSAGE.

ONCE upon a time a Mouse, a Bird, and a Sausage went to housekeeping together, and agreed so well that they accumulated wealth fast. It was the duty of the Bird to fetch wood, of the Mouse to draw water and make the fire, and of the Sausage to cook.

They who are prosperous are for ever hankering after something new, and thus one day the Bird, meeting another bird on her way home, told him of her condition in a very boastful way. The other bird, however, blamed her for her great labours for the two who lived at ease at home; for when the

Mouse had made the fire and drawn the water she could retire to her chamber, and rest till she was called to lay the table ; while the Sausage remained by the fire, and saw that the food was well cooked, and when the dinner-time approached dressed it with the gravy and vegetables, and made it ready with butter and salt.

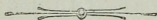
As soon, then, as the Bird returned and laid down her burden, they sat down to table, and after their meal was finished they slept till the next morning, and this life was a very happy one. The next day the Bird would not go for the wood, saying she had been slave long enough ; for once they must change about and try another plan. And although the Mouse and the Sausage protested earnestly against it, the Bird was unconvinced ; it must be tried. And so they tossed up, and it fell to the lot of the Sausage to fetch wood, while the Mouse had to cook, and the Bird to procure water.

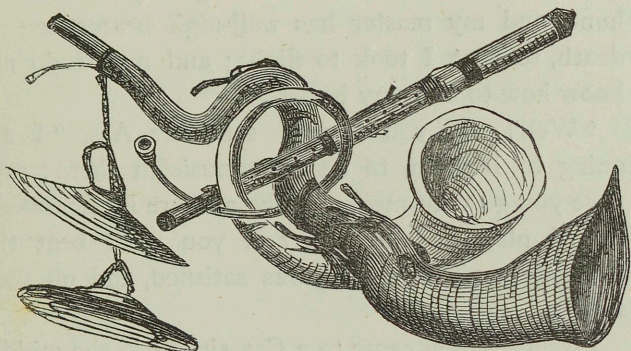
What happened ? The Sausage went forth into the forest, the Bird made the fire, the Mouse put on the pot, and waited alone until the Sausage should come home, bringing wood for the next day. But it remained away such a long time that they suspected some misfortune, and the Bird flew round a little way to see, and met near their house a Dog, which, having met the Sausage, had seized upon it and devoured it. The Bird complained bitterly against the Dog as a

public robber, but it availed nothing ; for the Dog declared that he had found forged letters upon the Sausage, for which its life was forfeited.

The Bird, full of grief, took the wood upon her back, and flew home to relate what she had seen and heard. Both she and the Mouse were very sad, but agreed to do their best, and remain with one another. Now the Bird laid the table and the Mouse prepared their meal ; and in order to make it quite fit she got into the pot to stir the vegetables up, and flavour them as the Sausage had been used to do ; but alas ! before she had scarcely got in, her skin and hair came off, and her life was sacrificed.

When the Bird came, and wished to sit down to dinner, no cook was to be found ! so, throwing away in a pet the sticks she had gathered, she called and searched high and low ; but no cook could she discover. From her carelessness the fire reached the wood, and a grand conflagration commenced ; so that the poor Bird hastened to the brook for water, but her pail falling in, she was carried with it, and not being able to extricate herself in time, she sank to the bottom.





THE MUSICIANS OF BREMEN.

A CERTAIN man had a Donkey, which had served him faithfully for many long years, but whose strength was so far gone that at last it was quite unfit for work. So his master was thinking how much he could make of the skin, but the Donkey perceiving that no good wind was blowing, ran away along the road to Bremen. "There," thought he, "I can be town-musician."

When he had run some way, he found a Hound lying by the road-side, yawning like one who was very tired.

"What are you yawning for now, you big fellow?" asked the Ass.

"Ah," replied the Hound, "because every day I grow older and weaker ; I cannot go any more to the hunt, and my master has well-nigh beaten me to death, so that I took to flight ; and now I do not know how to earn my bread."

"Well! do you know," said the Ass, "I am going to Bremen, to be town-musician there ; suppose you go with me and take a share in the music. I will play on the lute, and you shall beat the kettle-drums." The Dog was satisfied, and off they set.

Presently they came to a Cat, sitting in the middle of the path, with a face like three rainy days! "Now then, old shaver, what has crossed you?" asked the Ass.

"How can one be merry when one's neck has been pinched like mine?" answered the Cat. "Because I am growing old, and my teeth are all worn to stumps, and because I would rather sit by the fire and spin, than run after mice, my mistress wanted to drown me ; and so I ran away. But now good advice is dear, and I do not know what to do."

"Go with us to Bremen. You understand nocturnal music, so you can be town-musician."

The Cat consented, and went with them. The three vagabonds soon came near a Farm-yard, where, upon the barn-door, the Cock was sitting crowing with all his might.

"You crow through marrow and bone," said the Ass, "what do you do that for?"

"That is the way I prophesy fine weather," said the Cock; "but, because grand guests are coming for the Sunday, the housewife has no pity, and has told the cookmaid to make me into soup for the morrow; and this evening my head will be cut off. Now I am crowing with a full throat as long as I can."

"Ah, but you, Red-comb," replied the Ass, "rather come away with us. We are going to Bremen, to find there something better than death; you have a good voice, and if we make music together it will have full play."

The Cock consented to this plan, and so all four travelled on together. They could not, however, reach Bremen in one day, and at evening they came into a forest, where they meant to pass the night. The Ass and the Dog laid themselves down under a large tree, the Cat and the Cock climbed up into the branches, but the latter flew right to the top, where he was most safe. Before he went to sleep he looked all round the four quarters, and soon thought he saw a little spark in the distance; so, calling his companions, he said they were not far from a house, for he saw a light.

The Ass said, "If it is so, we had better get up and go further, for the pasturage here is very bad;"

and the Dog continued, "Yes, indeed! a couple of bones with some meat on would also be very acceptable!"

So they made haste towards the spot where the light was, and which shone now brighter and brighter, until they came to a well-lighted robber's cottage. The Ass, as the biggest, went to the window and peeped in. "What do you see, Gray-horse?" asked the Cock.

"What do I see?" replied the Ass; "a table laid out with savoury meats and drinks, with robbers sitting around and enjoying themselves."

"That were the right sort of thing for us," said the Cock.

"Yes, yes, I wish we were there," replied the Ass. Then these animals took counsel together how they should contrive to drive away the robbers, and at last they thought of a way. The Ass places his fore-feet upon the window-ledge, the Hound got on his back, the Cat climbed up upon the Dog, and, lastly, the Cock flew up and perched upon the head of the Cat. When this was accomplished, at a given signal they commenced together to perform their music: the Ass brayed, the Dog barked, the Cat mewed, and the Cock crew; and they made such a tremendous noise, and so loud, that the panes of the window were shivered! Terrified at these unearthly sounds, the robbers got up with great precipitation, thinking

nothing less than that some spirits had come, and fled off into the forest.

The four companions immediately sat down at the table, and quickly ate up all that was left, as if they had been fasting for six weeks.

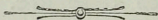
As soon as the four players had finished, they extinguished the light, and each sought for himself a sleeping place, according to his nature and custom. The Ass laid himself down upon some straw, the Hound behind the door, the Cat upon the hearth, near the warm ashes, and the Cock flew up upon a beam which ran across the room. Weary with their long walk, they soon went to sleep.

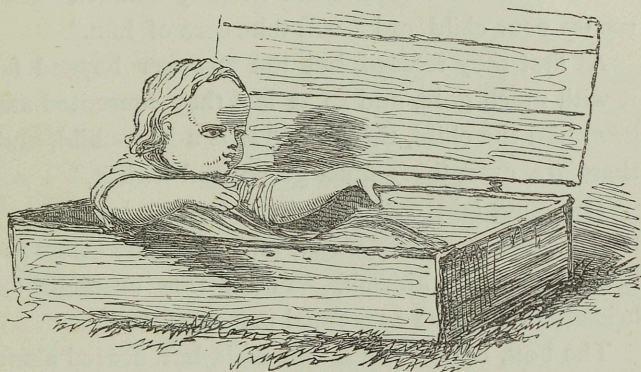
At midnight, the robbers perceived from their retreat that no light was burning in their house, and all appeared quiet; so the captain said, "We need not to have been frightened into fits;" and, calling one of the band, he sent him forward to reconnoitre. The messenger, finding all still, went into the kitchen to strike a light, and, taking the glistening fiery eyes of the Cat for live coals, he held a lucifer-match to them, expecting it to take fire. But the Cat, not understanding the joke, flew in his face, spitting and scratching, which dreadfully frightened him, so that he made for the back door; but the Dog, who laid there, sprang up and bit his leg; and as he limped upon the straw where the Ass was stretched out, it gave him a powerful kick with its hind foot. This

was not all, for the Cock, awaking at the noise, clapped his wings, and cried from the beam, "Cock-a-doodle-doo, cock-a-doodle-doo!"

Then the robber ran back as well as he could to his captain, and said, "Ah, my master, there dwells a horrible witch in the house, who spat on me and scratched my face with her long nails; and then before the door stands a man with a knife, who chopped at my leg; and in the yard there lies a black monster, who beat me with a great wooden club; and, besides all, upon the roof sits a judge, who called out, 'Bring the knave up, do!' so I ran away as fast as I could."

After this the robbers dared not again go near their house; but everything prospered so well with the four town-musicians of Bremen, that they did not forsake their situation! And there they are to this day, for anything I know.





THE GIANT WITH THE THREE GOLDEN HAIRS.

THERE was once upon a time a poor woman whose son was born with a caul, and so it was foretold of him that in his fourteenth year he should marry the King's daughter.

As it happened the King soon after came into the village, quite unknown to any one, and when he asked the people what news there was, they answered, "A few days since a child with a caul was born, which is a sure sign that he will be very lucky; and, indeed, it has been foretold of him that in his fourteenth year he will marry the King's daughter."

The King had a wicked heart, and was disturbed

concerning this prophecy, so he went to the parents, and said to them in a most friendly manner, "Give me up your child and I will take care of him."

At first they refused, but the stranger begged for it with much gold, and so at last they consented and gave him the child, thinking, "It is a luck-child, and, therefore, everything must go on well with it."

The King laid the child in a box and rode away till he came to a deep water, into which he threw the box, saying to himself, "From this unsought-for bridegroom have I now freed my daughter."

The box, however, did not sink, but floated along like a boat, and not one drop of water penetrated it. It floated at last down to a mill two miles from the King's palace, and in the mill-dam it stuck fast. The miller's boy, who was fortunately standing there, observed it, and drew it ashore with a hook, expecting to find a great treasure. When, however, he opened the box he saw a beautiful child, alive and merry. He took it to the people at the mill, who, having no children, adopted it for their own, saying, "God has sent it to us." They took good care of the child, and it grew up a steady, good lad.

It happened one day that the King went into the mill for shelter during a thunderstorm, and asked the people whether the boy was their child.

"No," they answered; "he is a foundling, who,

fourteen years ago, floated into our dam in a box, which the miller's boy drew out of the water."

The King observed at once that it was no other than the luck-child whom he had thrown into the water, and so said to them, "Good people, could not the youth carry a letter to my wife the Queen? If so, I will give him two pieces of gold for a reward."

"As my lord the King commands," they replied, and bade the youth get ready.

Then the King wrote a letter to the Queen, wherein he said, "So soon as this boy arrives with this letter, let him be killed and buried, and let all be done before I return."

The youth set out on his journey with the letter, but he lost himself, and at evening came into a great forest. In the gloom he saw a little light, and going up to it he found a cottage, into which he went, and perceived an old woman sitting by the fire. As soon as she saw the lad she was terrified, and exclaimed, "Why do you come here; and what would you do?"

"I am come from the mill," he answered, "and am going to my lady the Queen to carry a letter; but because I have lost my way in this forest, I wish to pass the night here."

"Poor boy!" said the woman, "you have come to a den of robbers, who, when they return, will murder you."

"Let who will come," he replied, "I am not afraid;

I am so weary that I can go no further ;” and, stretching himself upon a bench, he went to sleep. Presently the robbers entered, and asked in a rage what strange lad was lying there.

“Ah,” said the old woman, “it is an innocent youth, who has lost himself in the forest, and whom I have taken in out of compassion. He carries with him a letter to the Queen.”

The robbers seized the letter and read it, and understood that as soon as the youth arrived he was to be put to death. Then the robbers also took compassion on him, and the captain tore up the letter and wrote another, wherein he declared that the youth upon his arrival was to be married to the Princess. They let him sleep quietly on his bench till the morning, and as soon as he awoke they gave him the letter and showed him the right road.

When the Queen received the letter she did as it commanded, and caused a splendid marriage feast to be prepared, and the Princess was given in marriage to the luck-child, who, since he was both young and handsome, pleased her well, and they were all very happy.

Some little time afterwards the King returned to his palace and found the prophecy fulfilled, and his daughter married to the luck-child. “How did this happen?” he asked. “In my letter I gave quite another command.”

Then the Queen handed him the letter, that he might read for himself what it stated. The King perceived directly that it had been forged by another person, and he asked the youth what he had done with the original letter that had been entrusted to him.

"I know nothing about it," he replied ; "it must have been changed in the forest where I passed the night."

Inflamed with rage, the King answered, "Thou shalt not escape so easily ; he who would have my daughter must fetch for me three golden hairs from the head of the Giant ; bring thou to me what I desire, then shalt thou receive my daughter."

The King hoped by this means to get rid of him, but he answered, "The three Golden hairs I will fetch, for I fear not the Giant ;" and so he took leave and began his wanderings.

The road led him by a large town, where the watchman at the gate asked him what trade he understood, and what he knew. "I know everything," replied the youth.

"Then you can do us a kindness," said the watch, "if you tell us the reason why the fountain in our market-place, out of which wine used to flow, now, all at once, does not even give water."

"That you shall know," was the answer ; "but you must wait till I return."

Then he went on further and came to a rather large city ; where the watchman asked him, as before, what trade he understood, and what he knew. "I know everything," he replied.

"Then you can do us a kindness, if you tell us the reason why a tree, growing in our town, which used to bear golden apples, does not now even have any leaves."

"That you shall know," replied the youth, "if you wait till I return ;" and so saying he went on further till he came to a great lake, over which it was necessary that he should pass. The ferryman asked him what trade he understood, and what he knew.

"I know everything," he replied.

"Then," said the ferryman, "you can do me a kindness, if you tell me why, for ever and ever, I am obliged to row backwards and forwards, and am never to be released."

"You shall learn the reason why," replied the youth ; "but wait till I return."

As soon as he got over the water he found the entrance into the Giant's kingdom. It was black and gloomy, and the Giant was not at home ; but his old grandmother was sitting there in an immense arm-chair.

"What do you want ?" said she, looking at him fixedly.

"I want three Golden hairs from the head of the

King of these regions," replied the youth, "else I cannot obtain my bride."

"That is a bold request," said the woman ; "for if he comes home and finds you here it will be a bad thing for you ; but still you can remain, and I will see if I can help you."

Then she changed him into an ant, and told him to creep within the fold of her gown, where he would be quite safe.

"Yes," he said, "that is all very well ; but there are three things I am desirous of knowing :—Why a fountain, which used to spout wine, is now dry, and does not even give water.—Why a tree, which used to bear golden apples, does not now have leaves.—And why a ferryman is always rowing backwards and forwards and never gets released."

"Those are difficult questions," replied the old woman ; "but do you keep quiet, and pay attention to what the King says when I pluck each of the three golden hairs."

As soon as evening came the Giant returned, and scarcely had he entered, when he remarked that the air was not quite pure. "I smell ! I smell the flesh of man !" he exclaimed ; "all is not right."

Then he peeped into every corner and looked about, but could find nothing.

Presently his old grandmother began to scold, screaming, "There now, just as I have dusted and

put everything in order, you are pulling them all about again: you are for ever having man's flesh in your nose! Sit down and eat your supper."

When he had finished he felt tired, and the old woman took his head in her lap, and said she would comb his hair a bit. Presently he yawned, then winked, and at last snored. Then she plucked out a golden hair and laid it down beside her.

"Bah!" cried the King, "what are you about?"

"I have had a bad dream," answered the old woman, "and so I plucked one of your hairs."

"What did you dream, then?" asked he.

"I dreamt that a market-fountain, which used to spout wine, is dried up, and does not even give water: what is the matter with it, pray?"

"Why, if you must know," answered he, "there sits a toad under a stone in the spring, which, if any one kills, the wine will gush out as before."

Then the old woman went on combing till he went to sleep again, and snored so that the windows shook. Presently she pulled out a second hair.

"Confound it! what are you about?" exclaimed the King in a passion.

"Don't be angry," said she; "I did it in a dream."

"What did you dream about this time?" he asked.

"I dreamt that in a certain royal city there grew a fruit-tree, which formerly bore golden apples, but now has not a leaf upon it: what is the cause of it?"

"Why," replied the King, "at the root a mouse is gnawing. But if they kill it golden apples will grow again ; if not, the mouse will gnaw till the tree dies altogether. However, let me go to sleep in peace now ; for if you disturb me again you will catch a box on the ears."

Nevertheless the old woman, when she had rocked him again to sleep, plucked out a third golden hair. Up jumped the King in a fury, and would have ill-treated her, but she pacified him and said, "Who can help bad dreams?"

"What did you dream this time?" he asked, still curious to know.

"I dreamt of a ferryman, who is for ever compelled to row backwards and forwards, and will never be released. What is the reason thereof?"

"Oh, you simpleton!" answered the Giant. "When one comes who wants to cross over, he must give the oar into his hand ; then will the other be obliged to go to and fro, and he will be free."

Now, since the old woman had plucked the three golden hairs, and had received answers to the three questions, she let the Giant lie in peace, and he slept on till daybreak.

As soon as he went out in the morning the old woman took the ant out of the fold of her gown, and restored him again to his human form.

"There you have the three golden hairs from the

King's head, and what he replied to the three questions you have just heard."

"Yes, I have heard, and will well remember," said the luck-child ; and, thanking the old woman for her assistance in his trouble, he left those regions, well pleased that he had been so lucky in everything.

When he came to the ferryman he had to give him the promised answer. But he said, "First row me over, and then I will tell you how you may be freed ;" and as soon as they reached the opposite side he gave him the advice, "When another comes this way, and wants to pass over, give him the oar in his hand."

Then he went on to the first city, where stood the barren tree, and where the watchman waited for the answer. So he said to him, "Kill the mouse which gnaws at the root of the tree, and then it will again bear golden apples." The watchman thanked him, and gave him for a reward two asses laden with gold, which followed him.

Next he came to the other city, where the dry fountain was, and he told the watchman as the Giant had said,—*"Under a stone in the spring there sits a toad, which you must uncover and kill, and then wine will flow again as before."*

The watchman thanked him, and gave to him, as the other had done, two asses laden with gold.

Now the lucky youth soon reached home, and his

dear bride was very glad when she saw him return, and heard how capitably everything had gone with him. He brought the King what he had desired—the three golden hairs from the head of the Giant; and when his Majesty saw the four asses laden with gold he was quite pleased, and said, “Now are the conditions fulfilled, and you may have my daughter: but tell me, dear son-in-law, whence comes all this gold? This is, indeed, bountiful treasure.”

“I was ferried over a river,” he replied, “and there I picked it up, for it lies upon the shore like sand.”

“Can I not fetch some as well?” asked the King, feeling quite covetous.

“As much as you like; there is a ferryman who will row you across, and then you can fill your sacks on the other side.”

The covetous King set out in great haste upon his journey, and as soon as he came to the river beckoned to the ferryman to take him over. The man came and bade him step into his boat; and as soon as they reached the opposite shore, the ferryman put the oar into his hand and sprang on shore himself.

So the King was obliged to take his place, and there he is obliged to row to and fro for ever for his sins.

And there he still rows, for no one has yet come to take the oar from him.



THE THREE LANGUAGES.

IN Switzerland there lived an old Count, who had an only son, who was quite stupid and never learned anything. One day the father said, "My son, listen to what I have to say ; do all I may, I can knock nothing into your head. Now you shall go away, and an eminent master shall try his hand with you."

So the youth was sent to a foreign city, and remained a whole year with his master, and at the end of that time he returned home. His father asked him at once what he had learned, and he replied, "My father, I have learned what the dogs bark."

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed the father, "is this all you have learned? I will send you to some other city, to another master."

So the youth went away a second time, and after he had remained a year with this master, came home again. His father asked him, as before, what he had learned, and he replied, "I have learned what the birds sing." This answer put the father in a passion, and he exclaimed, "Oh, you prodigal! has all this precious time passed, and have you learned nothing? Are you not ashamed to come into my presence? Once more, I will send you to a third master; but if you learn nothing this time I will no longer be a father to you."

With this third master the boy remained, as before, a twelvemonth; and when he came back to his father, he told him that he had learned the language that the frogs croak. At this the father flew into a great rage, and, calling his people together, said, "This youth is no longer my son; I cast him off, and command that you lead him into the forest and take away his life."

The servants led him away into the forest, but they had not the heart to kill him, and so they let him go. They cut out, however, the eyes and the tongue of a fawn, and took them for a token to the old Count.

The young man wandered along, and after some

time came to a castle, where he asked for a night's lodging. The Lord of the castle said, "Yes, if you will sleep down below. There is the tower; you may go, but I warn you it is very perilous, for it is full of wild dogs, which bark and howl at every one, and, at certain hours, a man must be thrown to them, whom they devour."

Now, on account of these dogs the whole country round was in terror and sorrow, for no one could prevent their ravages; but the youth, being afraid of nothing, said, "Only let me in to these barking hounds, and give me something to throw to them; they will not harm me."

Since he himself wished it, they gave him some meat for the wild hounds, and let him into the tower. As soon as he entered, the dogs ran about him quite in a friendly way, wagging their tails, and never once barking; they ate, also, the meat he brought, and did not attempt to do him the least injury.

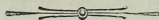
The next morning, to the astonishment of every one, he came forth unharmed, and told the Lord of the castle, "The hounds have informed me, in their language, why they thus waste and bring destruction upon the land. They have the guardianship of a large treasure beneath the tower, and till that is raised, they have no rest. In what way and manner this is to be done I have also understood from them."

At these words every one began rejoicing, and the Lord promised him his daughter in marriage, if he could raise the treasure. This task he happily accomplished, and the wild hounds thereupon disappeared, and the country was freed from that plague. Then the beautiful maiden was married to him, and they lived happily together.

After some time, he one day got into a carriage with his wife and set out on the road to Rome. On their way thither, they passed a swamp, where the frogs sat croaking. The young Count listened, and when he heard what they said, he became quite thoughtful and sad, but he did not tell his wife the reason.

At last they arrived at Rome, and found the Pope was just dead, and there was a great contention among the Cardinals as to who should be his successor. They at length resolved, that he on whom some miraculous sign should be shown should be elected. Just as they had thus resolved, at the same moment the young Count stepped into the church, and suddenly two snow-white doves flew down, one on each of his shoulders, and remained perched there. The clergy recognized in this circumstance the sign they required, and asked him on the spot whether he would be Pope. The young Count was undecided, and knew not whether he were worthy; but the Doves whispered to him that he

might take the honour, and so he consented. Then he was anointed and consecrated ; and so was fulfilled what the Frogs had prophesied—and which had so disturbed him,—that he should become the Pope. Upon his election he had to sing a mass, of which he knew nothing ; but the two Doves sitting upon his shoulder told him all that he required.





THE HANDLESS MAIDEN.

A CERTAIN Miller had fallen by degrees into great poverty, until he had nothing left but his mill and a large apple-tree. One day, when he was going into the forest to cut wood, an old man, whom he had never seen before, stepped up to him, and said, "Why do you trouble yourself with chopping wood? I will make you rich, if you will promise me what stands behind your mill."

The Miller thought to himself that it could be nothing but his apple-tree, so he said, "Yes," and concluded the bargain with the strange man.

The other, however, laughed derisively, and said, "After three years I will come and fetch what belongs to me;" and then he went away.

As soon as the Miller reached home, his wife came to him, and said, "Tell me, husband, whence comes this sudden flow of gold into our house? All at once every chest and cupboard is filled, and yet no man has brought any in; I cannot tell how it has happened."

The Miller, in reply, told her, "It comes from a strange lord, whom I met in the forest, who offered me great treasure, and I promised him, in return, what stands behind the mill, for we can very well spare the great apple-tree."

"Ah, my husband," exclaimed his wife, "it is the Evil Spirit whom you have seen; he did not mean the apple-tree, but our daughter, who was behind the mill sweeping the yard."

This Miller's daughter was a beautiful and pious maiden, and during all the three years lived in the fear of God without sin. When the time was up, and the day came when the Evil One was to fetch her, she washed herself quite clean and made a circle around herself with chalk. Quite early came the Evil One, but he could not approach her; so, in a rage, he said to the Miller, "Take away from her all water, that she may not be able to wash herself, else I have no power over her." The Miller did so, for he was afraid.

The next morning came the Evil One again, but she had wept upon her hands so that they were quite

clean. Then he was baffled again, and in his anger said to the Miller, "Cut off both her hands, or else I cannot now obtain her." The Miller was horrified, and said, "How can I cut off the hands of my own child?" But the Evil One pressed him, saying, "If you do not, you are mine, and I will take you yourself away!"

At last the Miller promised, and he went to the maiden, and said, "My child, if I do not cut off both your hands, the Evil One will carry me away, and in my terror I have promised him. Now help me in my trouble, and forgive me for the wickedness I am about to do you."

She replied, "Dear father, do with me what you will; I am your daughter."

Thereupon she laid down both her hands, and her father cut them off. For the third time now the Evil One came, but the maiden had let fall so many tears upon her arms, that they were both quite clean. So he was obliged to give her up, and after this lost all power over her.

The Miller now said to her, "I have received so much good through you, my daughter, that I will care for you most dearly all your life long."

But she answered, "Here I cannot remain; I will wander forth into the world, where compassionate men will give me as much as I require."

Then she had her arms bound behind her back,

and at sunrise departed on her journey, and walked the whole day long till night fell. At that time she arrived at a royal garden, and by the light of the moon she saw a tree standing there bearing most beautiful fruits, but she could not enter, for there was water all round. Since, however, she had walked the whole day without tasting a morsel, she was tormented by hunger, and said to herself, "Ah, would I were there, that I might eat of the fruit, else shall I perish with hunger." So she kneeled and prayed to God, and all at once an angel came down, who made a passage through the water, so that the ground was dry for her to pass over.

Then she went into the garden, and the angel with her. There she saw a tree full of beautiful pears, but they were all numbered ; so she stepped up and ate one to appease her hunger, but no more. The gardener perceived her do it, but because the angel stood by he was afraid, and thought the maiden was a spirit ; so he remained quiet and did not address her. As soon as she had eaten the pear she was satisfied, and went and hid herself under the bushes.

The next morning the King, to whom the garden belonged, came down, and counting the pears found that one was missing ; and he asked the gardener whither it was gone. The gardener replied, "Last night a spirit came, who had no hands, and ate the pear with her mouth."

The King then asked, "How did the spirit come through the water? and whither did it go after it had eaten the pear?"

The gardener answered, "One clothed in snow-white garments came down from heaven and made a passage through the waters, so that the spirit walked through on dry land. And because it must have been an angel, I was afraid, and neither called out nor questioned it; and as soon as the spirit had finished the fruit, she returned as she came."

The King said, "If it be as you say, I will this night watch with you."

As soon as it was dark the King came into the garden, bringing with him a priest, who was to address the spirit, and all three sat down under the tree. About midnight the maiden crept out from under the bushes, and again ate with her mouth a pear off the tree, whilst the angel clothed in white stood by her. Then the priest went towards her, and said, "Art thou come from God or from earth? Art thou a spirit or a human being?"

She replied, "I am no spirit, but a poor maiden, deserted by all, save God alone."

The King said, "If you are forsaken by all the world, yet will I not forsake you;" and he took her with him to his royal palace, and, because she was so beautiful and pious, he loved her with all his heart,

and ordered silver hands to be made for her, and made her his bride.

After a year had passed by, the King was obliged to go to war, so he commended the young Queen to the care of his mother, and told her to write him word if she had a child born, and to pay her especial attention. Soon afterwards the Queen bore a fine boy ; so the old mother wrote a letter to her son, containing the joyful news. The messenger, however, rested on his way by a brook, and, being weary with his long journey, fell asleep. Then came the Evil One, who had always been trying to do some evil to the Queen, and changed the letter for another, where it was said that the Queen had brought a changeling into the world.

As soon as the King had read this letter, he was frightened and much troubled ; nevertheless, he wrote an answer to his mother, that she should take great care of the Queen until his arrival. The messenger went back with the letter, but on his way rested at the same spot, and went to sleep. Then the Evil One came a second time, and put another letter in his pocket, wherein it was said the Queen and her child should be killed. When the old mother received this letter, she was struck with horror, and could not believe it ; so she wrote another letter to the King ; but she received no other answer, for the Evil One again placed a false letter in the messenger's

pocket ; and in this last it said that she should preserve the tongue and eyes of the Queen for a sign that she had fulfilled the order.

The old mother was sorely grieved to shed innocent blood, so she caused a calf to be fetched by night, and cut out its tongue and eyes. Then she said to the Queen, "I cannot let you be killed, as the King commands ; but you must remain here no longer. Go forth with your child into the wide world, and never return here again."

Thus saying, she bound the child upon the young Queen's back, and the poor wife went away weeping bitterly. Soon she entered a large wild forest, and there she fell upon her knees and prayed to God ; and the angel appeared, and led her to a little cottage, and over the door was a shield inscribed with the words, "Here may every one live freely."

Out of the house came a snow-white maiden, who said, "Welcome, Lady Queen !" and led her in. Then she took the little child from the Queen's back, and gave it some nourishment, and laid it on a beautifully covered bed.

Presently the Queen asked, "How do you know that I am a Queen ?" and the maiden answered, "I am an angel sent from God to tend you and your child ;" and in this cottage she lived seven years, and was well cared for, and through God's mercy to her, on account of her piety, her hands grew again as before.

Meanwhile the King had come home again, and his first thought was to see his wife and child. Then his mother began to weep, and said, "You wicked husband, why did you write to me that I should put to death two innocent souls!" and, showing him the two letters which the Evil One had forged, she continued, "I have done as you commanded;" and she brought him the tokens, the two eyes and the tongue.

Then the King began to weep so bitterly for his dear wife and son that the old mother pitied him, and said, "Be comforted, she lives yet! I caused a calf to be slain, from whom I took these tokens; but the child I bound on your wife's back, and I bade them go forth into the wide world; and she promised never to return here, because you were so wrathful against her."

"So far as heaven is blue," exclaimed the King, "I will go; and neither will I eat nor drink until I have found again my dear wife and child, if they have not perished of hunger by this time."

Thereupon the King set out, and for seven long years sought his wife in every stony cleft and rocky cave, but found her not; and he began to think she must have perished. And all this time he neither ate nor drank, but God sustained him.

At last he came into a large forest, and found there the little cottage whereon the shield was with

the words, "Here may every one live freely." Out of the house came the white maiden, and she took him by the hand; and, leading him in, said, "Be welcome, Great King! Whence comest thou?"

He replied, "For seven long years I have sought everywhere for my wife and child; but I have not succeeded."

Then the angel offered him meat and drink, but he refused both, and would only rest a little while. So he lay down to sleep, and covered his face with a napkin.

Now went the angel into the chamber where sat the Queen, with her son, whom she usually called "SORROWFUL," and said to her, "Come down, with your child: your husband is here." So she went to where he lay, and the napkin fell from off his face; so the Queen said, "SORROWFUL, pick up the napkin, and cover again your father's face."

The child did as he was bid; and the King, who heard in his slumber what passed, let the napkin again fall from off his face. At this the boy became impatient, and said, "Dear mother, how can I cover my father's face? Have I indeed a father on the earth? I have learnt the prayer, 'Our Father which art in heaven;' and you have told me my Father was in heaven—the good God: how can I talk to this wild man; he is not my father."

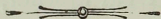
As the King heard this he raised himself up, and

asked the Queen who she was. The Queen replied : " I am your wife, and this is your son, SORROWFUL." But when he saw her human hands, he said, " My wife had silver hands."

" The merciful God," said the Queen, " has caused my hands to grow again ;" and the angel, going into the chamber, brought out the silver hands, and showed them to him.

Now he perceived that they were certainly his dear wife and child ; and he kissed them gladly, saying, " A heavy stone is taken from my heart ;" and after eating a meal together with the angel, they went home to the King's mother.

Their arrival caused great rejoicings everywhere ; and the King and Queen celebrated their marriage again, and ever afterwards lived happily together to the end of their lives.





THE OLD WITCH.

THERE was once a little girl who was very obstinate and wilful, and who never obeyed when her elders spoke to her ; and so how could she be happy ? One day she said to her parents, “ I have heard so much of the old Witch, that I will go and see her. People say she is a wonderful old woman, and has many marvellous things in her house ; and I am very curious to see them.”

Her parents, however, forbade her going, saying, “ The Witch is a wicked old woman, who performs many godless deeds ; and if you go near her, you are no longer a child of ours.”

The girl, however, would not turn back at her

parents' command, but went to the Witch's house. When she arrived there the woman asked her, "Why are you so pale?"

"Ah," replied she, trembling all over, "I have frightened myself so with what I have just seen."

"And what did you see?" inquired the old Witch.

"I saw a black man on your steps."

"That was a collier," replied she.

"Then I saw a grey man."

"That was a sportsman," said the old woman.

"After him I saw a blood-red man."

"That was a butcher," replied the woman.

"But, oh, I was most terrified," continued the girl, "when I peeped through your window, and saw not you, but a creature with a fiery head."

"Then you have seen the Witch in her proper dress," said the old woman; "for you I have long waited, and now you shall give me light." So saying, she changed the girl into a block of wood, and then threw it into the fire; and when it was fully alight she sat down on the hearth, warmed herself, and said, "Ah, now for once it burns brightly!"

